

## Minutes

### NWSWD Board of Supervisors Meeting and Organizational Meeting of the Board.

June 3, 2020

The Board of Supervisors of the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District held their regularly scheduled board meeting and its Annual Organizational Meeting on June 3, 2020 at 158 Morse Drive Georgia, VT at 6:30 PM.

Chairman Al Voegele called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

#### Supervisors Present:

Jennifer Bright, Enosburg  
Buermann, Bob – So. Hero  
Danielle Choiniere - Alburgh  
David Clark, - Fletcher  
Doremus, Mark - Bakersfield  
Fegard, Charen - Berkshire  
Green, Tim - Richford

Kade, Barry - Montgomery  
Lambert, Paul - Georgia  
Leitz, Tom - St. Albans City  
Richards, Jim - No. Hero  
Studebaker, Hugh - Franklin  
Tibbits, Jaime - Fairfield  
Voegele, Al - St. Albans Town

#### Supervisors Absent:

Anderson, Terry - Isle La Motte  
Kemsley, Mike - Grand Isle  
St. Francis, April - Highgate  
Micheli, Carlo - Swanton

#### Guests:

Tim Jones, Tech Environmental/Purpose Energy  
Eric Fitch, Purpose Energy  
Dave O'Keefe, Purpose Energy  
Chip Dillon, Purpose Energy

#### Others Present:

John Leddy, Executive Director  
Pam Bolster, Business Manager

### Full Board Meeting

**1) Agenda Review-Additions/Deletions:** No Changes, Additions or Deletions.

**2) Vote: Minutes of the February 5, 2020 NWSWD Board Meeting:**

Mr. Voegele requested a motion to accept the minutes of February 5, 2020 as presented. Mr. Kade made the motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Clark seconded. Mr. Richards asked for an amendment as he was shown as not present and was at the meeting. All were in favor with the amended minutes and the motion passed. One abstention from Mr. Green - not present

**3) Public Comment: None**

**4) New Business:**

**a) Tim Jones from Tech Environmental and PurposeEnergy – St. Albans: Inclusion of "The Saint" a new anaerobic digester facility in the NWSWD's Solid Waste Implementation Plan. Possible Vote.**

Tim Jones from Tech Environmental and PurposeEnergy was introduced to give a presentation regarding the inclusion of "The Saint", a proposed anaerobic digester facility in the NWSWD's Solid Waste Implementation Plan. Mr. Jones was in attendance along with Eric Fitch, Dave O'Keefe and Chip Dillon of PurposeEnergy. They wish to develop this project at the Industrial Park in St. Albans and were there to present the project to the NWSWD requesting the District include the proposed facility in their Solid Waste Implementation Plan. This is needed so they may meet the requirements of their Solid Waste Certification application to the State which they hope to complete in late June.

Mr. Jones explained the project involves a 1 megawatt facility that will receive and process food and beverage manufacturing process residuals. They will not accept waste such as manure or septage. They stated that the IWMEA process checks for PCB's and other harmful chemicals and as the solids for years have shown no alarming levels of anything that they are now de-regulated.

He stated it is advantageous to work with them as they have a pre-treatment discharge permit which requires discharge regulation from the EPA and/or ANR, particularly phosphorous.

Mr. Fitch the founder of Purpose Energy said they are an industrial wastewater treatment company that started as a renewable energy firm. Their first project in so Burlington takes biproduct from Magic Hat reducing it to methane. They are now developing an anaerobic digester in Middlebury and have rights to land in the St. Albans industrial park next to Ben & Jerry's. The Primary Feed stock Sources currently included within the region will be Ben & Jerry's, Callebaut Chocolate, and a hauler in Franklin County that currently hauls high concentration chocolate water out of the area. Both solids and liquids will be produced. They work with ag communities that grow row crops providing them replenishment phosphorus that is normally purchased from Morocco and could now will keep it local. The thermal energy produced will be purchased by Ben & Jerry's Facility who can purchase it for the same price as natural gas.

Mr. Kade questioned the nutritional value of the end product going to agriculture for fertilizer. Mr. Jones stated that it is roughly 6% nitrogen, 5% P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, and Potassium and that when sent to a farm for application they are given a report of full disclosure. Product can be approved for organic growing.

The facility will be fully enclosed and uses a sealed tank system. The gas made goes to an engine that turns a generator. Some food waste accepted will require de-packaging. Casella is a partner who is installing a de-packaging plant to prepare the waste prior to their process. There will be an emission stack and an emergency flare on the building. Leakage control was discussed though nothing in the tanks are toxic and can be used as a fertilizer. Any chemicals used in the process are stored in separate controlled tanks. Emergency procedures were discussed. Noise & Odors of the facility was questioned. They stated that Ben & Jerry's Facility drowns out any noise they may make and as the process is self-contained odors are not an issue.

The anaerobic digester itself is made of an epoxy coated carbon steel.

Benefits stated to the St. Albans area include, Bio-gas generation, re-use of materials, local material management taking trucks off the roads, phosphorus control, and that it will be servicing local businesses.

Mr. Clark questioned waste diversion measurement and Mr. Jones said that everything coming in and going out is measured but is not calculated for waste diversion, where would the raw product normally go? But stated it is something they may be able to develop.

Mr. Leddy explained to the PurposeEnergy Group that the board would discuss their proposal and let them know.

Discussion amongst the board noted the need to do the due diligence necessary and to collect some additional information including contact to other host communities (South Burlington and Middlebury) to gather information about the process. Mr. Leddy reviewed relevant parts of our by-laws for plan approval, with board discussion. The SWIP amendment process was discussed. Diversion was explored, they could be asked to provide totals of the de-packaged waste with the question being how much of this is truly being diverted? Would the board object to the project even if the diversion numbers were low? Is the project a positive anyway? Are the benefits of transportation reduction, waste heat, phosphorous capture, etc. economically and environmentally smart decisions? Is the technology sound? Is there any exposure to the District by including this in our SWIP? It was noted the operation seems very clean. Mr. Buermann noted that the waste generated within the region is currently going somewhere else, if we can take care of it within the region then it is the responsible thing to do. After hearing no real negatives, the board decided to speak with So Burl and Middlebury and have the executive committee meet to vote.

**Vote:** Mr. Voegle asked for a motion. Mr. Kade made the motion to assign the executive committee to review the information collected in speaking with the host communities of Middlebury and South Burlington and to make the final decision. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. Mr. Leitz abstains from the votes on this project due to a conflict.

## **b) Human Resource services for the NWSWD.**

Mr. Leddy stated that a couple of recent personnel issues have arisen that have created questions and the need to review our personnel policies. Mr. Voegele suggested consulting with Karen Stackpole during which specific issues were discussed but also a review of our current policies. Mr. Leddy would like to consult with either Stackpole's firm to rewrite the policies and to explore use of a firm to utilize for certain personnel issues and to review and keep our policies up to date, review benefit structures etc. Proposals for this will be requested. Though no vote is necessary Mr. Leddy wished for the board's approval which was given. Options will be presented to the board but John can accept the proposal he believes is in the District's best interest.

## **5) Old Business:**

### **a) Directors Report:**

Mr. Leddy on gave an update on current operations stating that the District is currently moving from shut down phase into its re-opening phase. The administrative offices are now re-opened to public with two administrative staff in the office at one time. The District has recalled all furloughed staff and put in place all necessary and required safety practices for customers and employees. All materials are now being accepted at open facilities that they accepted pre-Corona. Drop Off Sites are accepting two cars for service at a time and will be monitored for traffic flow issues. It is anticipated the St. Albans site will re-open by the end of June. E-Waste at Bakersfield is the exception for product acceptance due to box repair issues but the box will be swapped out. Composting will be reviewed later by Ms. Bolster.

Mr. Leddy discussed the Bakersfield Drop Off Site plans noting that they found the alternative site was only available for a few years and that there was an opportunity to re-align how the current site operates. The District proposal moves our containers further from the road up tight to the building removing NWSWD operations from the path of the construction project. This would provide District savings and it is believed, a good solution.

Mr. Leddy noted the completion of the Montgomery certification and Mr. Kade asked about the site neighbor who has voiced concerns about the site asking if any of her concerns been met.

Mr. Leddy replied that yes there has been communication between the neighbor and the district and that the District has addressed blowing trash, controlled traffic to keep it away from her right away, and moved the port o let out of her line of site. We have not built fencing at this point but will be getting to that now that construction season is in swing.

Mr. Leddy reported to the board that he had received a call from the town of Richford. They have decided/voted to suspend their curbside collection in the old village area in 2021. They have requested a drop off site in their area. Mr. Green, the Richford Representative believes it would be a profitable site, that it could be disastrous situation if something is not provided. He said he could start discussions with the select board about potential locations with possibilities already identified. Discussion ensued and will continue. Bakersfield user data was discussed and conducting a survey that included where users are coming from.

Green up day discussion was initiated by Mr. Clark of Fletcher who experienced disposal difficulties. The memo sent from the District indicated the town crew would take the trash to Highgate but they did not accept it and their driver did not have any cash to pay. John said possibly it was unclear in the memo but towns were supposed to call first so we could make arrangements. He also noted that in that memo he said that the district would be paying for all tires and only had about 50 tires come in so far. Mr. Voegele noted that in our last meeting we allocated 10K to tires but due to Covid and the delay of Green Up Day many things have been delayed. He hopes the board would re-allocate this money for next year. Mr. Leddy suggested that allowing a certain amount for tires per town and asking them to be brought in as they are collected rather than holding them until green up day would be much easier to manage operationally.

### **b) Finance Report:**

Ms. Bolster stated the current cash position as stable but is watching it closely. She noted the new On-line payment system for customers as well as the new paperless invoicing system. She is working on the terminal at the Georgia drop off site to enable credit card payments. She noted Corona related expenses to date at approximately \$3500.00 but that many supplies were still on backorder and Personnel Expenses for furloughed staff who we paid for about month at approximately \$ 8000.00 FEMA and other program reimbursement possibilities were explored. She explained FFCRA (Families First Corona Response Act) developed under the FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) and though we're not required to follow FMLA, FFCRA is a requirement. Though are allowed furlough reasons fell slightly outside of regulations it's something that could still be required and we have fulfilled our requirements if this were the case. Furloughed staff return was discussed, who is coming back and who is not. Ms. Bolster noted that expenditures are coming in relating to the infrastructure grant and redesign of the GA site. A little under 5K to date and that these are not budget related funds, this is coming out of capital maintenance funds previously approved. She noted bond payments are done for the fiscal year and that the last business loan payment securing NWSWD trucks is done. The District has no other loans now other than the bond. She noted a new board member Mr. Kittell from Sheldon who was not at the meeting but hopefully will be able to attend next time. She brought up on the screen the composting comparison she prepared showing the decreases in commercial composting since the onslaught of corona, detailing the totes collected as well as the revenue losses. She noted the 53% decrease in business from March to April and the 17% decrease from April to May. As well she noted the decreases for this period against 2019. Things will start to increase as business starts to resume and though the schools have been a big loss it happened about 2.5 months earlier than when we would lose them anyway. Surcharge analysis screen was brought up. She reviewed noting the minimal decreases and in some cases increases- up in March by 3%, April down 4.35%, then reviewed the expectations for May & June. She accrued for the P&L for June using a figures based on a 5% decrease for May and June both of which she does not have the reports for from Casellas at this time. She reviewed the Drop Off Site Trash Income using a comparison sheet that showed the decreases in drop off site income March – May and in comparison to 2019. There was a 15.34% decrease over last year. She reviewed the Profit & Loss with the accrual through June showing the expectation for Fiscal Year End. Reviewing most line items both income and expense with some discussion and concluded that we should still show a good surplus. Outstanding accounts receivable was reviewed.

## **6) Other Business:**

### **a) Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board:**

Mr. Voegele requested Mr. Leddy to proceed with nominations. Mr. Leitz nominated Albin Voegele as Chairman. Mr. Clark moved to close nominations, Mr. Kade seconded. All in favor and nominations were closed. Mr. Leddy requested a vote. All were in favor of electing Albin Voegele for a one year term as Chairman. He asked for Vice Chair nominations. Mr. Lambert nominated Jaime Tibbits for Vice Chair. Mr. Kade moved to close the nominations. Mr. Leitz seconded. Vote was taken, all were in favor of electing Jaime Tibbits as Vice Chair. Mr. Voegele asked for nominations for Treasurer. Mr. Kade nominated John Leddy. Mr. Leitz made a motion to close nominations, motion seconded by Mr. Green. Vote taken, all in favor of electing John Leddy as Treasurer. Mr. Richards nominated Pam Bolster as District Clerk. Motion made to close nominations by Ms. Tibbits. Vote to elect Pam Bolster as Clerk occurred, all were in favor of electing Ms. Bolster as clerk. Committee assignments will occur at a later meeting.

Meeting schedule discussion: regular schedule reviewed. Meetings will be held in August, October, November, December, February, April and June, with Committee Meetings held as necessary. No full board meetings are held in July, September, January, March, or May.

Discussion occurred about the zoom meeting format and it was agreed that it worked really well and will be a part of future meetings. The board had suggestions to address any potential issues that some members may experience due to connectivity issues though it is possible to phone in as well. Mr. Clark asked though that occasionally we will be able to resume in person meetings.

Board Adjourned 9:17 PM