

LUZERNE COUNTY

SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #6

DATE: Tuesday, December 22, 2020

6:00 p.m. - via ZOOM

SWAC COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Chris Perry** - County Council member on SWAC

**Kendra Radle** - County Council member on SWAC

**Matthew Vough** - County Council member on SWAC

**Beth DeNardi** - Recycling Coordinator

**Eddie O'Neill** - Operational Services Director

**Matt Jones** - Planning Commission Director

**Butch Frati** - Wilkes-Barre City

**John Hambrose** - Waste Management

**John J. Wood, P.E.**, Project Engineer/SWAC Consultant

**Romilda Crocamo, Esq.** -  
Luzerne County Chief Solicitor

\*Meeting reported and transcribed by  
Angela Sallemi, RMR, CRR

1 MR. PERRY: Let's get started. I call the  
2 meeting to order. Let's do the *Pledge of Allegiance*  
3 and a moment of silence.

4 (*Pledge of Allegiance* was recited followed  
5 by a moment of silence.)

6 (Roll call of the council members was taken  
7 at which Kendra Radle, Matt Vough and Chris Perry were  
8 present.)

9 (There being no additions or deletions to  
10 the meeting agenda, a motion was made by council  
11 member Vough to adopt the agenda, seconded by council  
12 member Radle and approved by unanimous vote.)

13 MR. PERRY: No. 1 on the agenda. Discussion  
14 on the rejection of the initial submission of the  
15 final draft to Luzerne County Council. I'll ask  
16 Attorney Crocamo to address that.

17 MS. CROCAMO: Good evening, everyone. I'm  
18 just going to recap what transpired at the last county  
19 council meeting to advise why the plan was not  
20 adopted. There are three main reasons.

21 The first reason is that it was submitted to  
22 council and not voted upon within the required 60 days  
23 of the act.

24 Also, the committee that reviewed the plan  
25 that was submitted to county council, that committee

1 was not organized under the Home Rule Charter with the  
2 acceptance of county council.

3 Moreover, any meetings that the committee  
4 had, to my research, were not publicized, and notice  
5 wasn't given, which could raise a Sunshine Act  
6 violation.

7 So given that the plan was not adopted by  
8 council, we are now in Section 504 of the state act,  
9 which requires that we advise why the plan was not  
10 adopted, and that's why we are here today.

11 We now have a committee that was approved by  
12 county council, and we are going forward from there.

13 That's it.

14 MR. PERRY: Thank you, Romilda. I  
15 appreciate that.

16 Looking at the bullet points, let's save the  
17 discussion on the approval process for after No. 2 in  
18 the agenda.

19 As Attorney Crocamo pointed out, the  
20 committee was ratified on December 15th, at the last  
21 meeting, and myself, Matt Vough and Kendra Radle were  
22 placed on it, and we joined 14 other people.

23 It's nice for the three of us to join a  
24 committee that's already completed 640 pages of work.  
25 I commend you for that, and I thank Ed and Beth for

1 trying to get us up to speed and provide us a lot of  
2 information since this committee was formed.

3 We three council members are still in the  
4 learning process, and we're going to lean a lot on the  
5 other 14 people, or people that are here from the  
6 committee, to bring us up to speed. If we have some  
7 questions to ask later on, and I'm sure you'll have  
8 all the answers for us.

9 And the next bullet point, this meeting was  
10 advertised. And according to Mr. O'Neill, this is the  
11 fourth meeting of our advisory committee.

12 Let's go down to No. 2 and a general  
13 discussion on the final draft. I'm going to turn this  
14 over to Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Wood to give us a summary  
15 of what's going on. Obviously, it's 640 pages long,  
16 but tell us something about that. Also, address a  
17 little bit about the ordinance, which is probably the  
18 teeth of whole plan itself. And that's something that  
19 we'll be voting on coming up along with the whole plan  
20 itself.

21 So Mr. O'Neill, I'll turn it over to you,  
22 Ed, to highlight what's going on.

23 MR. O'NEILL: Thank you, Mr. Perry. I did  
24 want to allow Mr. Wood an opportunity to speak for a  
25 few minutes. As he had mentioned, you know, they were

1 the consultant that was brought on to help put this  
2 plan together. You know, a bulk of the work was done  
3 by the consulting firm, along with input from Beth and  
4 myself and, of course, the members of the Solid Waste  
5 Advisory Committee.

6 But I asked John to briefly go through a  
7 short time frame of, you know, where we started and  
8 bring us to date to where we are today. It's not  
9 really a summary of the plan so to speak, it's more of  
10 a timeline of what we have done since we got together  
11 and started the production of this draft.

12 So if I can hand it over to John, and then I  
13 guess I could speak to the ordinance upon his  
14 completion of that summary.

15 John.

16 MR. WOOD: So two pieces to the plan itself.  
17 Within Pennsylvania, the solid waste plans really  
18 started back in the late '80s or early '90s when there  
19 was a lack of landfill space, or an apparent lack of  
20 landfill space. So the primary purpose of the plan is  
21 to demonstrate that the county has capacity to dispose  
22 of solid waste for the 10-year planning period, the  
23 next ten years; the 10-year planning period that's  
24 addressed in the plan. And that's what this plan  
25 does.

1           This plan is very consistent with prior  
2 plans in that you rely on local facilities, local  
3 privately-owned facilities. We have completed a  
4 procurement process, or a statement of interest, where  
5 the local landfills and transfer stations have agreed  
6 to a contract to provide this capacity for the next  
7 ten years. So that aspect of it is well-defined and  
8 has been completed.

9           As for the plan itself, we actually started  
10 back in October of 2018. And then in July of this  
11 year, we had a draft plan. You know, we had met with  
12 the SWAC several times, developed a plan, developed a  
13 solicitation of interest and identified the private  
14 landfills and private transfer stations. And back in  
15 July, we had a draft copy of the plan that went out  
16 for a 90-day public comment period.

17           At that time, it was advertised in the  
18 newspaper twice in mid July. And then it was sent to  
19 the Department of Environmental Protection, each of  
20 the municipalities within the county, as well as the  
21 planning department. There was also a hard copy that  
22 was kept in the county records building. So that was  
23 the initial comment period.

24           And then in September, there was a public  
25 hearing that was held in the county EMA building for

1 questions and comments on the draft plan. There were  
2 about eight people, I believe, that attended that  
3 meeting. We then had a second hearing in October,  
4 October 6th, and that was a virtual meeting.

5 Then following that, after the plan had been  
6 out there with the municipalities, that's when it was  
7 submitted to the county council for their approval.  
8 And then, as was discussed earlier, the intent is that  
9 it's supposed to be approved within a 60-day period.

10 The next step, once county council approves  
11 this, is the plan will be sent to the municipalities  
12 and to DEP for their final approval, and we have to  
13 send that out ten days after council adopts it. And  
14 then, you know, in the process of ratification, each  
15 municipality has 90 days to act on the plan.

16 If a municipality does not act, it is  
17 assumed that the plan is ratified. If they do act,  
18 they submit a copy of that resolution back to the  
19 county. So that's the process of where we are now  
20 and what's left to be done in order to get this plan  
21 accepted by DEP.

22 We have had conversations, ongoing  
23 conversations, with DEP. They've provided some  
24 comments, nothing substantial.

25 And I know, Eddie, you were talking with

1       them earlier, late last week, I believe. And they  
2       haven't raised any concerns, and we don't see any  
3       issues with the DEP approval process.

4               MR. O'NEILL: That's correct, John. I spoke  
5       with DEP as recently as yesterday.

6               MR. WOOD: Okay.

7               MR. PERRY: Okay, John. Thanks.

8               Anybody have any questions for John on his  
9       presentation?

10              MS. RADLE: Yes, Mr. Perry; it's Kendra.  
11       Can I ask a question?

12              MR. PERRY: Sure.

13              MS. RADLE: Mr. Wood, you said on July 19th,  
14       you guys came up with a draft plan, and then it was  
15       put out for a 90-day public comment or was advertised  
16       in the paper. Just wondering if there was any  
17       feedback that you guys got during that 90-day public  
18       comment period. Or even during the public hearings,  
19       did you get any feedback? Did the draft change at  
20       that point? Or is the draft that we're looking at now  
21       the same plan that went out originally on July 19th?

22              MR. WOOD: We did not receive any  
23       substantial comments during either one of those  
24       periods. We did receive some minor comments from SWAC  
25       members, and there were some minor updates in some of



1 the numbers because at this point, we had revised a  
2 couple of the numbers because we had updated tonnage  
3 information. So there was no material change to the  
4 plan from the initial version from July. There were  
5 no material changes to the plan, really, since July.

6 SWAC members had been providing comments and  
7 advice throughout the process. So that's really who  
8 we've received the primary comments from.

9 MS. RADLE: Thank you.

10 MR. PERRY: Anyone else?

11 Mr. O'Neill, do you want to give us a little  
12 overview of the ordinance that we are also going to be  
13 asked to approve. I mean, that kind of has a lot of  
14 teeth to the whole situation. Could you address that  
15 a little bit for us.

16 MR. O'NEILL: Yes, Mr. Perry. As part of  
17 the plan, you know, what we do is we enter into  
18 agreements with the landfills. And as part of those  
19 agreements, there are fees that are collected on a per  
20 tonnage basis for municipal base that is taken to each  
21 of them respectively.

22 That money is then returned to the county  
23 through the solid waste management recycling office  
24 and basically provides the means for it to operate,  
25 including salaries and all of the incidental costs

1 that go into the programs that we run, the  
2 advertising, some reimbursements that we offer to the  
3 municipalities for holding collections on a local  
4 level.

5 So all of that and everything within the  
6 department, as you council members are probably well  
7 aware, is funded entirely through those fees. So I  
8 think -- and I'm kind of speaking out of my opinion of  
9 what I've learned throughout this process, and it is  
10 my first time through the process -- that the  
11 ordinance is basically providing a bit of an insurance  
12 policy, if you will, to those landfills to say, hey,  
13 we are contracting with you, you are going to be  
14 providing us fees. And in return for that, you know,  
15 we're offering you some level of confidence that  
16 everything is going to go to you collectively as a  
17 group.

18 So it's a way of saying, in exchange for  
19 those fees to operate and to work with us on our plan  
20 throughout that 10-year period, we're going to do  
21 everything within our means to make sure that that  
22 municipal waste is taken to one of the designated  
23 participating sites. So that's essentially what I see  
24 the role of the ordinance being in our plan.

25 Obviously, any ordinance requires an

1 enforcement mechanism, and all of that information is  
2 listed within the context of the ordinance.

3 MR. PERRY: Mr. O'Neill, how is that going  
4 to be enforced? How do you enforce that if someone,  
5 some hauler, takes it to another landfill? How do you  
6 enforce the ordinance itself?

7 MR. O'NEILL: Well, I'm going to try to give  
8 you a short version of it. Obviously, there are a  
9 number of ways it can be enforced or, I should say,  
10 monitored. Obviously, if we had the staff, and that  
11 has been done in the past to my understanding, you  
12 know, there are times when people could go out and  
13 make spot checks, and that's been done in the past.

14 And I think it's done by other counties that  
15 have large departments and personnel to do that. We  
16 are, unfortunately, not in that position.

17 The way we had discussed trying to monitor  
18 this as closely as possible was that DEP requires all  
19 of the landfills to report all of the municipal waste  
20 that is taken to those respective landfills to DEP.  
21 So we can go on, and that information is available on  
22 their website. And we can spot check that on occasion  
23 to see if any of the landfills are receiving Luzerne  
24 County municipal waste that should not be. In the  
25 event that we do find someone that is, in fact, going

1 outside of the so-called network, we could report  
2 that.

3 Now, the tricky part of this is to find out  
4 who that is; that might be a little bit more  
5 challenging. We can try and contact the landfills and  
6 simply request information, tickets for those specific  
7 volumes that were reported from Luzerne County. And  
8 that would probably be the primary or the initial way  
9 to try and get that information.

10 So if we were to obtain that information  
11 about, let's just call them ABC Waste Hauler, we would  
12 notify them in writing. And I believe that perhaps  
13 Romilda could speak a little bit more to the process  
14 that would ensue thereafter.

15 MS. CROCAMO: Sure. What would happen then  
16 is that we would have to get an originating agency  
17 identifier from the state police, the Pennsylvania  
18 State Police, Commonwealth Law Enforcement Network.  
19 We would do that. We would then get specific  
20 citations created. And then as issues arise, we would  
21 issue the citation and file it with the magistrate.

22 I spoke with Eddie, and the Office of Law  
23 will assist Eddie or Beth or whoever is designated to  
24 process those citations at the magistrate level.

25 MR. PERRY: Thanks, Ed. Another question I

1 have. Getting back to the disposal facilities and to  
2 the transfer stations, I see you sent out a  
3 solicitation of interest; right?

4 MR. O'NEILL: Correct.

5 MR. PERRY: And these are the ones that  
6 responded to it?

7 MR. O'NEILL: Correct.

8 MR. PERRY: Okay. It's pretty obvious that  
9 the closest landfill here is Keystone, and the closest  
10 recycling facility is in Hanover here. And in  
11 Hazleton, they'd probably go down to Tamaqua. Okay;  
12 that makes a whole lot of sense.

13 MR. WOOD: Well, I think that from what  
14 Eddie said, yes, it's easy to understand where some of  
15 these haulers go if they report it. But from an  
16 economic standpoint, they have to drive very far to  
17 get away from one of these landfills that's not in  
18 your plan.

19 MR. PERRY: I could see that, John; you're  
20 absolutely right.

21 MR. WOOD: You're driving to the other side  
22 of Williamsport; you know, you're driving to New  
23 Jersey, or something like that. So because of how  
24 this is structured, you know, all of the local  
25 facilities are in your plan.

1           So, you know, there's the legal side of it,  
2           and then there's sort of the economic side of it.

3           MR. HAMBROSE: My name is John Hambrose. I  
4           work for Waste Management and Alliance Landfill, which  
5           is operated by our company and is in Taylor. And  
6           that's probably closer to most of Luzerne County than  
7           even Keystone Landfill.

8           MR. PERRY: Oh, I did not know that.  
9           Interesting. Thank you.

10          Okay. Do we have any other questions?

11          MS. RADLE: I have a quick questions. It's  
12          Kendra Radle. I'm not sure who can answer it, but I  
13          will ask and see where I get a good response.

14          So you mentioned that refunds from those  
15          fees that we collect can be issued back to the  
16          municipalities, but I read somewhere in the plan that  
17          I think it's, like, only 41 municipalities out of 76,  
18          so that there's 35 that don't. But anyway, it says  
19          that they offer residential access to recycle  
20          collection.

21          So do we want the rest of the municipalities  
22          to also offer that? Are we doing anything to  
23          encourage them to do that? Are the people who aren't  
24          offering the residential access to this recycling, are  
25          they also eligible to get refunds from the fees? Just

1       some clarification. Like, I genuinely -- as Mr. Perry  
2       said in the beginning, this is a learning process for  
3       me, so I don't know if we're okay with just the 41  
4       participating, or if we need them all to participate.  
5       Just a question on that.

6               MR. O'NEILL: Ms. Radle, if you wouldn't  
7       mind, I'd like to ask Beth DeNardi to address that  
8       question, if that's acceptable.

9               MS. DeNARDI: To answer your question, the  
10       programs that we offer are not only limited to the 41  
11       towns but all 76. And the programs that we offer are  
12       paper-shredding; should they decide to do an  
13       electronics recycling collection, we also offer an  
14       educational recycling grant.

15              Anything that we offer from the solid waste  
16       recycling office goes right across the board. It's  
17       for all 76 towns if they want to take advantage of it,  
18       and they're all volunteer programs.

19              MS. RADLE: Thank you, Mr. DeNardi.

20              MR. PERRY: Beth, I see that the state has a  
21       35 percent recycling goal. Does that mean percentage  
22       of municipalities? Like 35 percent out of 76  
23       municipalities?

24              Is that what they mean, John?

25              MR. WOOD: There's two pieces to this. The

1 first is that is on a weight basis. So the goal is 35  
2 percent by weight, and Luzerne County is achieving  
3 that. You're running about 36 percent, so slightly  
4 above the goal, which is better than quite a few  
5 counties here in Pennsylvania.

6 As to whether or not a municipality has to  
7 recycle, that is based on population. There are  
8 mandated and nonmandated communities. Mandated is if  
9 a community has more than 10,000 people, the  
10 municipality is required to offer recycling.

11 MR. PERRY: Thanks, John.

12 MR. WOOD: So within Luzerne County, there  
13 are some that are required to offer it; others do it  
14 voluntarily.

15 MR. PERRY: Thanks, John. I did not know  
16 that.

17 Any other questions?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. PERRY: Attorney Crocamo, I'd like to go  
20 back to that bullet point that we skipped in No. 1,  
21 discussion of the approval process. What is the plan  
22 going forward?

23 MS. CROCAMO: Going forward, we will have to  
24 have another public hearing, and it will be submitted  
25 then to county council for their approval.



1 MR. PERRY: And do we have 45 days to do  
2 this on that extension; is that correct?

3 MS. CROCAMO: Yes, yes. We have 45 days  
4 left of a 75-day extension, yes.

5 MR. PERRY: Okay. Any other questions?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. URBAN: This is Steve Urban. Are you  
8 going to have public comment over these things?

9 MR. PERRY: Yes, we're definitely going to  
10 have it, Steve. So just hold off for a second, and I  
11 will do that in about one minute. Okay, Steve,

12 MR. URBAN: Thank you.

13 MR. PERRY: I need a motion to move the  
14 Solid Waste Management Plan with the recommendation  
15 for approval to the next Luzerne County Council  
16 meeting.

17 MR. VOUGH: I can make that motion. Matt  
18 Vough.

19 MR. PERRY: Okay, Matt.

20 I need a second.

21 MR. RADLE: I'll second the motion. Kendra.

22 MR. PERRY: All in favor say aye.

23 (Unanimous aye vote was taken.)

24 MR. PERRY: Okay. Let's move to public  
25 comment.

1 Steve, are you there?

2 MR. URBAN: I am.

3 MR. PERRY: Okay. You're on.

4 MR. URBAN: So pretty much with the plan  
5 itself, I just want to, again, make people aware that  
6 I had brought up some emails and actually emailed the  
7 county staff regarding this plan because I took issue  
8 with some of it because, you know, A, it wasn't done  
9 publicly. I know you guys are addressing that now.

10 But, I mean, as far as Mr. Wood, I'm  
11 assuming you're the consultant; correct?

12 MR. WOOD: That is correct; yes, sir.

13 MR. URBAN: Did the county do an RFP to hire  
14 you?

15 MR. WOOD: Yes, they did an RFP in 2018 to  
16 select a consultant for this project, that's correct,

17 MR. URBAN: Okay. I don't think council was  
18 notified back then about it.

19 Anyway, as far as the 10-year plan, I mean,  
20 I looked at part of it. And I think, you know, I had  
21 brought a couple issues up during county council  
22 meetings. You know, like, Lancaster seems to have a  
23 good solid waste plan, especially when it comes to,  
24 like, e-recycling.

25 I don't think our plan actually goes far

1 enough when it comes to bulky items like mattresses,  
2 televisions, appliances; you know, things that are  
3 huge to get rid of that end up like maybe over the  
4 side of an embankment.

5 I understand it's just basically very loose,  
6 and it says, okay, maybe municipalities can do it on  
7 an as-needed basis, but it doesn't go far enough for  
8 the next decade. Is there any way to expand upon  
9 that?

10 I mean, it appears that Lancaster has a  
11 pretty good grip on what they do down there. Why  
12 can't we maybe model something after them?

13 MS. DeNARDI: This is Beth speaking, if I  
14 may, Mr. Urban. In reference to Lancaster, Lancaster  
15 has their own facility. Lancaster also has an  
16 incinerator, and Lancaster has a landfill.

17 Now, with their drop-off facility, they have  
18 a staff of five people, I believe it is. The reason  
19 they are allowed to do an ongoing program is because  
20 they are trying to keep the electronics out and/or  
21 anything else that should not be in the incinerator.

22 I know that they have an ongoing program. I  
23 know they have a very successful program. Please keep  
24 in mind, again, they have a building. They have a  
25 staff. They have an incinerator. And they have a

1 landfill. They do not want the electronics to go into  
2 the incinerator, and they do not want the electronics  
3 to go into the landfill, which is why they have a  
4 building for drop-off. Thank you.

5 MR. URBAN: Okay. I mean, I only see that  
6 being problematic, you know, in Luzerne County. Small  
7 electronics, I mean, you could smash them up and  
8 putting them in, like, a Wilkes-Barre blue bag or  
9 something. You know, even though you're not supposed  
10 to throw them in there, it's a way to get rid of them,  
11 and they end up in the landfill.

12 So, you know, we're kind of defeating the  
13 purpose. In some respects, I don't think, like I  
14 said, we don't go far enough as far as recycling  
15 certain items and getting other recyclers involved, in  
16 a sense.

17 And then you had mentioned, or Mr. O'Neill,  
18 I think, mentioned that part of your budget -- or the  
19 monies that are collected go to paying for your  
20 salaries. Was that notated when we went through the  
21 budget process a couple weeks ago? You know, that  
22 that revenue actually covers certain positions in that  
23 office? I don't remember anybody going over that and  
24 stating that during the budget process.

25 MR. O'NEILL: I don't believe that it was

1       stated. That's been the case here for as long as I'm  
2       aware. I don't know that that was specifically to be  
3       discussed at the meeting. But if that's something  
4       that should be brought up, I could certainly make sure  
5       it's included in subsequent budget years.

6               MR. URBAN: I mean, if we're going to pass  
7       anything with salaries in there, then if part of the  
8       salary is being reimbursed through revenue, we would  
9       like to know that as county council. You know, just  
10      like human services gets reimbursed part of their  
11      salaries and whatnot.

12             So I don't think -- I mean, we're looking  
13      for transparency in government and also the funding  
14      mechanism by which staff is actually compensated. So,  
15      I think, in the future, that would be good for us to  
16      offer more clarity as county council.

17             MR. O'NEILL: Okay.

18             MR. URBAN: And then one last point. The  
19      other thing that I had was I also brought up the  
20      penalty in there, in that particular ordinance. And I  
21      had actually copied part of Act 101 and sent it along.  
22      So, you know, I kind of wanted to know, like, who was  
23      actually going to enforce it and write the citation.  
24      I heard you'd have to get the PSP involved.

25             MS. CROCAMO: We have to get their

1 certification so that we can write the citation.

2 MR. URBAN: Right, okay. So you have to get  
3 their approval first?

4 MS. CROCAMO: Yes, correct. And it's been  
5 done. Shannon Crake has done this in the past in  
6 another capacity, and so she understands the process,  
7 and she will be assigned to work with Beth and Eddie  
8 on that.

9 MR. URBAN: Okay. So that one paragraph,  
10 that penalty paragraph in the actual ordinance itself,  
11 is that going to change or be mirrored with Act 101?

12 MS. CROCAMO: It doesn't have to. Actually,  
13 there's a provision in the act, in the state act, that  
14 indicates that municipalities and counties cannot  
15 enact penalties that are less severe. So the penalty  
16 that's in the ordinance is more severe in that it's  
17 more severe than the initial penalties and, you know,  
18 it is ongoing.

19 So the state act allows for the local  
20 municipalities in the counties to change the penalty,  
21 and that's what was done in this act.

22 MR. URBAN: Yeah, because I was looking at,  
23 you know, the penalties actually increase if there's a  
24 second or third offense; and you're actually rarely  
25 looking at one penalty amount and up to 30 days

1 imprisonment. I think it's up to a \$2500 fine and 30  
2 days' imprisonment. Whereas, the act itself has  
3 additional language in there for subsequent  
4 infractions or violations.

5 MS. CROCAMO: Correct. But the penalty in  
6 the ordinance is more severe for the initial act. So  
7 there's an argument that could be said that, you know,  
8 put the penalty higher upfront. But the state act  
9 does allow for a difference in the penalty.

10 MR. URBAN: Okay. Can you later on forward  
11 that section of the act so I can take a look at it.

12 MS. CROCAMO: Sure, absolutely.

13 MR. URBAN: Okay. Thank you.

14 MR. PERRY: Anything else for public  
15 comment?

16 MR. RICHARD MANTA: Richard Manta, public  
17 comment.

18 MR. PERRY: Of course. Go ahead.

19 MR. MANTA: Okay. Thank you. Thank you  
20 very much.

21 Listening to this whole thing, and I've been  
22 aware of a lot of things going on in Hanover. I have  
23 six questions, and I'll ask the questions, and then  
24 I'll step back and I'll listen to the answers. Just  
25 bear with me.

1           Do you think it's fair that only eight  
2 people came out, eight people out of all the people in  
3 the county to come out to a meeting like this? It's  
4 so important.

5           And I'm going to bounce back and forth.  
6 It's the same thing that Wyoming Valley Sanitary  
7 Authority did. All right.

8           Is it fair to the municipality that, if they  
9 say no, that they're going to be counted anyway? All  
10 right. That's the second question.

11          Is it fair to have a virtual meeting where  
12 senior citizens and some of the public cannot go to a  
13 virtual meeting because they don't have the computers,  
14 they don't have means to get on a virtual meeting? I  
15 have a cellphone luckily that I can get on a virtual  
16 meeting. So that's three.

17          They're following the same pattern as  
18 Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority followed where they  
19 had a meeting, they didn't let all the public know.  
20 They had very little participation in the meeting,  
21 which was good because they had it at 1:00 o'clock in  
22 the afternoon when everybody was working, and they  
23 rammed it through with the rain tax, all right.

24          Now, another point that I have, the fifth  
25 question is what they said about the -- I'll call them



1       dumps. So they want to monopolize a particular  
2       landfill, and I don't think that's right. I mean,  
3       everybody should have -- if you have a landfill,  
4       everybody should participate in it. And that way, it  
5       would spread the wealth around to some of these  
6       smaller places that would need money to stay open.  
7       The big landfill up in Scranton has a lot of money,  
8       and we know who backs that.

9                   And then the last question: Is it going to  
10       be a fee or an increase to the taxpayers of Luzerne  
11       County like the rainwater fee, tax, whatever you want  
12       to call that? And they're pulling stuff down into the  
13       Hanover Area. Again, Sammy Guesto is going to have  
14       his fingers tied into this, and I don't feel that  
15       that's very fair.

16                   Thank you very much, and I'll sit back and  
17       listen to the answers.

18                   MR. PERRY: Thanks, Richard.

19                   MR. MANTA: Thank you.

20                   MR. PERRY: Okay. Who wants to answer those  
21       questions?

22                   MS. CROCAMO: Well, I can speak to the  
23       public hearing. You know, Mr. Manta, I wish we could  
24       be meeting in person right now. We're in the middle  
25       of a pandemic. We're abiding by the rules of the

1 Office of Open Records and the Sunshine Act as best we  
2 can.

3 And for the people, the eight people that  
4 did attend the public meeting, good for them. I wish  
5 that there would be a lot more people on this meeting  
6 and every other meeting that we have.

7 I'm not sure that we can force the public to  
8 come to the meetings, but we are making them public  
9 and allowing for the interested parties and the public  
10 to make whatever statements or recommendations that  
11 they want.

12 MR. WOOD: For a matter a history, we have  
13 had two public meetings. They were advertised in the  
14 newspaper. The first public meeting was in person.  
15 The second public meeting was held virtually, and that  
16 was because of the time period.

17 So there have been two public hearings  
18 already, both of which were advertised in the  
19 newspaper. And, you know, like I said, they were held  
20 in September and October.

21 MR. PERRY: Mr. Manta, I'll take the one  
22 about the landfills and give everybody an equal  
23 opportunity.

24 The county sent out what's called a  
25 solicitation of interest, SOI. And Beth, you can

1 answer it. How many landfills and recycling centers  
2 did you send it to? A lot of them? All of them or  
3 what?

4 MR. MANTA: Again, I would say that there's  
5 some other recycling areas in the Wyoming Valley. I'm  
6 sorry to interrupt you, Chris.

7 MR. PERRY: That's okay.

8 MR. MANTA: But there's some recycling areas  
9 that are in the valley, that, you know, they could use  
10 the recycling material also. And, I mean, you don't  
11 want to make a monopoly out of this because, I mean,  
12 it's going to turn around and bite you in the rear  
13 end. Because people are going to say, Well, look,  
14 Luzerne County is making a monopoly out of this;  
15 they're only selling the material to one scrap yard.  
16 I mean, there's a lot of scrap yards in the area. I'm  
17 sorry; go ahead.

18 MR. WOOD: This is John Wood. When we  
19 prepared the solicitation of interest, it was sent to  
20 -- and let's separate solid waste garbage from  
21 recyclables. Okay. So when we prepared the  
22 solicitation of interest that was advertised in the  
23 newspaper, it was sent to all of the facilities that  
24 were in your prior plan. And it was advertised in two  
25 trade journals, solid waste trade journals. So it was

1 widely advertised.

2 Right at this point, as for being a monopoly  
3 for solid waste, we actually have seven landfills that  
4 are in the plan. So it is not a monopoly. There are  
5 seven landfills within the plan.

6 As for recycling, recycling is available as  
7 a free market service. The plan does not commit the  
8 waste, nor does it assure disposal of recyclables to a  
9 specific recycling center or any specific recycling  
10 center.

11 I think if you look in the plan, what you  
12 see is identification of recycling facilities that are  
13 in the area, but it doesn't commit -- we do not have a  
14 contract with the recycling centers, so that is  
15 completely a free market for recyclables.

16 So the waste can go to any of the landfills,  
17 any of the seven that are in the plan or any of the  
18 three transfer stations in the plan. There is no  
19 monopoly there. And then recyclables, that's a free  
20 market because that's considered a product. That's a  
21 free market; that can go to any recycler anywhere. I  
22 think we have four identified within the plan, but  
23 that's just ones that are located within Luzerne  
24 County. It can go anywhere.

25 MR. MANTA: Okay. Then the last question

1 was: What is this going to cost the taxpayers?

2 MR. WOOD: At this point, the fees for trash  
3 collection and recycling services are charged either  
4 by individual municipalities; or individual households  
5 contract directly with the haulers themselves. So the  
6 county is not billing for trash collection.

7 The facilities, the landfills that are in  
8 the plan, are the same facilities that are already in  
9 the plan. So the county doesn't necessarily charge  
10 for trash collection or recycling services, so that's  
11 really beyond what the county would be charging or  
12 collecting on.

13 MR. MANTA: So then it's a no; it's not  
14 going to cost the county taxpayers any more than what  
15 they're already doing now, right?

16 MR. WOOD: The only difference is currently  
17 the fee that is charged by the landfills is \$2 per  
18 ton. That fee is going to increase to \$2.80 per ton.  
19 So it's an 80 cent increase that will be charged for  
20 waste that's disposed of.

21 A household, if you try to do that on a  
22 household basis, a household generates half of a ton a  
23 year, so maybe 40 cents, 50 cents a year. That's the  
24 only change in this program that I can see that  
25 changes from what you're currently at.

1 MR. MANTA: Okay. Thank you very much.

2 MR. PERRY: Thanks for your interest, Rich.  
3 Anyone else?

4 MR. KNAPP: Mr. Perry, Ron Knapp.

5 MR. PERRY: Yeah, Ron. Go ahead.

6 MR. KNAPP: I want to ask Attorney Romilda  
7 Crocamo a question regarding the virtual meetings.

8 Now, this is probably aloof to the  
9 conversation we're talking about, but I was going to  
10 address this also during a regular Luzerne County  
11 Council meeting in regards to...

12 MR. PERRY: Ron, Ron, excuse me, one second.  
13 Ron, stick to what we're talking about here, if you  
14 can.

15 MR. KNAPP: Mr. Perry...

16 MR. PERRY: Yes.

17 MR. KNAPP: I appreciate seeing your face  
18 and hearing your voice. I say I appreciate seeing  
19 your face because if I had a hearing impairment, the  
20 circumstance with a person being hearing impaired,  
21 it's important that the public, during these  
22 conferences or these phone calls, they'd be able to  
23 read lips.

24 For instance, Governor Wolf and his house  
25 secretary, transparency; they have a sign language

1 person letting people with hearing impairments be able  
2 to appreciate and understand what's going on during  
3 the meetings.

4 As I said, this is off from the subject, but  
5 I appreciate Mr. Wood, John Wood, and Steve and  
6 yourself for being visually seen tonight because for  
7 the taxpayer, as a representative for us, a fiduciary,  
8 it's good for the taxpayers to see who is representing  
9 us.

10 So as I stated, it is a bit of aloof, but I  
11 think this is something that it's important to be  
12 raised because I don't see an end to these  
13 teleconferences, this platform coming to an end any  
14 time soon.

15 And what you're basically doing is we are  
16 disenfranchising somebody with a disability with a  
17 hearing impairment. And that's something that we  
18 shouldn't do, so that's why I ask Attorney Romilda  
19 Crocamo to just answer the question.

20 Shouldn't we be addressing something of this  
21 nature? As I said, I'm going to bring it up during a  
22 Luzerne County Council meeting, regular meeting. But  
23 this is something that's been pressing on me about  
24 this. So I was wondering if you could answer that for  
25 me. Thank you.

1 MS. CROCAMO: Ron, can I call you Ron? Is  
2 that all right?

3 MR. KNAPP: Absolutely.

4 MS. CROCAMO: Okay. The way we are  
5 conducting our meetings is in conformity with state  
6 law. And we are doing the best that we can. I think  
7 it's a brilliant idea to have a sign language  
8 interpreter available to translate for the meetings,  
9 and I will look into that personally. I think that's  
10 a very good idea.

11 There's no requirement that people have  
12 their cameras on. We could ask that be done. Council  
13 can approve that if they want that as part of their  
14 rules at their meetings. But what I will do  
15 definitely is look into the possibility of a sign  
16 language interpreter.

17 MR. KNAPP: I appreciate you doing that.  
18 And, again, it's something that everyone -- and this  
19 is not to knock anybody, you know, we've been doing  
20 this for so long, and I've been participating at the  
21 meetings for so long, it just pressed on me because  
22 there are disabled people, and the people that  
23 represent us on council, I felt that they should have  
24 the courtesy to show themselves. And so that way  
25 their lips can be moving when they're talking, and so



1 that might alleviate the hearing impairment issue with  
2 lip-reading. Okay.

3 MS. CROCAMO: It's a very good idea.

4 MR. PERRY: Thanks, Ron.

5 MR. WOOD: One other item as it relates to  
6 the Solid Waste Plan. Each of the Solid Waste Plans  
7 has had a stenographer. And within the Solid Waste  
8 Plan, in the appendix, is a written record of each of  
9 those meetings.

10 So as part of this process, we have had a  
11 court reporter there. This is being noted today also,  
12 and that will be included in the plan. So we do have  
13 a written record of all of the meetings that SWAC had  
14 conducted.

15 MR. PERRY: Thank you, John.

16 Anybody else from the public?

17 MR. GRIFFITH: Chris, it's Walter.

18 MR. PERRY: Go ahead, Walter. Thanks for  
19 coming on.

20 MR. GRIFFITH: No problem. I just have a  
21 couple quick questions on the advisory committee.

22 On the web page, is there a place where we  
23 can find who sits on the advisory committee for the  
24 Solid Waste Committee? Is that list posted somewhere  
25 on our web page, by chance?

1                   And the other question is, and just from  
2                   what I gathered from the last couple meetings about  
3                   who sits on the Solid Waste Committee or advisory  
4                   board other than the newly-created ad hoc committee,  
5                   I'm a little bit -- not concerned; I think the people  
6                   who sit on the committee are certainly qualified. I  
7                   know Butch Frati from Wilkes-Barre city very well. I  
8                   think he's very well-qualified; and others, I know  
9                   them.

10                   So I'm not trying to say that I don't think  
11                   they would be capable to sit on the committee.  
12                   However, I think it would probably serve the committee  
13                   as well or better if you would have people from the  
14                   recycling areas, like possibly Waste Reduction. I  
15                   think Mr. Valenti is the guy who's in charge of that.  
16                   Maybe he could be on the committee to provide any  
17                   input.

18                   Possibly, Emil Tabit from Tabit's Automobile  
19                   Scrap Yard might be a resource to try and help with  
20                   recycling of automobile tires and things of that  
21                   nature. And I didn't get a chance to look through the  
22                   entire document. I'm sure Beth is on the line, and  
23                   she could direct me.

24                   Are there places in that solid waste plan --  
25                   or maybe that's not the right place to look. Are

1       there places in that plan that tell people where they  
2       could dispose of automobile waste oil? Do we have  
3       places where people could take used tires if the  
4       county is not doing a recycling plan? Or recycled  
5       TVs?

6                Are there places in that document where  
7       citizenry can go out and take a look and say, hey, I  
8       have six gallons of waste oil from my car. I've been  
9       changing my oil; I just don't know where to get rid of  
10      this junk.

11              So the next thing they do, the next possible  
12      thing they would do, is dump it down the drain because  
13      they don't really know where to take it, knowing full  
14      well that there are garages that will take it and burn  
15      it for free, and it wouldn't cost them anything.

16              But if they would be provided that  
17      information, that may be a tool for them to eliminate  
18      some of the solid waste dumping. I know it's a big  
19      concern for the group I go out with picking up litter  
20      and trash. Most of the stuff that we pick up along  
21      the highways is not so much paper, and it's not so  
22      much paper cups, although that is a goodly amount,  
23      it's the used tires, the mattresses, the big household  
24      good items that people just, for some reason or  
25      another, feel it's appropriate to take it and toss it

1 off the back of their pickup truck down the highway.  
2 And maybe it's because they just don't know what else  
3 to do with it.

4 And I wonder if that document gives any of  
5 that information. If you could share that with me,  
6 I'd appreciate it. Thank you. That's all I have.

7 Thanks, Chris.

8 MR. PERRY: Good idea, Walter.

9 MR. WOOD: This is John Wood. A list of the  
10 SWAC members -- the SWAC members are acknowledged on  
11 the first page of the plan. In addition, SWAC members  
12 are identified in the meeting notes from Meeting 1.

13 There is also, within the plan, I believe  
14 it's Appendix C, there is a residential recycling  
15 guide that the department has prepared, and that  
16 recycling guide identifies where different materials  
17 can be taken, including tires, waste oil, gasoline, as  
18 well as conventional recyclables.

19 So that residential recycling guide is  
20 included in the plan, in Appendix C, I believe. It's  
21 also available -- Beth, you have that available on  
22 hard copy within the department?

23 MS. DeNARDI: Yes, that's correct.

24 MR. PERRY: Thanks, John.

25 Hey, Beth, I have in front of me the Luzerne

1 County Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Perhaps you  
2 could send that to Walter. As a matter of fact, you  
3 could send it to maybe all of the council members.  
4 Will that be all right?

5 MS. DeNARDI: I'm sorry; what exactly is it  
6 you wanted me to send?

7 MR. PERRY: Walter wanted a list of who's on  
8 the advisory committee. Well, I have a copy right in  
9 front of me, so I think I got it from you. If you  
10 could send it to Walter and to all of the council  
11 members, I think that would be a good idea.

12 MS. DeNARDI: Very good.

13 MR. PERRY: Thanks, Beth, I appreciate it.

14 MR. GRIFFITH: On Appendix C -- excuse me,  
15 Chris; I don't mean to jump in.

16 MR. PERRY: Sure. Go ahead.

17 MR. GRIFFITH: On Appendix C, I'm looking  
18 for those facilities. And I think that that's helpful  
19 information for some of the people.

20 You know, I'm trying to find where on your  
21 document is Appendix C. So I'll continue to look  
22 through and see if there are any other questions I  
23 have on that. But, again, I looked at the advisory  
24 committee. If Beth wants to send it, that's fine. I  
25 looked at that; that's on, like, the second or third

1 page of your document. And I don't see folks like  
2 Mr. Valenti from Waste Reduction on the committee.

3 And, again, I'm not saying that the people  
4 who are on the committee aren't adequate. But I think  
5 to get a broader spectrum of input, it might be  
6 helpful to have those other people participate. But,  
7 again, I think that that would give maybe a better  
8 flavor of how people could, you know, be better able  
9 to dispose of specific items; particularly batteries  
10 for cars or, you know, automobile parts or possibly a  
11 whole automobile. Some people don't even know what to  
12 do with that, so it sits in their backyard.

13 But I appreciate the input. I appreciate  
14 the meeting. And I'll look through that appendix. If  
15 I have any other questions, if I could jump in, I'll  
16 jump in, Chris. Thank you very much.

17 MR. PERRY: Thanks, Walter. And we'll be  
18 bringing this to council. So I would think that  
19 Mr. Wood would be at our next meeting that we have,  
20 and if we don't have the questions now, we could bring  
21 them up and ask them at the next meeting that we have  
22 of county council.

23 MR. MANTA: Mr. Perry, Rich Manta again. I  
24 have one more question.

25 MR. PERRY: Real quick, Mr. Manta.

1 MR. MANTA: Okay, real quick. ABC Hauling  
2 is down in Kingston. And he's a new recycling center  
3 and new scrap reclaiming. He's a brand new business.  
4 That would be a good place for them to, you know, help  
5 the new businesses get onboard. Okay.

6 MR. PERRY: Thanks, Richard.

7 MR. MANTA: Thank you much.

8 MR. PERRY: Anybody else? Any more public  
9 comment?

10 MR. URBAN: One more quick question.

11 MR. PERRY: Yes, Steve.

12 MR. URBAN: Just thinking about something,  
13 too. How about, like, medicinal waste? You know,  
14 like, prescription pills, things like that, that you  
15 really don't want to throw in the trash to harm the  
16 environment. Does that solid waste plan cover  
17 anything like that? Or have we thought outside of the  
18 box to recycle something like medicines?

19 MR. PERRY: John, what do you think?

20 MR. WOOD: The plan does address that. You  
21 know, you can divide that into sort of medical waste,  
22 which is highly regulated and is not recyclable. And  
23 then you have the pharmaceutical waste. And a lot of  
24 the pharmaceutical -- the safe disposal of  
25 pharmaceuticals is really, because a lot of them are

1 controlled substances, a lot of that is handled  
2 through the police departments -- the police  
3 departments, sheriffs' offices, PSP, all have drop  
4 boxes, as well as many of the pharmacies have drop  
5 boxes to use that so that it's safe handling of the  
6 material.

7 But medical waste, in and by itself, either  
8 by FDA or by DEP, is really not recyclable.

9 MR. PERRY: Thanks, John.

10 Anything else? Any more public comment?  
11 Any questions from the committee?

12 (No response.)

13 MR. VOUGH: I move to adjourn.

14 MR. PERRY: Okay. Second on that?

15 MS. RADLE: Second, Kendra.

16 MR. PERRY: All in favor.

17 MS. CROCAMO: Excuse me. Was there a motion  
18 that the committee send this to county council?

19 MR. PERRY: Yes.

20 MS. CROCAMO: All right. I was getting  
21 static; I just want to make sure.

22 MR. PERRY: We took care of that, Romilda.  
23 Thank you. Okay. So all in favor.

24 (A unanimous aye vote was taken to adjourn  
25 the meeting at 7:03 p.m.)