

## **OHSTT SOLID WASTE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Date: March 10, 2016 ...Time: 7. PM...Place: Owls Head Town Office

1. **Call To Order:** 7:00 pm....present: Bruce Colson, Chair (OH), Ron Porter (T), Skip Connell (ST), Peter Lammert (T) and Dave Matthews (OH), Jan Gaudio (ST), Paul Gibbons, Atty, Diane Giese, bookkeeper.

2. **Recognize Guests:** none.

3. **Public Comments, for items not on the agenda:** none

### **Old Business**

4. **Vote on last meeting's minutes:** Discussion: Peter said he was unhappy with the minutes not including enough information and suggested getting a tape recorder. After more discussion it was suggested to hold on voting the minutes until corrections and additions (to the edited by Jan Gaudio minutes) could be made.

Motion Bruce 1<sup>st</sup>, Peter 2<sup>nd</sup>, all approved.

5. **Weighing:** Weighing will not be required or done until Scott gets the agreement detailing responsibilities and liabilities. Scott was said to be unhappy with it and Peter said there are still errors in the agreement. Skip wondered why we were putting the weighing issues on Scott. Haulers will be required to have a weight slip, but it can come from any weigh station and Scott was amenable to using his scale. It should be made clear, however, that haulers can go where ever they want to be weighed. The agreement was to protect Scott not to put the onus on him. There was a discussion on the misunderstanding of which haulers would need weigh slips. Only commercial haulers would be required to have a slip.

Scott told Peter he wants his lawyer to look at the agreement but he does not want to pay for this review.

Paul said he had called Scott and explained that the executive session (which Scott was unhappy about) was regarding possible pending litigation and that he (Paul) felt an agreement was to protect Scott.

Jan said he would like to see final copies of both policy and agreement.

Bruce spoke about invoices that had been sent with weight information on them.

Diane, showed Jim Dunning's email and there was a motion to have Dave contact Jim Dunning

Bruce 1<sup>st</sup>, Peter 2<sup>nd</sup>, all approved.

6. **Any discussion on post 2018 and MSW:** Paul began by sharing that he felt the real problem is the risk that Fiberright might not work. He wondered why they didn't put

a clause in saying that if they could not accomplish the work without going over \$70 a ton (meaning their process did not work) that they could go to the landfill in Norridgewock where MSW could be dumped for \$60/ ton.

Skip said he thought this was a nasty solution and Paul said it would just be a way to protect themselves if their process didn't work.

Paul: MRC had the ability for oversight. They needed to make sure PERC was getting enough trash. There is \$25 million in the kitty and Paul thinks they should have gone to towns and asked them what they wanted the money to be used for. If the towns decide not to use MRC the money should go back to the towns.

Paul: Limited partnerships hold money in case they have to go to litigation but Paul says the towns are already in a limited partnership and thinks MRC made the conditions convoluted.

Paul's take on it is that they have great land in Hamden and if Fiberight worked it would be incredible.

Peter proceeded to read part of Fiberight's information. Bruce said he had pulled Fiberight aside at the Rockland's council meeting and asked about using haulers and cans and felt Fiberight's price would actually be higher when all parts (using their equipment) were added together. This, he said, was a concern for him.

Paul is concerned that the political power of MRC would be weakened if it loses many of the towns now a part of it as the legislators wouldn't be pulling together.

Paul spoke at length about issues and problems with PERC and its costs to dispose of MSW because of having to separate types of trash and that this system creates higher maintenance costs.

There was an extended discussion on the pros and cons of Fiberight and Ecomaine where PERC seems more problematic.

There followed numerous specific conversations around the technical pros and cons of the potential providers. There were also questions about what could happen if pricing didn't work and tipping fees had to be raised to save the companies. Both Fiberight and Ecomaine have offered \$70 tipping fees.

There was a conversation about the cans and weights. Paul said that giving out keys to the facility to haulers was not a good idea.

**7. Personnel board:** Peter vehemently resigned from the personnel board and passed off a file of material. Shortly after some remarks, Peter's resignation was accepted with a motion by Skip 1<sup>st</sup>, Ron 2<sup>nd</sup> and all approved. Dave was nominated to become a regular member of the personnel board and there was a motion by Skip 1<sup>st</sup>, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> with

a unanimous vote. Peter agreed to be alternate and there was a motion to accept this with Skip 1<sup>st</sup>, Dave 2<sup>nd</sup> and all approved.

Diane Giese tendered her resignation and said she would send a letter to that effect.

**8. Review of bills to be paid:** Warrant was circulated and approved. Peter 1<sup>st</sup>, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> all approved.

**9. Correspondence:** The board discussed an email from John Spears who was formerly the Town Administrator for South Thomaston, but was writing as a citizen.

**This email was not corrected for grammar or content.**

Owls Head, South Thomaston and  
Thomaston Solid Waste Cooperative Board

My name is John Spear. As most of you know, I live in South Thomaston, and have over the years served as both a South Thomaston town administrator and selectboard member. I have also held several other municipal positions, including serving on the OHSTT Cooperative Board several years ago.

I had hoped to attend your meeting on Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup>, but as I have to be at another meeting in Waldoboro at 6:00 PM, I'm afraid I probably won't be able to make it. Consequently I am writing you this email hoping it might be included under item 6 of your agenda.

Let me start by saying that when I left as Interim Administrator in South Thomaston about two months ago, it appeared to me that there were only two options available for post 2018 solid waste processing and disposal. The Municipal Review Committee's (MRC) proposed Fiberight plant and the current option, PERC. It also appeared to me, based on the MRC/Fiberight presentation meeting held in Thomaston just before I left (where numerous Selectboard and Transfer Station Committee members from the three co-op towns were in attendance) that there was a general consensus that the only viable option was MRC/Fiberight.

As I understand it, a third option is now under consideration, that being EcoMaine in Portland. I was very recently informed by one Transfer Station Committee member that a presentation regarding EcoMaine has been scheduled for Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> in Thomaston. While I have absolutely no issue with an EcoMaine option being evaluated, I would like to offer a few thoughts for your consideration.

First, I have heard it said, and read in at least one newspaper article, that we are about half way between EcoMaine and the proposed Fiberight plant, so transportation costs, which are a significant part of the overall equation, should not be impacted. And we are indeed about half way.

But the key word here is "about". In actuality, according to Google maps, the Buttermilk Drive transfer station is 59.7 miles from the Fiberight plant and 80.5 miles from EcoMaine. That's an increase of nearly 80 miles per round trip. Fuel is relatively cheap now, but.... And is that environmentally sound?

Time wise it is 1 hour and 26 minutes from the Fiberight plant and 1 hour and 35 minutes from EcoMaine. That's an increase of 18 minutes per round trip. But that's if you travel Route 1. Our heaviest run frequency is in the summer, and I'm sure you have all heard of a Town called Wiscasset?

If you bypass Wiscasset, the round trip time increases to 3 hours and 40 minutes per trip, an increase of nearly an hour per trip. So I'm not so sure I agree that transportation costs won't be impacted

Also, a recent article in the Courier Gazette by Chelsea Avirett's, who was addressing Rockland's evaluation of its post 2018 disposal options, states that MRC/Fiberwright option will eliminate a communities' ability to reduce waste as a community. I have heard others voice this concern as well. However, that was not what I heard at the Thomaston presentation. Thinking that I might have heard wrong, I called MRC Executive Director Greg Louder. He confirmed that that is simply not true. He noted that unlike the current PERC contract, there is no GAT, the acronym for Guaranteed Annual Tonnage.

Greg went on to tell me the MRC learned from years of experience that the GAT was unpopular and viewed as being at cross purposes with reduction, reuse and recycling and that the MRC understands it has no place in any post 2018 plan. Greg then stated, and I quote, "that any community that signs on to the MRC/Fiberwright option will have all the freedom in the world to reduce its waste as it sees fit." My review of the current proposed agreements between the municipalities and MRC, while admittedly cursory, found no such GAT language.

Thirdly, I like the Fiberwright plan. As you all know hopper waste will be combed over at the Fiberwright plant and a second level of recyclables will be removed, over and above what is done locally. This will remove a very significant additional percentage from the waste stream, it will of course vary depending on the makeup of the hopper waste from the different transfer stations.

Then the heavy organics, including food scraps and soiled/wet paper, that can't be easily recycled, will be removed and fed into an aerobic digester to create gas, which will be sold. These organics make up a significant percentage of the total waste stream, 25 to 40 percent I am told.

Both PERC and EcoMaine will continue to incinerate the hopper waste. In other words, burning plastics and wet paper to boiled water out of the organics, so most everything will then burn. Wet paper and food waste is a very poor fuel. And unless we are prepared to get really serious about recycling, and the research shows that that means pay per bag, it will basically be business as usual, the only question will be if it is done at EcoMaine instead of PERC.

I know EcoMaine has a great reputation for working with communities to upgrade local recycling and composting programs, but getting the organics out of the waste stream locally is a major challenge. The best programs have moderate success rates, and typically require significant expenditures. And the challenge is exacerbated in areas with lots of restaurants, hotels/inns, vacation rentals, etc.

The other thing I like about staying with the MRC, is that the MRC is us. As you all know the MRC is a nonprofit organization comprised of the 180+/- member municipalities.... which, by the way, has served us very well for the past 25 plus years.

The MRC Board of Directors is elected by the member cities and towns and is comprised of local municipal officials. I'm sure most of you are aware that, Jim Gurrea, Manager of the MidCoast Solid Waste Cooperative in Rockport is on the MRC's board.

The MRC's mission and priorities are set by the member municipalities. We, the cities and towns, collectively, can change the course, if we don't like the direction. We pilot the ship, we are not simply passengers, as we would be with PERC and Eco Maine.

**To my mind, this is a critical piece of information, and for some reason it seems to be omitted from any articles or reports that I have read regarding the post 2018 options.**

**I understand that Fiberright, the company that will build and operate the plant, is a private company. But the MRC, again all of us, will own the land (and related infrastructure) upon which the plant sits. This puts us in a powerful position.**

**To be sure, there are risks, but I believe the MRC plan, our plan, that our elected Board of Directors and staff have spend the last several years developing, is the right choice, both from an environmental and financial perspective. I think it is an exciting opportunity. It is a chance to advance our statewide solid waste disposal system where reduction, reuse and recycling rates have basically remained stagnant for years.**

**Thank You**

**John A. Spear**

**There was also correspondence from Scott Johnson and Beverly St. Clair:**

**Dave felt Scott had misunderstood the conversation and felt shut out, he said it was not an illegal meeting.**

**Skip wondered how we should respond.**

**Jan thought there should be a response and hopes that Paul's phone call explained any issues.**

**Ron felt Scott was troubled by being named in the letter regarding a price increase for the prison. Bruce said he would put together a response and send it to the board for their input.**

**Peter's email response to John Spear: (email copied without corrections)**

***John, I would not send that email to anyone as it has some bad errors in it. For example, check you milage difference computation***

***I would be glad to talk to you about them anytime.***

***I can talk much faster than I can type.***

***Regards, Pete Lammert***

***691-2900***

Jan said he felt the email was premature and said the conversation began at the caucus. Peter said his response was only pointing out his (John's) mistakes. Bruce asked Jan to respond and to write on behalf of the board and not as a solitary person unless that is noted in the email.

Peter said he has correspondence to Val Blastow (Thomaston town manager) from Peter and back on board recommendations of length of contracts every three years. Our vote (the board) is a straw vote and meant to send recommendations but cannot make decisions.

"This board has decisively decided to recommend...." Means the board has to come to a consensus. Jan would like recommendations for his March 29<sup>th</sup> town meeting.

The next meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> needs to make the decision on the disposal contract.

**Peter's email re the prison.** He feels they should be charged proportionally and \$147,000 is the figure he comes up with. This is \$13,000 less than what was billed. Peter said he went through the budget line by line of overhead to reach this figure. Peter said he had issues with the population numbers and Dave said the figures came from census numbers received from the prison.

Dave spoke of the budget determinations made in December and fees any other comments should have been aired at that time. Dave said he used 800 tonnage from the prison. He would like to get the actual figures. Peter read off the figures he got from Pine Tree.

Dave said if the 800 tonnage number is incorrect we should correct for that. "We went back and reviewed our work" and it came up with a correct figure. I looks like the 800 tonnage figure was total tonnage and not just the prison.

Ron said they had not been paying their fair share for a long time and were being "unjustly enriched" (sic, Paul)

Using the new figures to total 800 tons vs. earlier the prison would owe a new amount of \$125,192. There was discussion of using population vs. tonnage.

Motion was made to adjourn 10 p.m.: Jan 1<sup>st</sup> , Peter 2<sup>nd</sup> , all approved.

The next meeting was set for March 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at the Owls Head Town Hall.