

MEETING NOTES - Draft
Blair County Municipal Solid Waste Plan Revision

Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Meeting #3

Date of Meeting: Thursday, September 27, 2012, 4:00 PM
Meeting Location: Altoona Heritage Discovery Center
1421 12th Avenue, Altoona, PA
Meeting #: Blair County SWAC Meeting #3
Attendees: See Attached Sign-in Sheet

Terry Keene from Barton & Loguidice opened the meeting, and briefly reviewed some housekeeping items. Terry also introduced the main topic of the impending closure of the County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling, with transfer of some duties and services to the IRC.

Terry Stacey confirmed with everyone that his Department is closing at the end of September, due to a lack of County funds to continue operations. The last effective day of his Department's operation is Friday, September 28. A staff of six is impacted, including three staff located at the composting site. Some staff are transitioning to IRC compost operations staff (2), and some others have secured employment in other county departments. Terry received comments of thanks and recognition from meeting attendees for his professionalism during these difficult transitional times.

John Frederick explained some of the services and activities that are transitioning from the County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling to the IRC, and others which are being discontinued. John and Terry reviewed some of these changes.

1. The Buckhorn Compost site will transition to IRC operation on October 1. Site staff will be reduced from 2 ½ to 2, and will now be under the IRC (two of the former County compost site employees). Because of the staff reduction and other considerations, it is likely that the site may be closed on Wednesday and Thursday beginning in 2013.
2. John hopes to keep the Duncansville R&D composting site open to the public on Tuesdays during "compost season." The County Conservation District provides staff to help with operation of this site ½ day on Tuesdays.
3. The days of the week that the Buckhorn and Duncansville sites will be opened are subject to change, as the IRC fine-tunes its staff availability.
4. Of the eight County recyclables dropoff sites, all but one (the Sam's Club site) have been vacated as of his date (the goal was to shut these sites down by October 1, as discussed at the last meeting). Recycling dropoff containers from the closed sites have been placed at storage locations. John said that the Sam's Club site collects a large quantity of materials typically (perhaps 200-300 tons per year), and can be more easily serviced than other sites. The IRC will see if this site can be kept open.

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5. The IRC will retain four "Haul-All" brand dropoff trailers to use at special events through the year.
6. Paul Kane now operates a recyclables dropoff site in Williamsburg, and another dropoff site in Woodbury Township is possible.
7. Ken Wertz is contemplating operating a recyclables dropoff site at the Frankstown Municipal Building for bottles and cans. This may be expanded to accept paper, also. Claudia Montero suggested that recycling education may be needed in Frankstown to explain the dropoff program better to its residents.
8. In the recent IRC RFP for recyclables dropoff services, both Waste Management and Burgmeier offered free cardboard pickup. The IRC may look into trying to further pursue such arrangements when the initial transitional duties are in hand and resolved.
9. Terry Decker is taking some recyclable materials in Martinsburg and Roaring Springs.
10. The Buckhorn recyclables dropoff site will remain open and operated by the IRC.
11. John reported that there are no real dropoff options at the current time in the southern part of the County.
12. In the four IRC communities, old corrugated cardboard (OCC) is being added to the list of mandated recyclable materials collected at curbside beginning in November-December.
13. John reported that from the September 5 municipality meeting, where meeting attendees were asked to complete and return surveys to the IRC indicating their interest in sponsoring a recyclables dropoff site, few surveys were returned. John reported that only 2 or 3 have expressed any willingness to further discuss this, and only one municipality may be willing to offer such financial support.
14. John noted that Blair, Snyder and Antis each have ordinances in place that require haulers to pick up recyclables at curbside from residents that request it. John feels this may be a good model to try to expand in other areas of the County, especially in light of the eliminated recyclables dropoff sites. John mentioned a few other good municipal candidates for this non-mandated, optional curbside recycling ordinance.

There was some discussion of the Planet Aid and US Again drop-offs for clothing, and whether these dropoffs negatively impact Salvation Army and Goodwill operations. There was no good consensus on this; might or might not impact these stores in some areas. Also, it is noted that consignment stores are becoming more prevalent now, as people try to stretch their dollars further (both in selling clothing and in purchasing at discount prices).

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There was some discussion by Terry Stacey and John Frederick of other County-sponsored or conducted services that may or may not be picked up by the IRC. Some of these are mandated by PADEP. John said the IRC will try to continue as many of these activities as possible.

1. County Recycling Coordinator – John Frederick will take this role over from Terry Stacey.
2. Recycling education
3. Enforcement.
4. Annual recycling data collection and reporting.
5. Annual Household Hazardous Waste collection events.
6. IRC/ Cleanways cleanup events – such as tires, electronics, hard-to-recycle materials. Terry mentioned that the County electronics contract with “WeRecycle” may still have remaining community events due – this will need to be reviewed, but the company is ceasing operations in Pennsylvania, and this contract is being cancelled on October 31.
7. Recycling Video competition with schools, which has gone on for the past 15 years, and includes a big awards presentation.
8. A toll-free litter line. John says the IRC will do this, and there is some PADEP initiative to continue this.
9. Terry Stacey reported that there are some permits and agreements that the County has held, that will need to be transitioned to the IRC and some agreement between the County and the IRC related to this transition of duties.
 - a. County Recycling Coordinator Grant – to the IRC.
 - b. County 904 Performance Grant – will all be one grant application now, to the IRC.
 - c. Household Hazardous Waste Grant Access by the IRC.
 - d. Electronics collection and processing services – the WeRecycle agreement, and a possible new RFP – under review.
 - e. Conveyance of recycling and composting equipment from the County to the IRC.
 - f. Subdivision and transfer of the 22-acre Buckhorn compost site from the Blair County SWA to the IRC.
 - g. Conveyance of the Duncansville compost site lease to the IRC.
 - h. Buckhorn and Duncansville permits (and limitations, related to future ideas for the sites).

There was some discussion about the former hauler licensing program that is no longer allowed in most cases under PA Act 90. Small (17,000 lb or less GVW) vehicles can still be licensed by counties. Further, some counties now register larger trucks/ haulers, usually at little or no fee, to keep track of haulers. There was a question on enforcing any continuing licensing or registration program, and whether there are any benefits to a program. This may need to be addressed in the Plan Update.

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There was a suggestion to consider including a mandatory garbage collection ordinance in the Plan Update.

Donna asked who the liaison at the county will be for the Plan Update, with the closure of Terry Stacey's department. The SWAC voted unanimously that John Frederick should be the direct liaison between the SWAC and Barton & Loguidice. John accepted that role. Terry Keene said he would check with Diane Meling of the County Commissioners to confirm whether Diane will remain the commissioner's liaison with Terry Keene and the SWAC.

John noted that the IRC will be moving to City Hall over the next few weeks, and his office will take over the Terry Stacey's office files. That transition has been underway.

The next SWAC meeting will be held at 4:00 pm on October 23 at the same location as this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:30 pm