Solid Waste Advisory Committee 4-2-09 MEETING

There were 12 people present: 1. Beth Gillespie, SW Coordinator; 2. Dave Alvarado, Northwest Industrial Services; 3. Sheila Pachernegg, Consultant; 4. Nancy Thompson, Citizen (works at PUD); 5. Roberta Rene Wehreing, Citizen (works in County Mailroom); 6. Cindy Low, Excess Disposal; 7. Judy Henshaw, Citizen (works at Newport Schools); 8. Travis Low, Excess Disposal; 9. Rose Low, Excess Disposal; 10. Don Hutson, Kalispel Tribe; 11. Mark Havner, Fire Department Chief; and 12. Terri Ann Hedtke, Citizen (works in County Building & Planning).

Several SWAC voting members were absent this month due to snowy weather, vacations, illness, etc. Absent members were: Bob Spencer, Cusick Mayor; Ron Curren, Public Works Director; Tara Leininger, Metaline Falls Mayor; Dennis McLaughlin, Regional Disposal Company; Harley Seger, County HHW/Recycling; Charles Kress, Citizen (retired from Pend Oreille County); 5. Bob Nichols, B&N Sanitary; Scott Campbell, Ponderay Newsprint;

Beth passed a sign up sheet around. While waiting for the meeting to begin, Beth shared photos of the new baler installed at the South County Deer Valley Transfer Station. When asked how much cardboard it takes to make a bale, Beth said we are not certain, but probably 3-4 bales from a trailer of cardboard. Each bale has an average weight of 1,200 pounds. Two bales of cardboard were made on March 31 after Harley was trained.

Dave, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:07pm and began with introductions. Dave said we were short voting members so did not have a quorum (a majority of the members) to either nominate or vote on the Chair and Vice Chair positions so he will continue to be Acting Chair. Dave suggested perhaps the election of Chair and Vice Chair be done via email. Discussion followed on whether this would be proper Robert’s Rules of Order. Beth will check into this and email voting members.

Beth explained that the March 11th minutes were emailed or mailed on March 26th to all SWAC members and interested citizens (32 in all). She asked if there were any additions or corrections. No changes were voiced but no vote of approval was made since there was no quorum. Tabled until next meeting in May.

A discussion regarding committee membership followed. A nine member SWAC versus an eleven member one was discussed. Quorum issues might still persist regardless of the size of SWAC. Dave asked if we shouldn’t elect two alternate members with proxy voting privileges for absent members. Mark asked about who and how the SWAC members are appointed. Beth said the Commissioners appointed the original members and additional members or replacements are appointed by the Public Works Director as per Commissioner’s Resolution 2008-56. A question regarding approving items when a quorum doesn’t exist, then what percentage of members would be a fair representation to vote? Don stated that a “quorum” is a simple majority (more than half) of the members of SWAC, according to the SWAC By-Laws. Beth will try to email the members to ask what they want to have as the SWAC board. Travis asked what level of commitment or obligation to attend monthly meetings members will have if they vote for Chair and Vice Chair via email. Rene suggested maybe the first Thursday from 3-5pm was still not the best time for everyone. Judy commented that there is no time best for all. Cindy commented that at the last meeting everyone seemed to concur that the first Thursday from 3-5pm was best so don’t change it again at this meeting. Dave asked aloud if more members would attend if we had pizza or some other food at each meeting. Too early for dinner from 3-5pm.

Sheila began the review of the Plan Sections 1 & 2 by saying Section 1 is an overview of the plan and asked if there were any additions or clarifications needed. She said that Section 1 is where we’ve begun since the last plan (2002). Beth reminded everyone that the Plan is dated December 2008. Beth shared Scott Campbell’s memo (in his absence) where he asked to have the Plan replace “waste oil” with “used oil”. Dave interjected at this point that many of the questions are directed to Sheila as she is one of the consultants who prepared the plan for Pend Oreille County. On page 9, paragraph 1.7, a question was asked regarding a “litter control tax on Solid
Waste". Beth responded that there is a 3.6% Solid Waste tax on all tipping fees and that the monies are sent to the state quarterly.

"Fugitive" dumpsites were discussed and it was asked what to do if someone's front yard looks like a "dump". There is no County ordinance regarding such. Mark said that the first people they call if a fire is not a structure or natural vegetation is NE Tri County Health as they investigate illegal dumping in the county, even on private property. Does Pend Oreille County need an enforcement ordinance for fugitive dumpsites?

Dave called for additional comments on Section 1. Sheila said that this is NOT the final word on this Section, we just need to keep moving forward. Beth has sent all comments received to SWAC members.

On page 20, point 2.2.3 Industrial Generators Scott Campbell's email to Beth said that Ponderay Newsprint has 80 cy of MSW per WEEK not month. Cindy verified that that is about 4 dumpsters per week.

On page 23, point 2.4 Alternatives Mark said he would like to see more offsite recycle containers located throughout the county. Make community collections more community oriented. Increased revenue from the increased recycling could offset the extra costs. Dave asked if the Fire Districts are manned? Mark said they are not but thought the volunteer firefighters would naturally keep an eye on the containers. Mark said the Stanwood Fire District had very successful efforts. There are 8 Fire Districts in Pend Oreille County with 14 fire halls. Beth explained that an Offset Department of Ecology grant was recently received and a used oil heater for the new Recycle building will be purchased with it along with small, portable recycle trailers that can be pulled with a regular pickup truck. We want to place these at special functions or events throughout the County (like the rodeo, lavender festival, etc.)

Public response to recycling is "what do I get for doing it", as for many, that warm fuzzy feeling of helping the environment is not enough. The best incentive needs to be to reduce their solid waste costs. Travis asked how about the transfer stations becoming a "buyback" recycling program. Beth explained that Solid Waste has a relatively small budget and work force. Transportation costs of recyclables is very costly. Recycling takes retraining of the public. Good to start with the children as they learn fast and can teach their parents. Several SWAC members shared their personal methods and or reasons for recycling and really how like second nature it becomes after awhile.

Someone asked if there were any programs to teach a class on recycling at the schools. Dave asked if Solid Waste creates a monthly newsletter. Someone suggested an article in the "Grassroots" publication could be effective. Beth said no newsletter is done monthly, but she recently updated the County website with the 2008 Plan Update draft and the E-cycle brochure. When the SWAC monthly minutes have been approved, Sheila said those should be added to the website. Beth said she would like Solid Waste to have a presence at the County Fair this year if possible.

Sheila discussed recycle collection sites versus curbside recycling. Convenience is a big issue for recycling. Sheila will add recycle language to Section 2 as well as what is already contained in Section 3.

Beth explained that the new baler at the Deer Valley Transfer station can accommodate baling cardboard, paper, cans, plastic bottles and film, and carpet padding. We do not anticipate accepting plastic bottles anytime soon for recycling as it is not cost effective when it is so light and the market is so low.

Judy spoke about her recycling efforts at Newport Schools. She said the food waste scraps are sold to local pig farmers and all the tin cans and cardboard boxes are recycled via her own personal vehicle. She said she feels like a "lone ranger" but thinks she can bring more staff on board with recycling.
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Don asked if the County would be able to handle a multi-compartment trailer from the Tribe if they brought it in to the Recycle building for dumping. Beth said the building is not large enough to hold a variety of recyclables just waiting to be baled so they would have to be dumped into the appropriate trailers outside. A suggestion was whether or not a full trailer from the Tribe could be staged outside of the Recycle building and an empty one be sent back to the Tribe. Don said the Tribe is ready to recycle. A thorough discussion of recycle collection bins continued.

On page 21, point 2.2.5 Closed Landfills Dave asked Sheila where the County was with the post closure monitoring process. Sheila said the County could probably petitions the Department of Ecology soon to ask for early landfill closure since they appear to be stabilized and have no methane gas and the well testing appears good. Dave asked if there would be any funds left in the budget if the landfills were closed early. Sheila said the County never had any set dollar amount set aside for closures as they were always short on funds in the past so landfill closure was never a line item on the budget.

Dave asked Don what historically has the Tribe done for collection services? Don said most recently Northern Quest Casino has helped the Tribe in providing contracted service collection sites. He said he wasn’t sure what had been done in the past.

On page 22 point 2.4 Alternatives Mark mentioned under Public Education to have a handout available to help educate the public.

On page 22 point 2.4 Program & Administrative someone asked what was a Flow Control Ordinance. Beth will include a copy of it with these minutes. Mark asked about the evaluation of Solid Waste fees.

Cindy spoke up and gave insight on recycling from the past and what has changed over the decades. She has been in the business a long time and has seen a lot of changes in the public’s attitude to recycling.

Beth handed out page 22 with just the Section 2 Alternatives listed. Dave asked Sheila to explain each alternative and give a definition of “inert” waste. She said “inert” means that the waste cannot react with the environment. She also said “we need to look and think of the County, not as an individual but as a regional center.”

Someone asked if and when Usk station would get scales installed. Beth said the County Comprehensive Plan includes a land purchase, new scale shack and scales for Usk. It would look like the lone transfer station but a little smaller. Ron is working on acquiring additional land in Usk.

Sheila was very pleased with the abundance of good discussion! The process of mixed level of participation and how recommendations will be presented to the Commissioners and then the plan goes to the Department of Ecology for review.

Next SWAC meeting is Thursday, May 7, 2009 in the Commissioner’s meeting room at the old County Courthouse in Newport (625 4th Street, Scott & 4th) from 3 to 5pm.

Turn in all your comments on Sections 3 Recycling and Section 4 CDL & Inert Waste to Beth by April 30th.

Dave thanked everyone for their attendance and good discussions. Meeting adjourned at 5pm.

4-9-09 Beth Delagar - Approved by SWAC on 5-9-09