

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

**DATE:** October 18, 2007

**LOCATION:** MOSA Administrative Complex, Howes Cave

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joan Bent  
Ed Wesnofske  
William Strevy

**ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Gilbert L. Chichester  
David Parker  
Olga Podmajersky  
Daniel Baker  
Barbara Corrigan  
Glenn Packard

**1. Opening**

Chairperson Bent opened the meeting at \_\_\_ a.m.

**2. Minutes of Prior Meeting**

**3. OTS Retrofit**

Mr. Parker questioned where the Board sits on the 2005 OTS Retrofit Master Plan.

Mr. Chichester indicated there was an RFQ to engage engineers

Mr. Parker indicated a budget attachment dated 2006.

Ms. Bent indicated that the tipping floor was approved not the entire retrofit.

Mr. Strevy noted the Board approved MOSA move forward with the retrofit in November 2006. He summarized to say this has already been voted on we are going forward with this.

Ms. Podmajersky asked if we were going to bid on just one option.

Mr. Wesnofske indicated that we did receive cost estimates and we were seeking more explicit information on the cost.

Ms. Bent indicated the full Board is looking for more detailed costs.

Mr. Parker questioned if the Planning committee could move forward on this.

Mr. Strevy indicated that no further action was required.

Mr. Parker and Mr. Wesnofske recommend the retrofit be considered a priority for MOSA.

Mr. Parker indicated that he personally was against the 2005 Master Plan. He believes it can be done much less expensively. Mr. Parker does not believe there will be increased volume. He does believe the retrofit needs to be done for safety – separating the residential from commercial customers.

Mr. Wesnofske indicated it would improve efficiency although there would be no real cost savings.

Mr. Parker indicated there is a horizon; the Board is not talking about 25 years only 7 years.

Ms. Bent commented that is not etched in stone.

Mr. Parker referred to his retrofit idea. He agrees that the water table is an issue. Mr. Parker indicated on his sketch that, from a safety standpoint, residents could enter “this way”, but without the elaborate double building separating the two entrances.

Mr. Wesnofske questioned if there would be an open air tip wall.

Mr. Parker indicated it would be covered but not fully enclosed.

Mr. Wesnofske questioned if the DEC would allow us to operate an open air tip wall.

Mr. Chichester indicated that leachate would clearly be an issue and we still need to separate residents from commercial users.

Mr. Parker pointed out that the commercial users would remain inside.

Ms. Bent asked Mr. Parker if he wanted to change the design.

Mr. Parker noted he first wanted to see the cost.

Mr. Chichester pointed out that there is a cost associated with the bid process.

Mr. Wesnofske explained that the RFQ costs nothing and several engineering firms inspected the location all saw a need for a radical change. Various layouts were prepared and the Board chose the best one.

Mr. Parker explained that without restrictions the engineers will return with their best proposals. Mr. Parker wants safety in the context of cost.

Mr. Chichester pointed out that the engineers would need to return.

Mr. Wesnofske agreed that we need to take a look at the plan again.

Ms. Podmajersky recalled the many letters with different concerns one being recycling and felt that MOSA should take a look at the design again.

Mr. Chichester outlined the process.

Mr. Parker wanted the criteria changed for the next process to include cost as a concern. Ms. Podmajersky indicated the Board needed to decide between a retrofit and an upgrade. Based on who owns the land.

Mr. Wesnofske indicated that the ownership of the land is not set in stone. The city gets first option on the land as long as they pay for the improvements.

Mr. Parker indicated that city should be heard from through the Board representatives, regarding their opinion of the retrofit plan. Mr. Parker believes if three solid waste committee members were in agreement to move forward on the retrofit he would feel more comfortable spending the money with the County's support.

Mr. Chichester questioned what the driving force is what is best for MOSA or what is best for the people back home.

Ms. Bent expressed the need to hear the results of GBB report which should give some indication where we will be in the future.

Mr. Parker agreed something needs to be done at OTS it is just a matter of degree.

Mr. Wesnofske reviewed the history of the approx. six year old project, which started with concerns about the traffic pattern, led to insurance concerns, consideration of the deterioration of the building and now needs to improve the ability to visually supervise staff, electronic surveillance, and integrating the scale system.

Ms. Podmajersky is against the project for two reasons. 1. The land goes back to the city and 2. The location is not the right site to design a transfer station due to the water level.

Mr. Wesnofske indicated that there should be some reflection on this project. Two courses of action were required, first, get hard numbers from a bid process and second, get an evaluation from the engineers on Dave's sketch design.

Mr. Chichester will make arrangements for Golder to come in he would like Mr. Parker to participate in the meeting.

Ms. Podmajersky questioned if we could afford the cost to get a bid package together.

Mr. Chichester said we need to first understand where we are heading.

Ms. Bent agreed

Mr. Parker wanted to understand the cost to get the bids and the estimate of the cost for the project.

Ms. Bent pointed out that project is a multimillion dollar project and we do not expect it to cost much less.

Ms. Podmajersky requested a larger copy of the plan to study.

Mr. Packard indicated he would provide her with this.

Ms. Bent asked if the group agreed we need more detailed information on the cost of the OTS retrofit.

Mr. Wesnofske agreed with Mr. Chichester's reservation contingent on the GBB report. He noted that a compromise would be to have a consultation with the engineers and that Mr. Parker be present for that meeting.

Mr. Strevy believes we need the results of the GBB project before moving forward with this.

Ms. Bent indicated the OTS project would be held for future action.

#### **4. Crane Upgrade**

Mr. Chichester summarized the project as a safety and ergonomic issue. The control station at ATS needs to be upgraded and rebuilt. We are in the process of doing this and believe the cost will be close to \$10,000.

Ms. Bent can this be moved to the Operations committee?

Ms. Corrigan questioned the process to handle projects of this size. It exceeds the printed \$5,000 that requires Board approval so committing to the project is difficult without Board approval beforehand.

Mr. Wesnofske noted this should be done in the Finance committee with Mr. Chichester's guidance regarding where the funds would come from.

Mr. Strevy said take the money from the Schoharie black top or contingency. "I don't consider something under \$10,000 to be a capital project."

Mr. Wesnofske indicated if reserve funds are going to be used go to the finance committee.

Ms. Bent noted if the money is available in the current budget move it around.

Mr. Wesnofske said it sounded like ordinary maintenance.

Ms. Bent agreed and indicated the Board has weightier issues.

## 5. Phase II Planning

Ms. Bent introduced the GBB Phase II planning by reviewing the three outcomes of the Phase I report that required attention. There were three options regarding how MOSA should move forward: 1. continue as is, 2. partner with another authority or 3. something else.

Mr. Strevy questioned the cost of Phase II

Ms. Bent indicated we need to determine how big we want Phase II to be. What are our parameters?

Mr. Wesnofske felt that all three options should be included in Phase II because they are all questions stemming from different counties.

Mr. Parker questioned if the county Boards agreed to go with the outcome of Phase II.

Ms. Bent indicated it was an important step to take. If we stay status quo – hauling waste to landfills – cost are going up both fuel and the competition for landfill space is increasing. Should we include a future expectation of costs? I think we should include a time line 5 yr, 10 yr, 15 yr, or should we focus on 2014 as one point in time and beyond?

Mr. Strevy a time line with anticipated costs will help. We are looking long term we need to know the options. A landfill is touchy in Montgomery County if that is an option it would need to be considered in a different county.

Mr. Parker “Landfills need to be excluded.”

Ms. Bent the landfill should be included to show the cost comparison.

Mr. Parker said if it is used for cost comparison that is fine but the energy and money put into the landfill option should be limited.

Mr. Wesnofske indicated that the different options for landfills should be included. If we build one that is larger than for local use this could save \$4 million a year. That amount divided by the counties is a good amount of money. We could reduce user costs and subsidize it through outside use. \$36.85 in Oneida per ton for a 280,000 ton landfill includes all their costs including litigation. Burning some costs as much as exporting, in addition residual amounts remain that need to be transferred to a landfill. The difference between burning and transporting is only \$5- \$8 a ton different.

Mr. Parker it seems clear we will need to partner with other to increase volume.

Mr. Strevy we still need to include the landfill option to show cost comparisons.

Ms. Bent the time line should be included and consider the anticipated growth of the area.

Mr. Strevy we need a short term plan even if the landfill is chosen.

Mr. Wesnofske we need to interview residents we need a way to assess the environmental value – it is subjective. When does the cost of no landfill exceed the environmental value that residents place on no landfill? GBB needs to talk with people to assess this. What do the individual people want?

Mr. Strevy (the landfill) could be considered a regional issue.

Mr. Wesnofske people complain about the loss of control of MOSA. If we partner with others the loss of control would be greater. We need the increase volume to be competitive. We should include the cost to transport by rail. I think this is large but it should be considered.

Mr. Strevy we are considered just another hauler to the landfills, based on our volume. Mr. Baker commented that no one takes ownership of the responsibility to dispose of waste in Montgomery County, MOSA takes on this responsibility.

Ms. Bent: Can we have a resolution to bring forward to the full Board? We want to proceed with Phase II of GBB.

Mr. Wesnofske a subset of the landfill option should be options for the transport infrastructure.

Ms. Podmajersky “What are we talking about for Phase II?”

Ms. Bent “All options that were suggested”

Ms. Podmajersky questioned the Burn plant as an option

Ms. Bent indicated that would be addressed in the dedicated regional disposal section.

We are going to have GBB look into developing our own plan and partnering with others to help outline our options.

Ms. Podmajersky is there any indication how much this will cost?

Mr. Chichester “No, the cost is based on the scope.”

Mr. Strevy “What is our objective?”

Ms Bent: Our objective is to meet with the counties, using Erin as our facilitator. Share the outcomes of Phase II with the counties; indicate a decision needs to be made so MOSA is able to plan for the future.

Mr. Strevy what do we do if the counties do not respond.

Mr. Wesnofske we then make a decision and tell the counties we need to extend the service agreement.

Ms. Podmajersky: We can bring in new partners.

Mr. Parker: The Albany situation is a perfect opportunity. We should convince a politician to partner with us to work toward a vision.

Mr. Chichester: All constituents in the MOSA area have been clear they do not want outside waste.

Ms. Bent: Some counties are studying this on their own. The counties need to understand what it will cost them to handle their own waste.

Mr. Parker: The economics indicate we need to include a partner. Updating and modifying a burn plant and a landfill are both environmentally risky and costly.

Ms. Bent: Is there a resolution?

Mr. Strevy: I request that we obtain a proposal from GBB for Phase II based upon the Phase I recommendations by item.

Mr. Chichester: The Committee wants to negotiate some estimate for the Phase II work?

Ms Bent: With an estimate we can authorize them to move forward not to exceed a certain amount of money.

Mr. Wesnofske: The greatest issue will be interviewing regional and county authorities

Mr. Chichester: We need to determine their mode for validating issues.

Mr. Wesnofske: We want them to talk with more than functional persons; they need to talk to others to receive a flavor for the political feedback.

Ms. Bent: Is there money remaining from the initial resolution regarding Phase I?

Mr. Chichester: We will need to reconcile that account. We also need to spend more time with GBB internally so we better understand their scope and methods.

Ms. Bent: We should set up a meeting with the Planning Committee so we can get something a little higher and bring it back to the Board.

Mr. Wesnofske: Yes the details of the scope need to be tightened up Mr. Chichester should talk with them prior to the committee so they are better prepared for the Committee.

Mr. Strevy: Will they put a number on taking over the transfer stations; will they go deep enough to give the counties' the cost of handling their own waste?

Ms. Podmajersky: Any cost over \$5,000 needs Board approval GBB costs increased \$31,000 without Board approval.

Ms. Bent It appears that was a Planning Committee oversight.

Mr. Wesnofske: We need more negotiations with GBB. Begin with a phone conversation with Mr. Chichester to focus on more specific things. Then have them come back to speak with the Board. We need an estimate or a range for the cost.

Mr. Strevy: Phase I did not come out like I wanted my concern is Phase II does. Phase I was too general, once there is information it should take you someplace. This was not the result of Phase I.

Ms. Bent: A listing of people they spoke with would be helpful. I agree with Mr. Strevy Phase II needs to be tighter and more specific. GBB needs to provide credibility to cost and planning information.

Discussion followed regarding the outcome of Phase I and Erin's involvement

Mr. Wesnofske and Ms. Podmajersky agreed that there should have been cost information available before going to the county Boards.

Mr. Strevy: The Counties want us to take solid waste at a reasonable cost. That reasonable cost happens here around this table the county does not need to be involved in our decisions to hire more personnel. Erin is the right person for the job however she was not needed to tell them we were going to hire new employees.

## **6. Other Business**

Mr. Wesnofske: I would like the committee to consider if we should be hauling waste from town collection sites.

Some discussion followed this idea and the decision was made it should be on the agenda for the next meeting

Ms. Bent: Should we be licensing and registering haulers? It is one step closer to control.

Mr. Wesnofske: That is difficult without legislation for licensing to take place.

Mr. Strevy: The counties should go for the throat and put the flow control legislation out there.

Ms. Bent: Flow control laws would eliminate economic issues at the county level related to the subsidy.

There was further discussion regarding the number of haulers and the use of the outside waste rate. Mr. Wesnofske noted that the only 25% remain from 1999. The small haulers are either bought up or go out of business so there is little competition with the counties.

Mr. Chichester noted that small haulers exist because of MOSA. MOSA allows them someplace to go with the waste. If MOSA is gone the small haulers will go out of business because they will need to haul to the landfills that are out of their way.

Discussion continued regarding the haulers in the areas and how they operate.

## **7. Closing**

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.