

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

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**DATE:** April 19, 2005

**LOCATION:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Donald Lindberg  
Edward Wesnofske  
Charles Buck  
Raymond Halgas

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Gilbert Chichester  
Melissa Morlang  
Olga Podmajersky

**1. Opening**

Chairman Lindberg opened the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

**2. Report of Insurance Underwriter Regarding OTS**

The insurance underwriter inspected the Oneonta Transfer Station and made recommendations for improvements to the site. The report is attached hereto.

Gilbert Chichester reported that he had met with staff at the Transfer Station and a proposal was developed to change where the homeowners with bag waste drop off their garbage and recyclables. The plan is to modify the existing pass door on the north side of the transfer building. Concrete blocks would be placed from the corner of the building heading toward the scales as indicated by the pink lines on the attached map. The purple area indicates where the recycling containers would be placed. The blue areas indicate where the concrete pads were to be poured for trailer storage. The green lines indicate the flow of homeowner bagged waste.

Mr. Chichester explained that if homeowners had only recyclable material they would pass by the scales on Silas Lane and enter the site by the recycling boxes. Traffic would be monitored in the area when trailers were being moved in and out of the building. The County staff employee would remain in the recycling building dealing with the commercial recycling activity leaving no one to monitor the recycling boxes. Mr. Chichester stated that before the change is implemented the Authority would be distributing a flyer to users of the site.

Edward Wesnofske asked what would happen when the recycling boxes were full. Mr. Chichester explained that the County uses four containers, enough to handle the flow.

Donald Lindberg asked how homeowners were going to be kept away from the area where recycling is currently taking place. Mr. Chichester indicated that proper signage and advance notification of the change would deal with the majority of the issues.

Mr. Lindberg asked about the timing of implementation. Mr. Chichester stated that the insurance company is looking for action to take place in the near future. The options recommended by the insurance underwriter posed too many additional issues. The current proposal by MOSA staff appears to be the best alternative.

Raymond Halgas suggested that there might be a problem with homeowners contaminating the recycling boxes after hours once they are moved to a more visible location on the site. Mr. Chichester explained that the entire site is currently not secured and contamination or use of the boxes after hours occurs currently.

Mr. Halgas inquired as to the cost associated with the modification. Mr. Chichester stated that crusher run and Jersey Barriers would need to be purchased. Mr. Halgas felt that Jersey Barriers were too expensive to purchase and handle. Gilbert Chichester stated that he would ascertain what was available and inform the Board at the next Board meeting.

The committee agreed to the proposed modification and directed that Mr. Chichester proceed.

### **3. RFQ for Oneonta Transfer Station Retrofit**

Gilbert Chichester reported that he had received the written cost proposals from Dvirka and Bartilucci and Golder Associates as attached hereto. Mr. Chichester briefly reviewed each proposal.

Edward Wesnofske stated that Dvirka and Bartilucci's proposal included a quote if MOSA staff were to provide assistance at a reduced cost of \$3,000.

Raymond Halgas felt that due to the recent activities between the three counties his position was to spend the very least amount of money required to modify the station. He supported doing what the insurance underwriter required and repairing the floor in the transfer building. Mr. Halgas stated that the MOSA operations committee had spent time trying to give assistance to Otsego County relative to modifying the recycling operations at the Northern Transfer Station. Nothing resulted from the committee's efforts. In addition, the Otsego County Solid Waste Committee made it clear that they did not want to fund any studies relative to modifying the recycling operations at the Oneonta Transfer Station. If the Authority was to study the issue and develop a plan for modification the Committee did not wish to fund the implementation of such a plan. Essentially Otsego County wants MOSA to develop a plan but has no interest in paying for it.

Edward Wesnofske commented that the Authority has been working on the retrofit to the Oneonta Transfer Station for several years. In his opinion there was no question that a retrofit needs to take place. Approaching the retrofit in a piecemeal manner did not make sense to Mr. Wesnofske. All the engineering firms that the Authority has worked with to date have indicated that the current capacity is not sufficient to handle the waste flow.

Charles Buck felt that the design costs quoted seemed high. Olga Podmajersky responded that half of the proposal costs relates to the engineering firms learning about the system. Charles Buck stated that unless the Authority were moving towards handling the waste in an alternative manner i.e. separation of C&D for recycling purposes, the engineers should focus only on the current mode.

Raymond Halgas stated that Golder Associates does not like the direct dump mode, they like how the Authority is currently handling the waste. Golder has more experience with bigger operations where waste is separated on the tip floor. Gilbert Chichester stated that the safety issue of preventing people from falling into the trailer was a concern all the engineering firms have with the direct dump operation.

Charles Buck stated that the Authority would always have the issue with the wear on the tip floor if the current mode of operation continues. Raymond Halgas stated that Golder has recently been involved in a project for pouring a new floor.

Raymond Halgas stated that Dvirka and Bartilucci's general attitude was constructing a new building not renovating the existing building.

In terms of equipment changes, Donald Lindberg pointed out that Golder was not recommending a crane. They were more interested in using a machine more like a rubber tire excavator in place of the loader. Charles Buck felt that the crane being used at the Amsterdam Transfer Station yielded a cheaper cost per ton to operate when compared to a backhoe.

Edward Wesnofske stated that the Authority's experience with handling solid waste is important information when designing the modification to the Oneonta Transfer Station.

Raymond Halgas reported that he had observed the operation at the Port of Albany where the trailers are backed into the pit and the waste is dumped on the floor right next to them. Excavators with high cabs so that the operator can see into the trailers are used for loading.

Edward Wesnofske stated that he liked the approach Dvrika and Barilucci where taking whereby they have a base plan with two alternates. Mr. Wesnofske stated that he would like to see what is possible to do with the site. He was a bit bothered by Golder Associates in that they seemed eager to please. Mr. Wesnofske stated that MOSA has the best available engineering options based on the selection process that was used.

Raymond Halgas felt that Golder Associates was more open to trying different options.

Donald Lindberg stated that more discussion was needed before a final decision could be made.

#### **4. Storm Damage at ELF**

Gilbert Chichester distributed a map and picture identifying the storm damage at the Eastern Landfill as attached hereto. Mr. Chichester explained that when the landfill cover was put in place it was covered with permeable material. This results in the rain percolating to the plastic membrane and accumulating. This results in slides. Mr. Chichester stated that after the landfill is mowed bare areas can be seen. He felt that perhaps the landfill should be mowed more than twice to promote more growth, which would facilitate root growth giving greater stability.

Mr. Chichester reported that he had been in touch with FEMA and the Authority is in line to receive funds. The Authority needs to track costs incurred for the repairs. As is indicated by the attached letter from the Authority's engineers, the Authority is capable of doing the work themselves however if it is contracted out the cost could be approximately \$200,000.

Donald Lindberg asked about the timing of the work. Mr. Chichester replied that the work needs to be completed in the near future to prevent further erosion and damage.

Raymond Halgas asked if the Authority had the manpower to do the work in house. If not then who would prepare the bid. Gilbert Chichester stated that the engineers would prepare the bid specifications for an additional cost. Mr. Chichester felt that there were MOSA staff that were more than capable of handling the nature of the work, however equipment would need to be rented. This would also add to the backlog of work for the Buildings and Grounds Supervisor.

Raymond Halgas motion for the Authority to go to bid for the work that needs to be completed at the Eastern Landfill as well as the preventive work that needs to be completed at the Central Landfill. The motion was seconded by Charles Buck and unanimously approved.

Mr. Chichester distributed a letter from the engineers relative to additional work that should be performed on the Eastern Landfill as attached hereto. Items 1 through 3 have been completed and the Authority is holding off on item number 4. The Leachate pump upgrades need to be done.

Raymond Halgas asked if the work could be incorporated into the storm damage repairs. Mr. Chichester explained that it was a different type of vendor that is needed. The Authority has used Frank Brandle in the past for the electrical work and Severn Trent for the confined space work.

Charles Buck motioned seconded by Ray Halgas directing the Executive Director to present a resolution at the next Board meeting authorizing the work at the landfills to be done. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **5. Review of Field Staffing Pattern**

Gilbert Chichester distributed and reviewed a memo relative to the issues with the current staffing pattern as attached hereto.

Edward Wesnofske asked how much knowledge Dan Herrick had that reflects his involvement with all aspects of what the Authority does. Do we have other people than Dan Herrick that know what is going on? Are the systems and subsystems of the Authority documented? Gilbert Chichester replied that we did not have any additional staff people with Dan Herrick's knowledge nor do we have the systems documented. Mr. Chichester stated that one of his goals was to setup a system to identify each structure, what the structure contains and a log of the repairs performed.

Edward Wesnofske asked how much of Mr. Herrick's activity requires a second person. Gilbert Chichester stated that when working on construction types of activities such as the scalehouse in Oneonta, additional assistance is needed. When he needs the assistance we make every effort to give it to him, however that generally means we are taking away resources to complete other tasks.

Raymond Halgas stated that travel from site to site is the biggest issue, however you cannot easily get away from it. Gilbert Chichester stated that contracting out has been used in the area of equipment maintenance to deal with some of the travel issues.

Mr. Chichester stated that site staff are not acclimated to identifying the real problem with a piece of equipment so the decision to contract the work out is not always the best decision being made.

Raymond Halgas stated that the cost of the CAT preventive maintenance contract is getting so high that it may make more sense to hire a part time mechanic. Charles Buck felt that a "jack of all trades" is what is really needed.

Gilbert Chichester stated that the Authority barely has all the resources within the system to cover the base. It is difficult to find a part time transfer station operator that has a CDLA license, can run a backhoe and loader and only wants to work part time. Using retired employees can create worker's compensation liability issues.

Charles Buck asked who was available to cover for Dan Herrick. Gilbert Chichester stated that no one has the same skills as Mr. Herrick in the organization.

Edward Wesnofske asked when Larry Nellis retires next May how long would it take an individual to come up the curb and learn the equipment. Gilbert Chichester stated that Bud Ingraham is very knowledgeable and can handle repairing any piece of Authority equipment.

Charles Buck asked Mr. Chichester what he needed to solve the problem. Mr. Chichester felt that people could be diverted in the organization to provide Mr. Herrick assistance. Hiring contractors creates the issue of prevailing wage when using a larger company.

Raymond Halgas inquired as to the vendor areas the Authority would seek an outside vendor for in terms of buildings and grounds work. Mr. Chichester responded; plumbing, electrical and black top work. Charles Buck stated that the Authority could seek bids based on a time and materials rate and call upon the preferred vendors when needed.

Gilbert Chichester stated that developing a backup for Dan Herrick is still an issue. When a contractor is used coordination and oversight still needs to be provided. Mr. Chichester stated that a coordinator's position has been discussed in the past. He believes that this position is necessary in the organization to handle safety training, to develop operating procedures with constant follow-up and field presence and provide field coordination. This person would possibly fill in at the sites when necessary. Whoever is hired needs to have administrative skills as well as field experience.

Gilbert Chichester stated that he would like to hire a coordinator, discuss the potential of in house staff permanently working with Larry Nellis and continue to provide assistance to Dan Herrick by using the floater at the Schoharie Transfer Station. To accomplish part of this, Mr. Chichester felt that a part time weigh station operator might need to work on a temporary full time basis in order to accomplish some of the larger outstanding projects.

Charles Buck motioned seconded by Donald Lindberg to hire a part time weigh station operator on a temporary full time basis as needed. The motion was unanimously approved.

Another issue that needs attention is mowing the sites during the summer. Charles Buck stated that mowing entities exist but generally do not carry insurance. Raymond Halgas felt that there were contractors that could perform the service that were insured. Gilbert Chichester was director to obtain prices for contractors to mow the Amsterdam, Western and Northern Transfer Stations and report back to the committee.

In terms of the coordinator, Mr. Halgas stated that during Mr. Chichester evaluation process he supported the concept of hiring a field coordinator. The committee directed Mr. Chichester to develop a job description for a field coordinator and report back to the committee. The committee agreed that the field supervisor would be someone hired from outside the organization.

## **6. CAT Agreement**

Gilbert Chichester reported that in 2003 the Authority paid Southworth Milton \$15,123.99 for preventive maintenance performed on CAT equipment. In 2004 the Authority paid Southworth Milton \$17,734.22 for similar work. The Authority is charged one rate for each service performed on a given piece of equipment regardless of the level of service. The service is provided in 250-hour increments.

Larry Nellis informed Mr. Chichester that he could perform a preventive maintenance service on a backhoe for a fraction of what it costs to pay Southworth Milton. Donald Lindberg felt that Mr. Nellis did not have enough time to do the work.

Mr. Chichester reported that the staff felt that the Authority was paying too much for the services being provided. Charles Buck asked what the 2005 rates were. Mr. Chichester reported that there was a 25% increase in the contract prices. Some of the contracts have expired but Mr. Chichester has not moved to renew them given the drastic increase in the prices.

Donald Lindberg asked if the increase in the cost of the contracts justified hiring an additional employee. Mr. Chichester stated that two full time mechanics are required.

The committee directed Mr. Chichester to discuss the possibility with Bud Ingraham of him moving permanently to the Equipment Maintenance function.

## **7. Equipment Replacement Fund Purchases**

Gilbert Chichester reported that the Operations Committee is responsible for reviewing the equipment replacement fund and make recommendations to the full board. No final action was taken on the 2005 equipment replacement fund largely due to the uncertainties surrounding the modification to the Oneonta Transfer Station.

Mr. Chichester reported that there were two items that needed to be purchased utilizing the equipment replacement fund. The first item is a rebuilt crane grapple head. The cost would be \$8,900 less a \$3,000 trade-in plus \$1,500 in freight with a net cost of \$7,400. Charles Buck motioned seconded by Edward Wesnofske to recommend to the full board the purchase of a rebuilt crane grapple head. The motion was unanimously approved.

The second item in need of replacement was the Executive Director's computer. Charles Buck motioned seconded by Edward Wesnofske to recommend to the full board the purchase of a new computer and related peripherals. The motion was unanimously approved.

**8. Brush Hog**

The Authority owns a Kubota tractor with a finishing mower. There is a need to purchase a brush hog to mow certain areas of the landfills. The costs is approximately \$1,500. Raymond Halgas motioned seconded by Charles Buck to purchase a brush hog for the Kubota tractor. The motion was unanimously approved.

**9. Case Backhoe at NTS**

Mr. Chichester reported that the 1983 580D Case backhoe currently located at the Northern Transfer Station is not in safe working condition. The Authority purchased it used in 1994. It is not a four-wheel drive vehicle and the tires are not loaded. The spare backhoe will be brought to the Northern Transfer Station. In the event the spare is needed at another location the Northern Transfer Station could operate on a short-term basis without one.

The committee agreed to pull the backhoe out of service and recommended that it be sold at the auction conducted by Ray Teitsworth to be held in Otsego County on June 11, 2005.

**10. Closing**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Morlang  
Director of Finance and Administration