

**MONTGOMERY-OTSEGO-SCHOHARIE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY
PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING**

DATE: July 21, 2005

LOCATION: MOSA Administrative Complex, Howes Cave

MEMBERS PRESENT:

James Powers
Olga Podmajersky
Edward Wesnofske
Charles Buck

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Gilbert Chichester
Melissa Morlang
Erin Crotty

1. Opening

Chairperson Powers opened the meeting at 1:18 p.m.

2. Minutes of Prior Meeting

The minutes of the prior meeting of June 29, 2005 were approved as written.

3. Long Range Planning

Erin Crotty, President of The Crotty Group, LLC was introduced to the committee. Ms. Crotty stated that she has come to understand that the Planning Committee has an interest in working more efficiently towards a common goal. A facilitator can help the Authority define and achieve a common goal.

Ms. Crotty explained that she has had experience as a representative of the governor's office in developing an agreement for the New York City watershed. She was able to bring several different parties to the table and facilitate discussions resulting in an agreement. As Commissioner of DEC, Ms. Crotty was able to facilitate better communication between DEC's upper management's and the rank and file.

A key aspect of the facilitation process is that all parties share a common goal. In addition, each party must be willing to participate in the process or the process will fail.

Ms. Crotty explained that the facilitation process is not generic and is difficult to define in terms of timing. Much of the process depends on the parties involved. In general the first step is to work on defining the goal of the facilitation process. Once this is established Ms. Crotty would conduct individual interviews with the Governing Board and Management. She will ask specific questions of all parties. The answers she gets will be compiled such that they will not be linked to anyone, thus the results will be anonymous. She indicated that normally the comments made in the interviews would fall into categories or have a common theme. Examples of themes she has seen develop with other facilitations are "the lack of communications" or "lack of trust". The group would

decide on which theme it would work on first and a plan is developed. Ms. Crotty stated that not all themes need to be dealt with if the group decides that they are not priorities.

Ms. Crotty restated that the parties have to be committed to the process. It cannot be stopped until an end product is reached. The parties have to believe that the end product is better than where we are today.

Honesty is important in the process. Everything must be put on the table.

Edward Wesnofske stated that the nature of the MOSA Board is rooted in three different political communities raising question of how a Board make decisions when it is so tied to the politics of the county being represented.

Erin Crotty asked if the whole group saw the same problem. This would not be the first time that she has dealt with this issue. It is a difficult issue but not impossible. Ms. Crotty stated that the members of MOSA are members of MOSA and not the County they represent. She understands that it is difficult not to carry baggage when making decisions for the Authority but the Governing Board has a fiduciary responsibility to run the Authority. It is possible to de-link being a County representative and being a MOSA Board member. The key is to find a way to be comfortable with splitting the roles.

Edward Wesnofske inquired as to Ms. Crotty's experience with dealing with different types of County government i.e. Board of representative versus a Board of Supervisors. Erin Crotty responded that she has worked with all forms of municipal government.

Gilbert Chichester stated that it is difficult to deal with a constant turnover on the MOSA Board as well as at the County level. Mr. Chichester asked if it was possible to develop consistency over time with these major changes taking place.

Erin Crotty stated that MOSA could embark on a strategic planning process. The process should become part of everyday work and thus bridge the gaps created by the described turnover. If it is does not then the planning process was not done correctly. Planning documents help ease the pain of change but the pain cannot be eliminated. MOSA's statute dictates Board members appointments. The statute could be amended to address the issue of change.

Edward Wesnofske asked how Ms. Crotty would know if there was an unwilling participant. Ms. Crotty stated that it would be very obvious to spot someone who was not engaged in the process. A decision would be made at that point. The group could decide to try and persuade the individual. The MOSA Board members took the job to try and make the Authority succeed therefore they should be willing to participate in the process.

James Powers stated that he felt there were board members who clearly were not on the Board to run the Authority but to represent the County. Erin Crotty stated that she would pursue the issue by trying to understand why the County goals did not mirror the Authority's goals.

Olga Podmajersky stated that she did not understand why we needed a facilitation process. In her opinion there were two problems: establishing the GAT and long-range planning. She felt that once they were solved everything else would fall into place. Mr. Chichester stated that the Board has made attempts at addressing both issues with no common understanding or plan of action being developed. He suggested that with the assistance of an outside facilitator progress could be made.

Edward Wesnofske asked Ms. Crotty if there was ever a time when the process failed. Ms. Crotty stated that she has always succeeded. There were times during all her projects that it seemed that it might fail. Her tactic was to step back and find another path. She has been successful.

Erin Crotty stated that the purpose of the facilitation process is to establish the policies and procedures so that the Board can facilitate itself and no longer need M. Crotty's assistance.

Ms. Crotty stated that she would put forth a proposal to Mr. Chichester.

Edward Wesnofske motioned seconded by Charles Buck to recommend to the full Board to delegate responsibility to the Planning Committee to review Erin Crotty's proposal and engage her in the facilitation process. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

5. Closing

Olga Podmajersky motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Edward Wesnofske and unanimously approved on voice call.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Morlang
Director of Finance and Administration