

**MONTGOMERY-OTSEGO-SCHOHARIE SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: February 11, 2005

LOCATION: MOSA Administrative Complex

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donald Lindberg
Charles Buck
Edward Wesnofske
Raymond Halgas
Olga Podmajersky

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Chichester
Melissa Morlang
Terry Bliss
Dennis Sherrill, Vets GM
Press

1. Opening

Chairman Lindberg opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

2. Minutes of Prior Meeting

The minutes of the October 26, 2004 meeting were unanimously approved.

3. Request for Qualifications relative to Oneonta Transfer Station Retrofit

Gilbert Chichester stated that he was charged with finding an organization to work with relative to retrofitting the Oneonta Transfer Station. To that end he issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The RFQ included the issues and concerns raised by the Committee at its October 26, 2004 meeting. In addition the RFQ presented a general overview of the sites operation.

Three firms responded; Weston Solution, Golder Associates and Dvirka and Bartilucci Consulting Engineers. Mr. Chichester asked the committee how they wished to proceed relative to selecting one of the three companies. Edward Wesnofske stated that there were different levels of the three presentations in terms of quality. Mr. Wesnofske felt that two were good and the third was weak. He felt that the two acceptable presenters should be interviewed.

Donald Lindberg questioned who should be involved in the interview process. Raymond Halgas stated that the committee should be involved and felt that the two companies with the best presentations were Golder Associates and Dvirka and Bartilucci.

Charles Buck stated that he liked the Golder presentation the best. His only concern was selecting a company that would subcontract out the work. His experience with construction types of contracts is that many times the lead engineer subcontracts the work and problems result. Edward Wesnofske stated that Golder did indicate that they would partner with ET Environmental. Mr. Buck did not have an issue with a partnership.

Gilbert Chichester reminded the committee that the insurance company had conducted an inspection of the Oneonta Transfer Station close to a month ago. Mr. Chichester felt it important to review the report of the inspection prior to making any major decisions on the retrofit. He felt that the report would be forth coming in the near future.

Raymond Halgas stated that he felt it important for a cost/benefit analysis to be part of the response received from the companies. Knowing the return on our investment is critical. Mr. Halgas' goal is to eliminate one piece of equipment and one staff person. Would the company recommend using the existing building or constructing new? Mr. Halgas felt it important to ask these questions.

Donald Lindberg felt that the first step of the committee is to decide which company they would like to hire.

Gilbert Chichester stated that one question presented in the RFQ was whether or not the current site was adequate to handle all the activities we desire to be handled. Mr. Chichester would like for the company's open and honest response to the question.

Raymond Halgas felt that the companies needed to see the site before they meet with the committee. Gilbert Chichester asked if the committee expected the companies to have all the answers to the questions being asked. Mr. Halgas did not expect them to have the answers. Edward Wesnofske stated that given that the questions are included in the RFQ the companies can go to the site on their own time.

Gilbert Chichester was concerned that the committee was expecting the companies to start work on the project before they were officially engaged. Mr. Halgas felt it important for the companies to have a visual of the site before the committee meets with them. Mr. Chichester stated that the companies have indicated no problem with meeting with the Authority.

Charles Buck asked how specific the committee could be relative to laying out the task at hand. He felt Otsego County's decision on their desire to participate relative to the recycling activities at the station was important. Mr. Chichester stated that if we were too specific up front we would be making decisions without all the information. The RFQ was written such that the options relative to recycling would be identified separately.

Donald Lindberg stated when too many people are involved and giving their point of view as to what they expect it can be difficult to make decisions. He felt that is what happened last year when working with Barton and Loguidice. Gilbert Chichester agreed that engineers get

influenced based on what the committee communicates. Mr. Chichester felt that getting feedback as to the options first is critical to successfully developing plans for modifying the site.

The expectations of the committee relative to what is being asked of the companies before being engaged was further discussed. Gilbert Chichester stated that Golder clearly states in their response that they would meet at the site with staff to get a better understanding of the questions being asked in the RFQ. This is their first step once they are engaged.

Raymond Halgas stated that the committee needed to expand upon the questions raised in the RFQ before a meeting is held with the companies. He stated that the RFQ was written and included questions from a systems point of view.

Edward Wesnofske stated that the committee was thinking of essentially throwing up two companies in the air and seeing how they fall. Mr. Wesnofske felt that maybe it would be better to select one and ask for a cost proposal on completing step one of the process. Raymond Halgas felt that the committee should put a cap on the proposals and ask the two companies to bid.

The committee reviewed the questions being asked in the RFQ. Mr. Halgas raised an issue relative to question one in that it speaks to the recycling activities at the site. He did not feel that it was appropriate to pay for services on reengineering a program that the Authority does not manage. Gilbert Chichester stated that information on the recycling activities and possible alternatives is necessary from a cost/benefit analysis perspective before any decisions could be made. Giving feedback to one of the Authorities partners i.e. Otsego County is positive.

Edward Wesnofske stated that there could be possible funding from DEC for a recycling component of a retrofit. He felt that the value of the facility whether it be publicly or privately owned relates to the efficiency issue. In the future the OTS facility will be handling both streams. If the site does not operate efficiently, a competitor will likely build a facility that is efficient. This fact would reduce the value of the OTS site.

Gilbert Chichester stated that the RFQ also mentioned the issue of possibly separating C&D material from the waste flow. Mr. Chichester is depending on the company hired to have sufficient knowledge of the solid waste industry to know how the site should be retrofitted to handle what may be necessary in the future.

Donald Lindberg stated that one option may be to take down all the existing buildings, use the material for fill and construct a better facility. This could be more cost effective for the Authority and the County may be in need of relocating its existing recycling operation.

Gilbert Chichester mentioned that last week he had looked into the rail system as a means of transportation. The mode of transportation is also an issue that should be considered in the

retrofit process. It may not be cost effective for the Authority's size of operation. If it is not clearly stated in the RFQ it should be something that is considered.

Donald Lindberg responded that he felt the Authority should have its own landfill instead of transporting it across the State. Raymond Halgas stated that the city of Albany will likely need an alternate site based on the current size of its landfill. Gilbert Chichester stated that communities especially in the western part of the state are stopping the siting of landfills regardless of the host community benefit.

Edward Wesnofske stated that he recalled some prior discussion relative to utilizing the existing closed landfills for possible C&D disposal. Gilbert Chichester stated that it may be possible but it has not been thoroughly researched.

Raymond Halgas asked if Dvirka and Bartilucci would prepare something for the Authority prior to being engaged. Donald Lindberg stated that it is not appropriate to ask them to do work for the Authority and not get paid for it.

Melissa Morlang asked the committee what the criteria were for selecting a firm. Was it tied to a cost proposal or was it more about what kind of a product would be produced. During the refinancing project an underwriter needed to be hired. The Authority's approach was to conduct an interview to get a feel for the type of service that would be provided and if the firm seemed to be the type that the Authority could work with. Ms. Morlang felt that the same process should apply to selecting a firm for this project.

The committee agreed that an interview should be conducted but requested that both firms inspect the site prior to the interview. Edward Wesnofske motioned to direct the Executive Director to contact Golder Associates and Dvirka and Bartilucci to inspect the site and establish an interview date. The motion was seconded by Donald Lindberg and unanimously approved. The interviews would be conducted at the main office on the same day with one firm being interviewed from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and the second interview from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

4. Other Business

Northern Transfer Station

Terry Bliss took the floor. Mr. Bliss explained that he had spoken with Mr. Chichester last summer relative to the recycling activities at the Northern Transfer Station. Mr. Bliss does not feel that the County is providing the best service as possible at this location. Adjustments had been made in the past by moving the recycling activity from the upper location of the site to the lower level. This was in response to the safety issue of the stairs and ramp that were being used in the upper level.

Having moved the activity to the lower level the issue of being able to fully utilize the boxes is causing concern. The County is using 40 cubic yard boxes. Because the public is at the same level as the boxes, holes in the sides are being used for material to be deposited. This creates a situation where the one County employee has to climb a ladder to load material in from the top.

Terry Bliss is asking the committee to assist in exploring options for repositioning the boxes so that a ramp could be installed thereby taking advantage of the existing grade differential. Mr. Bliss stated that Mr. Chichester had requested a written proposal taking into consideration all the safety concerns that could be presented. At this time Mr. Bliss was not prepared to present that although he distributed a sketch of his concept.

The committee reviewed the sketch and agreed that it was necessary to go to the Northern Transfer Station on Saturday to see the operation in action.

Gilbert Chichester stated that it would be helpful if the County could implement rules for its employees that are uniform to the rules established for Authority employees. One inconsistency is the issue of the County employee scavenging materials and storing them on-site. Mr. Bliss stated that the county does allow its employee to keep the \$.05 deposit bottles. He stated that the past Wednesday he had been on site and did not feel that any additional scavenging was taking place.

Vets Disposal

Dennis Sherrill, General Manager for Vets Disposal, took the floor and explained that he was recently working for Cassella out of the Boston area and became employed as the General Manager for Vets in January. He has conducted a staffing analysis and has determined that it is necessary to hire an employee to be ultimately responsible for the operation of the recycling activities at the Oneonta Transfer Station. He feels that customer service is a major priority for him.

His current concern is that providing the best customer service, relative to the recycling contract, in the window of time currently available to his staff of 7:00 am to 3:00 pm is not adequate. He requested the committee to revisit the issue. The members of the committee explained that the issue in the past was that doors were broken and the Authority was left to perform the repairs. The Authority agreed to bring the doors into proper operating condition and offered the option to the County to allow for extended hours under the condition that all future door repairs and maintenance was to be paid for by the County. The County asked if Vets wanted to become responsible for all future repairs and at the time they did not. The Authority has retained control over the doors and has eliminated any need for ongoing repairs.

Mr. Sherrill felt that if he was successful in hiring a good employee to be responsible for the recycling contract he would take on the door issue. He stated that he would address the Otsego County Solid Waste Committee at its next meeting.

Pipeline to Amsterdam Wastewater Treatment Plant from ELF

Edward Wesnofske stated that he remembered a possibility for having a direct pipeline from ELF to the Amsterdam Wastewater Treatment Plant. He asked if that was still possible. He knew that BFI was looking into the same issue in that their closed landfill is directly across from the ELF.

Raymond Halgas stated that the current issue is cross connections in the catch basins between street runoff that should be diverted to the river and the city sewer lines. After a heavy rainfall the streets in the West End of the City are flooding and the street run-off is making its way to the treatment plant. This results in a diluted material at the treatment plant that cannot be properly treated before discharging water into the river.

Mr. Halgas stated that the State may take over part of Route 5 and at that time rectify the situation. Until that happens getting a direct pipeline to the Amsterdam Wastewater treatment plant is unlikely. He did not feel that there would be a solution in the near future.

5. Closing

Mr. Buck motioned for the meeting to adjourn at 10:25 a.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wesnofske and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Morlang
Director of Finance and Administration