

**WHITMAN COUNTY
SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE
Meeting
March 13, 2018**

MEMBERS:

Devon Felsted, Pullman Disposal, Chair
Dot Sharp, Colton, Vice-Chair (Excused)
Matthew Pederson, Republic Services
Rick Finch, WSU Waste Management
Bob Curry, Endicott
David Hansel, Albion
Eileen Macoll, Pullman
Chris Skidmore, WC Environmental Health
Aaron Lawhead, Empire Disposal/Waste Management

Staff: Mark Storey, WC Director/Engineer; David Nails, WC Transfer Station; Elinor Huber, Clerk.

Audience: Dean Kinzer, WC Commissioner; Layne Merritt J-U-B Engineers; Megan Gilmore, DOE.

3:05 p.m. – Devon Felsted opened the meeting. Introductions were held around the room.

MOTION by David Hansel and seconded by Eileen Macoll to approve the minutes from December 12, 2017. Motion passed.

Mark Storey gave an update on the repair of Cells 1, 2, 3 at the Transfer Station. They repaired the plastic covers but they probably will not be able to do anything more until May or June. We need to put all new gas monitoring apparatus on the end of the gas vents to be able to monitor them properly.

David Nails reported that because of the weather we had to suspend the finishing of the concrete basin for the 10,000 gallon tanks that will be used for effluent water for evaporation. There is also an HDPE liner inside that basin for leak prevention. We have been accepting effluent in those tanks throughout the winter. We anticipate about 4,000 gallons a year.

The Capital Improvement Planning was a process we started with Great West Engineering eight years ago. We shared a capital item wish list at the last meeting and we will look at cash flow requirements and start finishing the transfer station, the regulatory items and the effluent water. We hope to have either a draft or a final version for you to look at in June.

We are receiving recycled glass but we don't have enough glass to crush at this time. A lot of the recycled glass is contaminated and has to go into the garbage. David Nails made a YouTube video on Channel 8 regarding recycling glass. You can view the video by clicking on this link. <https://youtu.be/zZsK9AhRXI>

Whitman County is eligible for Planning and Implementation grant funding of \$161,583 for the two-year period, comprised of a 25% match of \$40,396, and a State share of \$121,188. An informative memo was sent out to each of the small towns and communities in Whitman County.

Layne Merritt thanked the SWAC members for sending the current information to him for the draft of the Solid Waste Management Plan. He will have the draft ready for review at the next meeting.

Matthew Pedersen stated the recycling market has changed. The Chinese National policy has started a significant market disruption in domestic recycling options. China has closed the borders to incoming recyclable materials. The government has been working to eliminate the impacts of manufacturing on their environment.

We are not asking Whitman County to make any changes, but at this time there are materials that are degrading to the point of no longer having value. We do have to be realistic in the discussion of contamination of your bottle system. One thing we like to emphasize is, “empty, clean, and dry.” When you are talking to your citizens about the best way to preserve the marketability of your recycling material, “empty clean and dry” is the answer.

Right now, we are stockpiling these materials and trying to find a market for them. Typically, commodities would go from your curb to our facility and arrive in China within a two-month period. As we get into summer we will decide how to deal with things based on the actual data we have collected over a 6-8 month period since the implementation of the policy. There is a lack of available markets for those materials that were once considered recyclable.

We must evaluate what is recyclable. We are going to wait it out and make a conscious business decision to hold the line and absorb that impact from our customers so that you don't have to make sweeping changes to your system. We are trying to build real data on a month to month commodity basis so that we know the decision is made for the right reasons and not out of fear.

Megan Gilmore said Ecology is saying to work with the idea, “If in doubt throw it out,” to try and reduce that contamination issue, because it causes huge problems. Ecology will be setting up some stake holder meetings in the near future to discuss these issues and who might be able to open some facilities and have that business interest on the west side. We encourage you to keep those conversations open between your haulers and just do the best you can at this point.

Matthew Pederson stated that is the cultural aspect that is unique to your County to have that conversation as a community to decide what is that value. Is the value in keeping that material out of the landfill or is the value in the budgetary constraints and paying someone to take that material, where in the past it had value and currently it is a neutral or negative value?

Mark Storey said it may be a difficult time in switching gears but one of the worst things that can happen is that people collect the recyclables and find out later that they are being landfilled. That is a huge cultural cost that I don't know anyone can afford. As we proceed, be careful that we are not throwing away recycling. I know it is going to happen; we will be forced to at some point. We just need to be transparent.

Eileen Macoll said the Mayor of Pullman would like to have another presentation from WC at the next council meeting on April 3, 2018. Mark Storey tentatively agreed to attend.

It was suggested to go on a tour to the WC Landfill/Transfer Station for our June meeting.

Adjourned - 4:23 p.m.