

LUZERNE COUNTY

SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #5

DATE: Monday, October 5, 2020
5:00 p.m.

PLACE: Teleconference conducted via
Zoom platform

PROJECT ENGINEER:

John J. Wood, P.E.
Senior Managing Engineer
Barton & Loguidice
3901 Hartzdale Drive
Suite 101
Camp Hill, PA 17011-7843

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:

Eddie O'Neill - Luzerne County Director of Operations

Beth DeNardi - Luzerne County Recycling Coordinator

Bob Price - Dupont Borough Councilman

Sam Guesto - Hanover Township Municipal Manager

Tom Kashatus - Private Citizen, Newport Township

Ryan Longfoot - Dallas Area Municipal Authority

Mary Malone - Hazleton Chamber of Commerce

Linda Zsoke - White Haven Manager

*Meeting reported and transcribed by
Angela Sallemi, RPR, CRR

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1 MR. WOOD: So this is John Wood. I'm a
 2 consultant with the engineering firm Barton & Loguidice.
 3 And I'm project manager for preparation of the Solid
 4 Waste Management Plan that we prepared with assistance
 5 from the county for Luzerne County.
 6 Some of you may have met Ashley Duncan early on.
 7 She had started on the project, but she has since left
 8 the firm. So a couple months ago, I took over for
 9 Ashley, and we've since been working on the plan. We
 10 have had several meetings with the SWAC members and have
 11 sent copies of the plan and made the plan available
 12 through the website to the municipalities within Luzerne
 13 County.
 14 So the purpose of this meeting is to review the
 15 plan and solicit any comments that people may have,
 16 either SWAC members, municipalities, or members of the
 17 public, any comments that they may have on the plan.
 18 So, like I said, this is John Wood. If we can
 19 go through and introduce everyone else on the call.
 20 MS. DeNARDI: Beth DeNardi, Luzerne County
 21 Recycling Coordinator.
 22 MR. O'NEILL: Eddie O'Neill, Luzerne County
 23 Operations.
 24 MR. GUESTO: Sam Guesto, Hanover Township
 25 Municipal Manager.

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1 MS. MALONE: Mary Malone, Hazleton Chamber of
 2 Commerce.
 3 MR. PRICE: Bob Price, Dupont Borough
 4 Councilman.
 5 MR. LONGFOOT: Ryan Longfoot, Dallas Area
 6 Municipal Authority.
 7 MS. SZOKE: Linda Szoke, White Haven Borough
 8 Manager.
 9 MR. WOOD: Also joining us is Angela Sallemi.
 10 She is our court reporter, so she will be recording and
 11 preparing notes of this meeting, which will then be
 12 supported as part of this plan.
 13 MS. DeNARDI: We just ask if anybody has a
 14 question, that you please speak loudly and clearly so
 15 that Angela can hear you, okay.
 16 MR. WOOD: So what I'd like to do tonight is
 17 just give you a real quick outline of the plan; where we
 18 stand from a process standpoint, as well as what the
 19 next steps will be, specifically focusing on the plan,
 20 as well as the agreements that have been prepared with
 21 the disposal facilities that are identified in the plan.
 22 So the plan has 13 chapters. The first chapter
 23 talks about the waste -- how much waste, what type of
 24 waste is generated within Luzerne County.
 25 The second chapter refers to the existing

4

1 facilities. So what facilities are currently being used
 2 by the municipalities within Luzerne.
 3 With Chapter 3, what we do in that section is we
 4 look at what the anticipated future population would be.
 5 And based on the amount of waste that historically has
 6 been generated, we estimate how much waste capacity is
 7 needed for the next ten years. And that's really the
 8 primary purpose of this plan is to assure that the
 9 county has disposal capacity for the next ten years.
 10 Chapter 4 documents the current recycling
 11 efforts.
 12 Chapter 5 talks about some of the options that
 13 are available for waste collection, as well as
 14 recycling.
 15 Chapter 6 discusses the actual facilities that
 16 will be used in the future.
 17 Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13, a lot of
 18 those are procedural with respect to this is a county
 19 plan. It does not overstep; it does not impede the
 20 ability for private firms to continue to do business.
 21 This is a responsibility, and it is a function of the
 22 county to prepare this plan.
 23 There are copies of ordinances and resolutions
 24 that are included in those sections. And then we do
 25 document the public participation process.

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1 So any questions on the organization?
 2 (No response.)
 3 So, first of all, I think there was a plan
 4 prepared in 2001. There was a plan that was updated in
 5 2010. And now, this is our 2020/2021 update.
 6 I think one of the main things to keep in mind
 7 with this plan is that the county is going to continue
 8 to use private landfills and private transfer stations
 9 in the region to manage their waste.
 10 So what we're looking at is an opportunity, or
 11 really looking at a system that's going to continue to
 12 do what's currently happening. We're not looking at
 13 implementation of any big programs. We're not looking
 14 at changing how the responsibility between the towns and
 15 the boroughs is set up with the county. The boroughs
 16 and townships, etc., will still have their own programs
 17 and be managing their collectors independently.
 18 So if we look at the amount of waste that's
 19 generated, there's roughly 250,000 tons of waste that's
 20 generated every year within Luzerne County. In
 21 addition, there's 135,000 tons of material that's
 22 actually recycled.
 23 So the total waste generation for Luzerne County
 24 is around 400,000 tons, of which 138,000 tons is
 25 recycled. So that winds up yielding a recycling

1 calculation, or amount of material diverted, of about 36
2 percent. So that's where we are on a tonnage
3 standpoint.

4 The facilities that are currently used, there
5 are six. There are six landfills that currently have
6 contracts: Alliance Sanitary Landfill; CES,
7 Commonwealth Environmental; Grand Central; Keystone;
8 Pioneer; and Wayne Township or Clinton County Landfill.

9 There are two other landfills that accept
10 residual waste. And residual waste is more of an
11 industrial waste. And those are Phoenix and White
12 Pines.

13 So at this point, over the last couple years,
14 primarily Keystone, Alliance and CES have been accepting
15 the majority of the waste generated in Luzerne County.

16 There are also three transfer stations located
17 near Luzerne County: Lehigh Valley Recycling Transfer,
18 Tamaqua Transfer; and Heap's Container Services. None
19 of them are in Luzerne County. They're in Lehigh,
20 Schuylkill and Columbia Counties.

21 Any questions so far?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. WOOD: So next we looked at how much waste
24 is going to be generated. So I worked with the county,
25 and they provided me with some population projections.

1 And we're looking at roughly 325,000 people in Luzerne
2 County over the next 10-year period.

3 So we took that population, and we looked at how
4 much waste is generated per person. And we came up with
5 projections for the next ten years.

6 And we looked at not just solid waste but also
7 recyclables, sludges, ash, etc. And we came up with
8 these projections. Once we had the projections, we went
9 through a process to obtain disposal capacity for the
10 county. And that was called a solicitation of interest.

11 So we prepared a document, sent it out to the
12 private waste companies. We placed an advertisement in
13 the local paper. We placed advertisements in trade
14 journals, *Waste Advantage*, *The Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

15 And we received responses from six disposal
16 facilities. In addition we received responses from the
17 transfer stations. And we asked them for a commitment
18 on the amount of capacity they would provide. And
19 they're willing to commit about 520,000 tons of capacity
20 per year. And like I said, you're currently generating
21 around 400,000 tons of waste per year. So there is
22 plenty of capacity available from these local regional
23 landfills.

24 There have since been capacity agreements
25 developed with each of these facilities. They're in the

1 process of being executed. And that will then tie up
2 those landfills. They will have committed to provide
3 you with capacity so that you now have assurances, and
4 we can make assurances to the state that the capacity is
5 provided.

6 Any questions or thoughts on the disposal
7 facilities?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. WOOD: Okay. So with respect to recycling,
10 recycling within Pennsylvania is regulated by Act 101.
11 And that Act, based on the population or the population
12 density of the municipality, requires some
13 municipalities to recycle.

14 So there are 76 municipalities within Luzerne
15 County. Of those 76, 14 are required by Act 101 to
16 recycle. Like I said, the total tons recycled is about
17 135,000 tons per year.

18 There are also six yard waste composting sites
19 within Luzerne County. So yard waste, leaf waste, is
20 taken to these facilities, composted, and then either
21 given away or sold as a resource.

22 So we did look at all of the municipalities. We
23 did confirm the population, and those that are mandated
24 are identified. There are many that are not mandated
25 that do have recycling. In fact, most of the

1 municipalities do. And the programs are either curbside
2 where you have curbside collection of recyclables or a
3 drop-off.

4 Like I said, we did look at the population. We
5 did look at population projections to make sure, was
6 there anyone who was close or may, within this time
7 period, exceed and have become mandated. But at this
8 point, there's only 14 that are mandated. So that's the
9 major aspects of the recycling program.

10 So then from a process standpoint, Luzerne
11 County is the signature for the waste disposal capacity
12 agreements with the private firms that have committed.
13 And like I said, it is in the process now of cleaning
14 those agreements up and having them executed for final
15 agreement.

16 Those are really the highlights of the plan. So
17 like I said, in June of this year, the plan was
18 released. There was a 90-day comment period. That
19 comment period ends tomorrow.

20 And then what we're going to do is if we have
21 any comments or any revisions, we'll make those
22 revisions. We'll adopt, and then we'll submit that
23 revised plan to the county manager, county council, for
24 their review. And then the plan will wind up being
25 finalized and then submitted back to the municipalities

1 as a final document; and submitted to DEP, Pennsylvania
2 Department of Environmental Protection, as a final
3 document.

4 There have been a series of SWAC meetings. We
5 did have a public hearing a couple weeks ago with some
6 of the SWAC members. And I see we do have some SWAC
7 members on this call with us again today.

8 So that's sort of an overview of the plan. I
9 think the key aspects are: Operationally, it's not
10 really going to change what's currently happening with
11 the local municipalities responsible for either doing
12 the collection or contracting for the collection; and
13 the continued use of the same facilities that are
14 currently under contract. We just have renewed and
15 updated contracts with those six landfills.

16 Beth, is there anything else in the plan that
17 you wanted to highlight?

18 MS. DeNARDI: John, did you want to talk about
19 the ordinance?

20 MR. WOOD: Sure. There are several ordinances
21 that are going to be passed, one of which is a flow
22 control ordinance. And the flow control ordinances
23 really give the county the ability to direct where the
24 waste is going. So that ties in with the contracts that
25 we're going to have.

1 What that does is that helps the county define
2 that, yes, this is the amount of waste we're going to
3 generate; this is where it's going. But it also gives
4 an assurance to the private waste companies that you do
5 control the waste, and you will have that waste
6 available.

7 So that's been under review. That's been
8 reviewed by the county solicitor. And I think we made
9 some changes to that. So that is one of the ordinances
10 that is in process. And that will go to council later
11 this month, Beth? Or next month?

12 MS. DeNARDI: I'm hoping this month. One thing
13 I wanted to say about the ordinance. We have put
14 together, the office has a simple form for the haulers
15 to just come and fill out. We're asking them to come in
16 and register with us, and we will be giving them a
17 sticker for the side of their vehicle. More or less so
18 that we know how many haulers we have out there, kind of
19 to help us keep track a little bit better of who is
20 hauling in Luzerne County.

21 As I said before, we cannot charge them. That
22 is the state. The state's responsibility is to do that.
23 We just want them to come in and register.

24 If you are hauling for a town, we ask that you
25 please send someone in so that we can give you a sticker

1 for your truck, as well. Again, this is free; no cost
2 at all. We're just trying to get a better handle on who
3 is handling the municipal solid waste in Luzerne County.

4 As John had said earlier, there's really not
5 going to be that much of a change for anyone in anyone's
6 schedules. Everyone has been very supportive of the
7 facilities that we have been using in the past. So I
8 don't think it's going to be that much of a change or an
9 adjustment for anyone when they see the plan.

10 I don't know if anyone has any questions on the
11 ordinance.

12 Eddie, do you have anything to add?

13 MR. O'NEILL: I have nothing to add. I think
14 John did a great job covering the details, going through
15 the plan. I appreciate you bringing up that about the
16 ordinance because that is something that has changed
17 from our current plan, and something that everyone
18 should be aware of. But I have nothing additional to
19 provide.

20 MS. DeNARDI: John.

21 MR. WOOD: No, I think those were the major
22 points. I do appreciate the SWAC members helping us
23 throughout this process and, you know, attending the
24 prior meetings and conference calls and participating in
25 either last week or this week.

1 So it is good, and we appreciate getting
2 feedback for the draft plan, etc.

3 MR. O'NEILL: Yeah, I concur with that, John. I
4 want to thank all the members, as well, on behalf of the
5 county for all their time, participation and stepping up
6 and being part of this process.

7 MR. WOOD: So Mary, Linda, Bob, if you have any
8 questions, we'd be glad to answer them now. If you have
9 any comments you want to get back to us, work with Beth
10 and get them back to Beth. But I think, you know, this
11 has been a good opportunity to continue to reach out to
12 people. It is a little strange trying to do this
13 through COVID, but we do appreciate you calling in
14 tonight.

15 MR. O'NEILL: You know, the purpose of this was
16 to see if there was anyone who had any feedback,
17 comments, that may not have been brought to us during
18 the first public hearing. So it was a great job in
19 summarizing everything.

20 John, thank you again. Beth, for adding the
21 information about the ordinance.

22 But at this point, I just would like to
23 officially see if there's anyone on the call that may
24 have any comments or feedback that you would like to
25 provide on the information that was given tonight.

1 (No response.)
 2 MR. O'NEILL: If there are no comments, Beth,
 3 you can proceed.
 4 MS. DeNARDI: John, could you please give a
 5 better definition of municipal solid waste.
 6 MR. WOOD: Sure. Municipal solid waste is a
 7 little bit confusing sometimes because by definition,
 8 and this is, you know, definition in state regs, as well
 9 as federal regs, it's a type of waste that's not
 10 necessarily generated just by a municipality. So it's
 11 any garbage -- garbage, trash, waste, usually solid --
 12 there are limits of liquid -- usually solid that results
 13 from residential, municipal, commercial or institutional
 14 establishments.
 15 It is not waste that is only from a
 16 municipality, per se. So, White Haven, for example,
 17 it's not limited to just waste that is collected, say,
 18 from White Haven. It's all trash that's collected,
 19 regardless of the generator. It is not just a municipal
 20 generator. That includes commercial, as well as
 21 industrial generators.
 22 MS. DeNARDI: Does it include sludge?
 23 MR. WOOD: Yes. Yes, it does include sludge.
 24 MS. DeNARDI: And waste water?
 25 MR. WOOD: It doesn't include waste water,

1 necessarily. But it does include sludge that's
 2 generated from waste water plants.
 3 MS. DeNARDI: Okay. And what's the difference
 4 between MSW and residual waste?
 5 MR. WOOD: Well, residual waste is defined as
 6 waste that's generated from industrial mining and
 7 agricultural operations that is not hazardous. It has
 8 to be nonhazardous. And, really, in a lot of cases,
 9 that material is generated and disposed of separately
 10 from the trash.
 11 You don't pick it up in a dumpster. You don't
 12 pick it up with a packer truck. You don't pick it up
 13 with a dumpster. So it's usually just one material. It
 14 may be a sludge coming from a paper plant. But it's a
 15 characteristic; really, it's a characteristic. It's
 16 different than what you think of normally when you think
 17 of garbage or refuse or solid waste.
 18 MS. DeNARDI: And who makes the determination,
 19 John, as to whether it's residual waste or municipal
 20 solid waste? Does the landfill do that?
 21 MR. WOOD: Yes.
 22 MS. DeNARDI: Okay.
 23 MR. WOOD: Really, think of the residuals coming
 24 from a heavy industry.
 25 MS. DeNARDI: Okay. Does anyone have any

1 additional questions?
 2 MR. GUESTO: This is Sam Guesto. How are you
 3 doing, John?
 4 MR. WOOD: Good.
 5 MR. GUESTO: John, I just want to note one
 6 change to one of the items in Table 4.1. It's the
 7 facilities that take the recyclables in Luzerne County.
 8 I'm not looking at it currently. But we did have a
 9 change in Hanover Township. Northeast Cartage was sold
 10 to GFL Environmental very recently. And I've actually
 11 met with the local leadership for GFL Environmental
 12 today. So that name has already been incorporated. I
 13 don't know if you want to put that into this plan, or if
 14 it even matters. But I just wanted to let you know so
 15 you knew technically what was going on.
 16 MR. WOOD: Who did they pick up? Was that
 17 Municipal Recovery?
 18 MR. GUESTO: No. They bought Northeast Cartage,
 19 which is a recycling facility.
 20 MR. O'NEILL: I appreciate that, Sam. I think
 21 that would be a good idea to make that change. Do you
 22 have any formal contact information for the company that
 23 you can provide?
 24 MR. GUESTO: Yes, I do. I could do it by email
 25 to Beth tomorrow, if you'd like.

1 MR. O'NEILL: That would be great. Can you do
 2 that? Would you mind.
 3 MR. GUESTO: No, I don't mind all. Absolutely.
 4 MR. O'NEILL: We'll certainly include that.
 5 That would be prudent.
 6 MS. DeNARDI: Thank you.
 7 MR. WOOD: GFL is a Canadian company. And
 8 they're in the process of moving into the U.S. They
 9 have a lot of operations down in the South. They're
 10 beginning to have more operations here in Pennsylvania.
 11 So picking up Northeast Cartage makes sense.
 12 Because of a merger that's occurring within the
 13 industry between Waste Management and Advanced, in other
 14 parts of the state, we're seeing where the new company,
 15 Waste Management new company, is going to have to divest
 16 some of their facilities. But since Advanced doesn't
 17 have anything up in the northeast, I wouldn't expect
 18 that to impact any of your landfills. In the central,
 19 south central and Western Pennsylvania where Advanced
 20 and Waste Management both have landfills, I do expect
 21 them to have to divest some of those. But that deal
 22 hasn't quite closed yet, and they haven't identified
 23 what facilities they're divesting.
 24 But I don't expect anything to happen up in the
 25 northeast. I'd be surprised if anything happened in the

1 northeast because Advanced doesn't have landfills up
2 that way.

3 MS. DeNARDI: Sam, do you happen to know if GFL
4 is going to continue with single-stream as far as
5 recycling goes with the plant?

6 MR. GUESTO: As of today and in our discussions
7 today, they went very well. But, yes, they are going to
8 continue with that at this point. They plan on doing
9 some upgrades to their current recycling capabilities.
10 But, you know, we talked about a couple different
11 things.

12 And right now, most of our municipalities are
13 getting charged from them on a formula basis. But
14 they're going to start to look at maybe giving us
15 something of a set rate for the year so we can budget
16 better. Because it's pretty tough when you don't know
17 what the market is going to be one month to the next.
18 But they're willing to say that they think they could
19 give the municipalities that use them a cost for that.

20 MS. DeNARDI: Excellent. Did they say anything
21 about glass?

22 MR. GUESTO: Well, I brought that up to them.
23 It was interesting. I said to them about the glass.
24 And they're interested, and they actually said that
25 they're going to -- I was going to tell you tomorrow in

1 an email, but I'll just tell you now. They're going to
2 reach out to you.

3 MS. DeNARDI: Perfect. Wonderful. Wonderful.
4 Well, I look forward to hearing from them.

5 MR. GUESTO: Yeah. Like I said, I'm going to
6 give you that information. I'll send it to you and
7 Eddie tomorrow in an email first thing in the morning.

8 MS. DeNARDI: Okay.

9 MR. O'NEILL: Thanks for all that info, Sam.

10 MR. GUESTO: No, problem.

11 MR. WOOD: Sam, did you say that GFL has
12 acquired -- the deal with Northeast has closed?

13 MR. GUESTO: Yes, correct. It's their first
14 recycling plant in Pennsylvania they bought.

15 MR. WOOD: I'm down in Lancaster, and I know
16 they've picked up some collection routes down here
17 recently also.

18 MR. GUESTO: Yeah. I know they talked about,
19 you know, they have a strategy where they're going to
20 keep looking, I guess, for different type of
21 acquisitions. They bought County Waste. I'm pretty
22 sure you probably didn't know that. That's the one that
23 just moved in over the last four years. And then they
24 acquired County Waste, too.

25 MR. WOOD: So Beth, there is one more question

1 we have on the chat here from Mary.

2 MS. DeNARDI: Okay.

3 MR. WOOD: *Beth, you had made a comment early on*
4 *about you had requested an input, but you only got*
5 *response from 5 of 35 companies. What were you looking*
6 *for?*

7 MS. DeNARDI: We put out an industrial recycling
8 guide. Basically, it coincides with the residential
9 recycling guide except with the industrial recycling
10 guide, what we're looking for is companies that will
11 take larger amounts than what municipalities can pick up
12 curbside.

13 For example, if somebody is redoing their house,
14 and they have vinyl siding, is there a company out there
15 that will accept vinyl siding in a larger amount for
16 recycling. It's been several years since we updated the
17 industrial recycling guide. And as I said, when I threw
18 the line out and sent out the information to
19 approximately 35 or 40 businesses, I only heard back
20 from 5.

21 Now, I know that in lieu of the situation that
22 we're all in right now, what with the pandemic and
23 people working and, you know, people not working and
24 restrictions, that it's possible that some of these
25 places may have closed. I'm going to throw the line out

1 again and see if I cannot get a few more businesses that
2 would accept a larger amount from residential customers;
3 anything that they would accept.

4 We have a list of -- gosh, I don't have the list
5 in front of me right now. I'm sorry; I apologize. But
6 it covers anything from oil in water, Antifreeze,
7 batteries, things like that, but more on an industrial
8 level that they would accept.

9 And when I say that, I mean -- I think I'm
10 losing you guys with this. I'm sorry; I apologize.
11 They're hard to find items to recycle. And if I could
12 find companies out there that will take it, that's what
13 we want to do with the industrial recycling guide.

14 So if anyone has any businesses out there that
15 they think may be able to help us out or be interested
16 in getting listed in the guide, please contact me. It's
17 a free listing. I would gladly send them a sheet that
18 they could fill out. As I said, the sheet has quite a
19 bit of items listed. They would only mark off what they
20 can accept for recycling. They don't have to mark
21 everything off. And then we would take it from there.

22 But I'm going to need more than five businesses;
23 that I can tell you. So if anyone has any businesses
24 that they would be willing to send to me, I'll gladly
25 take a look at them. Thank you.

1 MS. MALONE: Beth, this is Mary. I'll give you
2 some at some point tomorrow.

3 MS. DeNARDI: Perfect.

4 MS. MALONE: If there's a way with the chambers
5 in Luzerne County that we could -- if I could get a list
6 of who the companies are in the directory, and then
7 let's see if we can work with all of the chambers
8 regionally to find out either some new ones, or if, in
9 fact, they're still around.

10 MS. DeNARDI: Oh, that would be excellent.
11 Thank you so much.

12 MR. WOOD: I also see, we have a Steve Urban on
13 the call.

14 Steve, do you want to introduce yourself?

15 MR. KASHATUS: You also have Tom Kashatus here
16 from Newport Township. I'm not Steve Urban, but I'm Tom
17 Kashatus.

18 MS. MALONE: This is Mary Malone again. I
19 apologize; I have to hop off. Thank you very much for
20 the information and the presentation.

21 MS. DeNARDI: Thank you Mary. I look forward to
22 hearing from you tomorrow.

23 MR. O'NEILL: Is there anyone else with any
24 comments or information they would like to offer at this
25 time?

1 (No response.)

2 MR. O'NEILL: There being none, I would suggest
3 that we adjourn the hearing.

4 MR. WOOD: Sounds good. Thank you, Eddie.
5 Thank you, everyone, for logging in.

6 MR. O'NEILL: Thank you, again, to the members
7 of the SWAC committee.

8 And, John, we really appreciate all the effort
9 you made in getting us here in light of having to get
10 dropped into it in the middle of the process. So we've
11 all pulled together, and I think we've got a nice end
12 product here that hopefully we can get pushed through
13 for approval and get completed in the early spring of
14 2021.

15 MS. DeNARDI: Perfect. Thank you everyone.
16 Have a great night.

17 (Meeting concluded at 5:43 p.m.)

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