SOLID WASTE
POLICY BOARD MEETING

March 22, 2017
Solid Waste Department
9:00 am to 12:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Leon Pfaff (La Crosse County), Maureen Freedland (La Crosse County), David Eddy (Buffalo County), Steve Hogden (Trempealeau County), Jarrod Holter (City of Onalaska), Teresa Walters (Houston County), Mike Wobbe (Wabasha County)

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Patrick Barlow, (La Crosse County)

MEMBERS ABSENT: City of La Crosse, Vacant Position

OTHERS PRESENT: Hank Koch, Randy Nedrelo, Nick Nichols, Linda Bettin (Solid Waste Department), Rick Frank (Houston County), Brian Korth (St. Joseph’s Construction), Brian Kent (SEH), Brian Tippetts, (7 River’s Recycling), (Dave Harter, Harter’s), Joe Etten, (Up-Cycle, LLC)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
Chairman, Leon Pfaff, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

INTRODUCTIONS
Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

CONSENT AGENDA
• Approval of Minutes (November 14, 2016)

MOTION to approve previous minutes by Mike Wobbe, SECOND by David Eddy. MOTION passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS
Randy Nedrelo and Nick Nichols with the Solid Waste Department attended the WIRM Conference March 1, 2017 through March 3, 2017 in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. The Conference highlighted pulling food waste out of the trash stream.

DISCUSSION/QUESTION on UPDATES/HANDOUT
La Crosse County Solid Waste Department Updates:

Construction Projects
• Replacement of Private Wells
  Both the Walz and Sjolander wells are being replaced. This work is being done under an account with funds from La Crosse County associated with the old landfill. Agreement was reached to replace the wells in 2016 and work initiated on March 6th. Construction is expected to take the rest of March and will be followed
by testing and well development and abandonment of the previously existing wells.

- **Landfill Site Entrance**
  Work continues associated with the landfill site entrance. The City of La Crosse received bids to develop a frontage road and to provide services associated with development of a new access road into the landfill. This is being done as a combined bid between the La Crosse County Solid Waste Department and the City of La Crosse. Costs associated with this project ($684,000) came in slightly over ($30,000) the engineers cost estimate.

  Two new scales have been bid for the site entrance. These scales will provide enhanced capacity to serve customers, and longevity for the facility. The scales including a contingency came in at approximately $230,000 while the budget was $350,000.

  Work continues on the design and preparation for bids of a scale service building. Development of this building is more expensive than anticipated due to geological conditions requiring significant backfill, the small size of the building, the need for computer upgrades and new electronic systems to facilitate scale operations, fiber optic connections and modern cameras for security purposes. Bids are expected in April and a comparison to budget numbers will be performed at that time.

- **Landfill Construction – Phase VIIB, Phase VIIIB**
  The liner for Phase VIIB and the Bedrock Excavation for Phase VIIIB have been bid and with a contingency the approximate cost is $1,300,000. This is below the budgeted cost of $1,600,000. Approximately nine bids were received for the landfill construction and competitive prices were obtained. Work on the Phase VII Liner is expected to be completed by July 1, 2017 to allow a smooth transition with filling services at the landfill. In 2018, Phase VIIIB Liner will be constructed with approximately three to six acres of final cover.

- **Xcel and Stakeholder Contract Extensions**
  - The extension for the Xcel Contract has been signed by La Crosse County and Xcel.
  - Letters have been sent to all Stakeholders inviting them to extend the Stakeholder Contracts to 2030.
  - Responses have been received from Houston County, STCSWC, Village of Ettrick, and Perrot State Park.

- **Continued Development of the Master Land Use Plan**
  - Work continues on the same items identified in the Master Land Use Plan. A trail located on the west side of the landfill, which was rough graded in 2016 will be paved in 2017.
  - Numerous Eagle Scout Projects have been completed and five are in the works for 2017. On June 3, 2017 (Saturday), a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at the landfill to open the new section of trail, and celebrate the recent Eagle Scout projects. Tara Johnson, County Board Chair and the City of La Crosse, Mayor Kabat will be participating.
Wood Chips
- There has been an increasing glut on the market of wood chips.
- This is occurring since the Dairyland Power Cassville Plant shut down approximately two years ago and is no longer accepting wood waste materials.
- Xcel has been inundated with requests to take wood chips and is being selective on those materials chosen and length and terms of contracts.
- The landfill has been contacted by the City of La Crosse, the Town of Onalaska, and the Town of Holland along with a number of landscape contractors, all indicating that a problem getting rid of wood chips exists.
- This should be a future item of discussion with both the Sustainable La Crosse Commission and with the Policy Board.

Municipal Landfill Site Life
- A survey and calculations were completed for the La Crosse County Municipal Solid Waste Landfill.
- The estimated site life is somewhere between seventeen and twenty-one years, depending upon the density used, projected filling rates, and other factors.
- An expansion at the landfill is possible that would allow from ten to twenty years of additional capacity.

Financial Assurance
- Financial Assurance was reviewed with the DNR and adequate monies are available in our restricted reserve funds.
- The current reserve funds are slightly over-funded.

Capital Costs
- Every two years the Solid Waste Department updates it’s Capital Costs for use in budgeting practices and for the internal audit program.
- The Capital Costs for the landfill construction, closure and post closure care were updated in November of 2016.
- SEH, the Solid Waste Department’s consultant, updates these costs by using comparable bids and bid estimates from other landfills throughout the Midwest.

Environmental Rule Changes Affecting the Landfill
- Two rule changes have occurred both on the Federal and State level that affect the La Crosse County Landfill.
- The first rule deals with gas emissions and gas control systems. No impact to the way the landfill operate or mange our system will occur and some provisions will actually reduce the amount of monitoring required.
- The second rule deals with managing surface water requiring a SWPPP Plan (Surface Water Pollution Prevention Plan). This is a new requirement for the landfill and moves the overall regulation of surface water from the Solid Waste section to a division of surface water quality within the DNR.
- The appropriate plans and submittals have been made, and changes in the inspection and monitoring programs are underway.
- No significant impact to current compliance or operating procedures are expected from these rule changes.
- The La Crosse County Landfill had a perfect operating compliance record with their gas collection and removal system until 2016. Due to a lightning strike in August, a meter was damaged and while a backup meter was used a deviation occurred in the compliance program and was appropriately reported. Until that time, the operating record of the gas-to-energy system was perfect and La Crosse County Landfill was the only landfill to have such an operating record in Wisconsin.
Future Funding of HHM – Handout and Discussion
- The Household Hazardous Materials program has been operating at a deficit the last several years.
- While the programs reserve fund has been sufficient to cover the shortfall to date, changes to the funding formula need to be made in order to ensure long-term viability of the program.
- To help close this gap, the County Board’s approved a budget that included an increase in the county’s contribution to the HHM Program to $1.25/capita, provided all the Municipalities agreed to the same increase. All 18 Municipalities in the County have agreed to this increase.
- Even with this additional funding, the HHM Program is budgeting for another deficit in 2017.
- With the contract with the Municipalities expiring at the end of this year, HHM staff is exploring the program’s funding needs for the future and considering options for meeting these needs.
- Discussion ensued regarding ideas and options for the HHM program.
- Consensus of the Solid Waste Policy Board was to look at multiple possible choices for HHM’s program funding needs.

Ag Bags
- Revolution Plastics will be bringing 55 containers to the landfill for distribution to local farmers in early April.
- This should have a significant impact on the amount of Ag Bag material showing up at the Xcel Energy Plant, potentially reducing the amount of Ag plastic needing to be removed from the waste stream floor at the waste-to-energy facility.

Xcel Residue
- La Crosse County is working with the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) lobbyist to advance changes in state legislation that would exempt residue from Xcel when it is disposed of at the landfill from certain WDNR fees.
- If such legislation were enacted, this would save approximately $180,000 per year.
- Letters of support may be needed from our Wisconsin Stakeholders to assist in this process.

2016 ANNUAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETING
- The Annual Stakeholders meeting has been scheduled for Friday, June 23, 2017.
- An overview of the Solid Waste Department’s 2016 accomplishments will be followed by an overview of Xcel accomplishments in 2016.
- A special presentation from Jill Schoen of the Wisconsin DNR to talk about impacts on DNR work load and service under current budget restrictions and departmental changes. The DNR’s perspective of compliance of both the Xcel facility and the La Crosse County Landfill will be discussed.
- Celebrations of the Annual Partnership Award will also occur.
- A lunch will be provided and tours will be available.
FINANCIAL POSITION END OF 2016

- A short discussion is scheduled for March 22 on the preliminary results from the Finance Department regarding the Solid Waste Department’s financial position.
- In 2016, approximately $1,734,000 of additional revenue over budget was received. This was a result of increased economic development and higher waste generation rates throughout the service area.
- Operational costs increased by only $377,000 for 2016.
- Careful control and management of operational costs was due to good financial planning techniques, models used by the Department to manage each of the different service areas and attentiveness to operational costs by staff. The impact of these changes was to increase available cash.
- At the beginning of 2016 approximately $4,292,000 was available. This increased to approximately $6,382,000 at the end of 2016.
- Since the Solid Waste Department is facing approximately $7,000,000 in construction costs over the next two years with landfill construction, site entrance and a small closure project, current cash availability may not be sufficient to cover all of these costs.
- Various alternatives for funding the construction, including short-term borrowing are being examined.
- The Department’s excellent financial condition and the likelihood that cash flow will be very good in 2017 and 2018, may make short-term borrowing very minor.
- The financial position of the Solid Waste Department has been and continues to be outstanding. However, a plan for identifying future price increases need to be developed so all Stakeholders will have an understanding when and why price increases are instituted.

DISCUSSION: DEVELOPING A PRICE INCREASE PLAN

- The purpose of a price increase plan is to develop a strategy to deal with increasing costs associated with labor, construction, fuel, utilities, and to provide a mechanism that allows Stakeholders to understand when, how, and why prices are increased.
- With a price increase plan budgets can be forecast more accurately.
- To develop a price increase plan, the history of past price increases was reviewed.
- Alternatives to institute price increases was reviewed and their appropriateness to the La Crosse System and the Stakeholders desires was discussed.
- Policies currently existing and those in the future was reviewed that would affect the price increase plan.
- One such example is the desire to maintain the Solid Waste Department’s construction projects on a pay as we go schedule.
- It is expected that the development of a price increase plan may take two to three Policy Board meetings to fully discuss the issues at hand.
- Once the Stakeholders have reached consensus on a plan, a recommendation from the Policy Board would be made to the Public Works & Infrastructure Committee which would then be forwarded to the County Board for adoption.
- Throughout this process, input will be needed from the La Crosse County Administrator and Finance Department.
FUTURE MEETING DATE AND AGENDA TOPICS
Wednesday, June 7, 2017 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Future Funding of HHM
Update on Ag Bags
Update on Xcel Contract Extensions
Wood Waste Issues
What is the Right Level of Competition?
To What Extent Should We Subsidize Diversion Programs?

MOTION by Teresa Walter to adjourn the meeting. SECOND by David Eddy. MOTION passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:03.

Approved, June 7, 2017, Linda Bettin, Recorder.