

SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE

Monday, February 14, 2022 - 11:00 AM

Joe Pete Wilson, Chairperson

Chairman Wilson called this Solid Waste Task Force meeting to order at 11:46 am with the following members in attendance: Derek Doty, Ken Hughes, Jim Monty, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Meg Wood, Mike Mascarenas and Jim Dougan. Steve McNally was absent.

Also Present: Todd Hodgson, Hugh Harwood and Dina Garvey.

WILSON: Thank you for coming today, this is an important one and we're on a bit of tight timeline with our contract with Serkil, as well. So, we're going to have to keep this going on multiple levels, one is the big picture of what we're doing, two is the short term what are we doing with our hauling contract with Serkil and then in the most immediate short term we have some grant money to talk about. So, maybe I'll let Todd jump right in. Todd's got some information that will help us tackle those issues and the most urgent first and now that we're getting going, to really keep meeting more regularly. I let us get off to a slow start, but we'll have to keep meeting and making decisions, so that we can be ready for our short term goal of a Serkil contract, deciding about that. So, I'll turn things over to Todd.

HODGSON: Okay, from the decisions that Joe Pete and I had early on, as he took charge of this committee, it became apparent that just having a general understanding of what Essex County solid waste is and what it isn't. So, let me just run through that real quick before we get to the agenda that Joe Pete and I discussed previously. This is a diagram of what Essex County solid waste looks like, from the legend, I don't have a pointer on me, but Lake Placid is a major or North Elba, I should say, is a major transfer site by a big arrow, meaning that it receives trash from St. Armand and Wilmington, it's compacted there and goes directly to Franklin County. That is a major site. The same can be said of Lewis/Elizabethtown station and Schroon, down there at the bottom. The other sites that exist, that I guess are one tier down from that, would be Chesterfield, where they compact and go directly to Franklin County. Ticonderoga goes directly to Franklin County and Moriah goes directly to Franklin County and then we have some secondary sites. The Town of Keene is one of those, the Town of Keene's trash goes to the Elizabethtown/Lewis station. They have a small compactor and we have, let's see.

DOUGAN: Essex/Willsboro is the same.

HODGSON: Yes, that one is the same.

DOUGAN: With a small compactor that goes to Lewis.

HODGSON: Crown Point used to have a setup. The Xs are those that basically, either don't exist or are closed. Those towns don't have anything. So, Crown Point at one time had an operation, that

one is now closed. But, it really is a transportation system that is contracted out and these are the hours of operation for each town and just notice that there isn't an Essex County transfer station in that list, just to point that out. There's an annual, for 2021, for each town for the tons collected and the recyclables collected as a whole. So, you can see, what isn't reflected in, say Schroon's number is the Minerva and Newcomb...

DOUGAN: North Hudson

HODGSON: Yeah, North Hudson, that would also be added to that number that is trucked out of that site, which you can kind of see in comparison where the solid waste tonnage is for each of the towns.

HUGHES: Todd, there's a modification that needs to be made. I see Essex says Monday through Friday, but that's not accurate.

HODGON: Okay

HUGHES: Should I just email you?

HODGSON: Absolutely

HUGHES: Okay, great

MASCARENAS: Todd, the C&D on there has Essex, is that because that's the only place you can, it has Elizabethtown/Lewis, is that the only place that you record it? Because, most of those sites take C&D.

DOUGAN: Yeah, some of them do and we've got another slide that's going to show what each station does. But, the C&D is actually a contract each town has with Serkil and does not come through the County's billing, so the total and basically each town that does handle C&D, they have a set rate that they pay Serkil for, per dumpster, it's not tons. So, the tons don't get fully weighted, until they go out of, until they come into the Lewis Transfer Station.

MASCARENAS: So, there's additional C&D that isn't being captured?

DOUGAN: Nope, the numbers that you see are the numbers that are reported to NYS DEC. So, that is the total tons of C&D that are there, but because I'm not part of the accounting system or the tracking of Moriah.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, they get a lot.

DOUGAN: Moriah gets quite a bit of C&D, but they contracted, basically directly with Serkil. That's,

we're highlighting some of the issues with this contract.

MASCARENAS: Okay

DOUGAN: They contract directly with Serkil with a set rate per dumpster and then it gets picked up and so I can go back through. I would have to go to Serkil's bills that go directly to Moriah to see how many dumpsters were picked up, but I still won't know the tons.

MASCARENAS: Gotcha, sure.

DOUGAN: Other than Serkil many have those records, but I'm not necessarily privy to them, because that's a contract between them and Moriah.

MASCARENAS: Sure, understood.

MONTY: Which is being hauled by our equipment though, right?

DOUGAN: It is, it is and it's for a town, but it is all being hauled through our equipment and because it's not subject to going through our accounting system, the equipment replacement plan that we put in place a few years ago, those dollars that are per ton aren't subject to that either. That C&D isn't subject to that, follow me? Sorry Todd.

HODGSON: That's okay, I mean these are all details of how this functions.

DOTY: I am sure that it will probably add to the problem, but we have our own cell in North Elba, but we're within two years of being maxed out. So, I hate to add to your list, but soon we're going to have to deal with it.

MASCARENAS: That's what we do.

HODGSON: So, a little bit more detail. Some of these facilities have scales and those facilities that have scales are part of the County system, I'll call it. So, for instance, the Lewis station...

DOUGAN: Can I interrupt you? Truck scales

HODGSON: Truck scales, yes, not bag scales.

DOUGAN: Not bag scales, truck scales.

HODGSON: So, those scales exist at those sites, because it's part of the county system.

MONTY: But not for our transfer station.

DOUGAN: Yeah, your transfer station is separate.

MONTY: It's separate, we have no scales.

HODGSON: So, they exist at the Elizabethtown/Lewis site. They also exist at North Elba and they exist also in Schroon Lake, because of how the system is orchestrated. So, as we take the look at the contract with Serkil, those are some of the things that we need to keep in mind of how the infrastructure was put together.

Also, from this, of interest, just the list of compactor, what they are, small, large, or none in some cases. Most towns manage their own metal, it's not a part of Serkil and the contract that we have with them. Some have recycling through the County, some do not. So, you get the picture that although each town belonging in Essex County, each town is very different. Each town is very different, it has different challenges, has different needs, different emphasis on recycling, different things that they accept. So, the County has a, just a management system that's in the background.

TYLER: I just want to throw something out, too. Each town is very different and I don't know what kind of deal was cut, back in the day, for Westport to get their transfer station put in Elizabethtown, number one and number two, it's so unsafe. We've had multiple accidents there, just a couple of years ago a man fell and died. So, I would love to get that transfer station, with some help from the County, please, because it was done by the County to begin with, moved back into Westport, so we don't have to pay taxes on it, number one and number two, put in a much safer one in where people don't have to walk upstairs and throw their garbage in and put their recyclables away, because, I would dare to say we have 15-20 accidents in our site a year and one person died from it and so I would like to see some help from the County to move ours back to the Town of Westport. We have property by DPW, I mean it's one of my concerns for a long time and I don't know what else has to happen for something to change. Every time I approach somebody about it, well, it's the town's issue. Well, it is the Town's issue, but it's the County's issue when they cut the deal to put it in Etown to begin with and that is where they built it, so help.

WILSON: Ike, I think you're hitting on one of the most difficult things that we're going to have to address, is how the towns do things and what each town wants, versus if we're going to have a system that addresses what Jim's talking about, the expense of a contract, dealing with how much equipment is involved and how to pay for it. We're going to, this Committee is going to struggle with that balance of how do we, you know, continue to personalize that schedule of everybody's got their own operation. We're going to have some hard discussions about what is the town going to have to pay for? What does the County pay for? And then how we run them and that's going to be a hard one. You know when we talked about this a few years ago, about scales, who pays for the scales? You know we're going to have to...

TYLER: That's the problem you're going to have to figure out when deals were cut in the past and for each town, where some people got some and other people didn't, as far as that goes and the

infrastructure of the waste. We get this trailer in Westport, I don't know how in hell it can still be used, I really don't, it's just filled with holes; you wouldn't even see that in a dump somewhere.

WILSON: That's part of our charge, is how are we going to resolve these questions, so that this can be sustained with the changes we're going to face in more demand to pull out compostable materials, more demand to recycle and we lose revenue when we do that. So, we're going to struggle with just what you're saying, I think. How do we balance what each town wants, versus what we can afford as a system?

MONTY: And you've got to remember, you're talking County equipment with not County employees running, so something gets thrown in a compactor that shouldn't be in a compactor. The trailer gets damaged, the compactor gets damaged, because of negligence on the employee working there and it ends up being the County's responsibility to fix that negligence. I mean there's so many factors to consider. I would like to figure out a way I get 12 calls a week as to when my landfill station's open when it's pretty easy if you go to Lewis, but the Essex County says, Lewis Transfer Station on it. So, everybody calls, a dozen times a week we get calls and we're going to bring some C&D at 2:00. No, you're not, because we don't take C&D. well, it says on your website, but those are logistics and stuff.

DOUGAN: And I think we're going to, if we're really going to tackle solid waste and not just Serkil's contract or not just this or that, we've got to kind of rip the Band-Aid off on all those discussions, Ike.

TYLER: Yes

DOUGAN: This system was done a long time ago; I know that Schroon wants changes in the way that theirs is set up. In the middle of summer, they get Newcomb and Minerva's trash that has been compacted and has been sitting there for two weeks and it's 95° and it comes and it automatically smells. I get that, those discussions were put in place by people before this Board, years ago, that whole infrastructure. Where you're located, how she accepts it and we're going to have to kind of rip the Band-Aid off and have some almost fist to cuff type discussions here, if we're going to fix this. So, Todd is going to have a few more statements in this that are probably going to maybe rival everybody up, but that's my way of doing it.

GILLILLAND: The other issue, too, is one that we're facing with the abuse recyclables.

DOUGAN: And it is on our list and we may want to get the point that we have to ask to just discuss that.

GILLILLAND: Well, that's ongoing.

DOUGAN: We may have to discuss that without it being on tape, because of the potential, pending lawsuit.

HODGSON: So, just quickly, contract operations is, it's unlike any other division of DPW. It's in DPW, but Essex County doesn't run any transfer station or have any hours of operation. The contract services are provided through Essex County, but all those services are contracted out and run by County equipment, which has been said here. Essex County solid waste has no employees, manpower, budget or operations, essentially Essex County solid waste does not exist as a division. That's kind of a controversial statement, because, well Joe Pete can say, I kind of volunteered to take on some of this to try to help, because I know I've work a little bit with yourself and am certainly willing to come to your transfer station to start documenting some of the issues that exist, because that's the only way that we're going be able to unravel this. We have a contract that right now, if you put it back out, we're putting it back out with the same equipment, the same system, and going to make some of the same mistakes that we have currently. So, I'm interested in having this have a solution.

TYLER: When is that contract up?

HODGSON: Well, right now I think it's the end of the year.

WILSON: And we have to have either a new contract or withdraw by June. So, when I say we have a short-term goal, this Committee, we've got to make some discussions about Serkil in the next few months, you know to either limp along or change things dramatically, but it's a tight timeline.

HUGHES: Can we get a copy of that contract?

DOUGAN: You certainly can.

HUGHES: I don't know if I've ever seen. It would probably for this committee, if we're going to be looking at over the next couple of months and making a decision, it would be nice.

WINEMILLER: Can you just scan though?

DOUGAN: Oh, yeah, it's already out there and I can scan it.

WILSON: Just what's the date on it, off the top of, because that was part of our...

DOUGAN: This contract, this one is dated 2019 which was a renewal of a 2014.

HUGHES: Not super old, but worthy of review.

MONTY: I think we, did we extend it two years while we reviewed it?

DOUGAN: We did extend it to where we are now.

MASCARENAS: Todd's last statement is absolutely the case. At one point in time, Essex County Solid Waste did exist as a division, I don't know if you're going to go into that?

HODGSON: No, not this time.

MASCARENAS: Okay, so I will not take up any more time, but just so people are aware of that. It hasn't been, I've been here 23 years and it hasn't been since I've been here, but those people did exist and we did. The State deal is what put an end to that.

DOUGAN: The State deal kind of put an end to that.

WILSON: Around landfill closures?

MASCARENAS: Yes, absolutely.

DOUGAN: Around landfill closures and because Mike brought it up I'm going to just give a touch more detail to that is that did end it, plus there was a certain amount of money that came from the State that bought most of this equipment then; okay?

HODGSON: Correct

DOUGAN: More than 20 years ago most of the equipment was bought. Those of you that have been on the Board for a few years, about 3 years ago I came to the Board with a replacement plan and it's not replacing everything at once and we are making strides and the Board at that time put some money into equipment replacements that probably should have been put in place long prior to that and we're trying to work out of that some of these things.

MASCARENAS: A system that started 30 years ago, essentially, that amount that the State gave the County was somewhat self-sufficient; right? The amount paid for the system, that amount hasn't changed in that time; right? So, as the cost of everything continues to escalate that amount that we've been getting from the State when away, has now come back, well, it helps, it still meets the needs of the original deal.

WILSON: Yeah, it's just a drop in the bucket. So, I think that some of the issues that we're going to face as towns is, this is going to cost money, one way or the other. Either the County is going to be picking up the bill or we're going to continue to pick up the bill, it's going to cost money. We've got to decide how we're going to, where that money's going to go, who's going to pay? It's going to cost money, this is getting more expensive, not less and the work I've done with Todd, you know, we've, the Town of Keene to address safety issues, to address contamination of recycling. We bought our own shipping container just for cardboard. We're piloting using a Smartsheet to track our recycling with Serkil so we really know what's going on. We're investing in this and it's pointing out to me that

to accomplish the changes you're talking about it's going to cost our residents money, it's how are we going to organize that so it's the most cost effective and we can balance our town control with the efficiency and profitability of the system or profitability is the wrong word, self-sustaining finances for the system.

WINEMILLER: In lieu of that I just want to talk about something that I have talked to Todd about recently and I know that this is long term, this isn't short term, but long term I would like to see a facility in Essex County that uses the solid waste as fuel, that recycles tin and sells it as sheets, that recycles plastic and sells it and you know the glass, whatever, compost. You know we could have a composting facility and actually sell the bagged compost and I know that this is going to take a lot of money and time and it doesn't help us right this quick second, but I do think that we need to be proactive and look at this thing long term and we could actual turn our solid waste into something amazing for our County and not just a problem.

DOUGAN: So, we'll get to talk about the grant that we have right now and that plays into long term plans, such as that.

WINEMILLER: Okay

DOUGAN: Yours is amazing, your vision there, but it is something that we can work toward and will probably come out of this grant or when Todd gets the words of what that grant's supposed to do, we can talk about some of that.

GILLILLAND: You need to go down to the Casella Facility, down in southern Vermont and actually walk in and see what kind of operation that is and when you see that thing and the cost of actually doing that, your mind's going to change.

WINEMILLER: I understand.

GILLILLAND: I recommend that you go do that as the first chapter and they will give you a tour, their solid waste engineers will run it all through and you can see it. Doing what you're discussing there is very expensive and it's very, very labor intensive.

WINEMILLER: But, maybe we could partner with them, Shaun. It's not that far.

GILLILLAND: You mean partner with Casella?

WINEMILLER: Yeah, it's not that far away.

GILLILLAND: I think Keene, you a few years ago, you guys looked into using Casella and stuff. They're a for profit business and that's all they do.

WINEMILLER: But, I'm just saying if they have a facility that's already run in a way that's sustainable, you know maybe we should look at that.

GILLILLAND: But, we're not in the business in of trying to make money like a solid waste company like Casella is.

WINEMILLER: Right, I'm not saying to.

GILLILLAND: I would just recommend all members, everybody go down there, maybe we should organize a tour, so you can see what's involved in it.

WILSON: But, one thought though that I am taking from what you're saying, in a more general principal is, as I've talked with Jim and Todd about this, I think an important aspect of what we design is we have to be designing a system that responds to changes in recycling regulations and recycling markets. If we design something that's rigid like the system that we have now, here comes composting along and what are we going to do? You know we're going to lose like 30% of the revenue we generate going over the scales, because the composting material isn't going into the trash stream anymore. Instead of collecting money to dispose of it, we're going to be paying money to compost it. So, we've got to design a system that can respond to changes in regulations in the recycling market and how that looks, I don't know, but that's got to be a key thing, because we can't predict, you know nobody when we set up the system we have now predicted how much we would, revenue that we would be losing to recycling and then when the Chinese stopped buying materials and the bottom fell out of our revenue, you know we've got to be able to respond to stuff like that. So, that's the point, the most immediate point I take from what you're saying.

WINEMILLER: And a question, as far as what you just mentioned, where do our plastics go? So, we #1 and #2 and I don't know if Serkil has informed you all, they only informed me, because I called them with a question. On January 14th they told me they stopped taking #3 - #7, they're only doing #1 and #2 and I said, well were you going to let us all or you know? So, because I made that call I know, I don't know if you know. I don't know if anybody knows, but where are they going?

HODGSON: So, there is a good amount of material that is thrown out.

WINEMILLER: It's thrown out?

HODGSON: Yup, it's in the garbage and goes as a cost back to the County system. That's what happens.

WINEMILLER: So, we're recycling plastics to throw them away.

HODGSON: Absolutely.

DOUGAN: In all honestly, if you go to Casella's, you'll find the same thing, but this contract done in

2014 gives all recycling to Serkil. We play a very, very small role in it and then if they generate revenue, good for them. If they decide it's cheaper for them to throw it out, oh well, we kind of don't care, other than they're supposed to dispose of it properly; which is what the other issue that we might talk about here, today. So, an issue with this contract, okay and if you're going to have a very strict thing on more levels of recycling it will cost you more in the future, similar to having Casella there. When he had Casella, it was Zero Sort; right? It cost you a lot of money, but we all know, because we know some people that have worked at Casella, many of those things that come back to them as recycled by somebody still go out as garbage. They still handle it as garbage.

MASCARENAS: Well the profit margin is what Shaun eluded to.

WILSON: So, Davina you're talking about an issue that's market driven and I tell you the best resource that I found for a neutral opinion is the North Elba employee, Shannon Porter who runs their recycling and in terms of tour, what Shaun recommended and going to see Shannon, because we talked about that. They do the utmost to try and recycle to protect the environment and recoup revenue and they bale themselves, then store it until the market is strong and they've had to put stuff back into trash, because there's no market and they run out of storage space. So, that's market driven and that's what I mean by we've got to be able to respond to this stuff, but I would encourage you to talk to Shannon, just to see how the nuts and bolts of it work, because I had those same questions and then I realized that's not in our control. So, then if we're going to design a system, how are we going to deal with market forces like that that effect the, you know, the bottom line of our town operations, our county operations, whatever it's going to be. We've got to keep that in mind as we're setting up our next contract and building new facilities. How are we going to respond to market, you know what's the best thing? To farm it out? To do it ourselves? A blend and I don't know the answer to that.

WINEMILLER: I'm sorry, I'm just, I'm trying to wrap my brain around this and I know I'm kind of getting a little bit off track here, so I do apologize to everyone, but that frustrates me like I can't even express right now.

WILSON: You know, let's talk and I'll share with you my experience. I did two trips with Board members and did you come to North Elba, once? But, let's talk afterwards, so I can share that with you.

HODGSON: The goal of this discussion is to channel that frustration.

WINEMILLER: Thank you

DOUGAN: Todd's only part way through his presentation, but he's got a second one, because we know there's a lot of issues. There's a lot to discuss here and we're going to get down to about three topics that we want to just focus on today and everything else fits into those, if we can. I appreciate the energy that everybody has here, because it's going to take that for us, I mean it's

been broken in a way, it's been broke for a long time and we want to fix it.

MONTY: And there's a lot of factors, 100 factors. I mean you and I have had the conversation how many times about the independents that come there. The independents, Serkil doesn't really supervise them then they come here, they go down over the scales, but you've got recycling that's thrown in there. I mean how many times have I told you, I've seen them come down and throw 1s in the 2s and you go and look over and half is 1s, which they separate and Essex County gets billed for it, because they take it and throw it in the compactor and so there's so many mitigating factors by having them there.

HODGSON: That problem that you just went over works just like this; the contractor operates the transfer station alongside of the Town of Lewis, not required or run by Essex County, roughly 2,000 tons are processed with Essex County equipment with no offsetting costs back to Essex County for preparing or doing anything. So, we have a rough figure of what that is that they run their business doing that with our equipment. Essex County Purchasing, they do the billing for this system and they actually were responsible for the budget prior to 2018. Jim has since taken over some of the budget responsibilities, mainly because of equipment replacements and other things that needed to happen in the system and because of system complaints and just real quick, Town of North Elba, this is the best in Essex County and at least a decent role model to play. If you look at the recycling, it's very clear what they do and what they don't do and this is Essex County, that is the back of the recycling trailer, they typically look about like that.

WINEMILLER: That could be our trailer any given day and people complain about it all the time and it's incredibly difficult to manage, because people go in there and they throw and it's just a mess.

HODGSON: You can't navigate between the doors that are in there, things are generally not very well sorted out, there's intention, but it doesn't work that way.

So, okay, that was supposed to be, just a what it is, but so we're going to get rid of that one.

DOUGAN: How many employees to you have, Derek, do you know?

DOTY: Shannon has six, I think we're down one right now, it should be seven. She's on the phone all week long, every week to find and justify markets.

HODGSON: Yes, that's what it takes.

WILSON: And you also have great support from the highway department in terms of equipment to handle stuff.

DOTY: It's a husband/wife deal.

WILSON: Exactly, but having that already budgeted support makes your recycling operation more

affordable, because you don't need to own a giant loader, because they can send one over.

DOTY: Yes, but we do have dedicated machinery.

WILSON: Oh, yeah, yeah, but not quite as much.

DOTY: And the landfill carries itself for us, at this point.

HODGSON: Yes, yes

WOOD: Todd, can you send that to us?

HODGSON: Sure

WOOD: Okay, thank you.

DOUGAN: Just to follow-up on that one statement, because I just can't help myself, my sorry. This is an enterprise fund for the County, which means it's supposed to pay for itself; okay? It's supposed to pay for itself. Last year, 2021, the interfund transfer was \$916,000.00 to this enterprise fund. So, the closest thing most of you have to an enterprise fund is your water and sewer, special districts; right? They're only supposed to be paid by the people who use them, so this enterprise is only supposed to be paid by the people who use it, so this enterprise is only supposed to be paid by the people who use it. So, \$916,000.00, the County put in last year, not including paying for our own trash that we generate, as a business; okay? \$916,000.00, roughly 12,000 tons was done up there.

WINEMILLER: That's ridiculous.

DOUGAN: That would be \$76.00 a ton that we would have to raise the price to cover that. So, just to, you know and this isn't anywhere near the level of service that you brought up, Davina. So, that's just putting numbers where numbers are.

WILSON: That's helpful.

HODGSON: Okay, I need three things from you guys today, so just in case I get distracted, again. So, this is just a list of some issues and tasks and we are going to add to this. So, I need that feedback from Ike, from other Supervisors that have issues at their stations. We need to compile a list, because we need to make sure that we're working for solving at least some of those issues moving forward, but for today, Task One; we need something to identify needs, establish goals and create a mission and this is some thoughts that Joe Pete and myself have been back and forth on a few things, but I think it's important that we have at least some goal stated, because in the background I want to go back to that to make sure that the things I am working on are pushing that goal. So, if we could get some thoughts on that, it doesn't have to be today, but I really would like to

have that feedback, so that we know what we're shooting for.

WINEMILLER: You want an email, Todd, is that you're asking?

HODGSON: That would be fine. You can email Joe Pete, you could email me.

TYLER: Facility ordinated questions or this is for the county?

WINEMILLER: The towns?

DOUGAN: Both

TYLER: The major goal right now is get the contract situated.

DOUGAN: That's one goal, but I think, I guess I better step back on a couple of things. What's the difference in some of the towns? Todd told you the difference in equipment, but Newcomb and Minerva, they don't charge their residents when they come in, per bag, it's all on their taxes because they have so much State land. So, they turn it all into the State as part of their general fund taxes. So, they don't have an issue with revenue, they cover it, unlike many of the rest of you, not a big deal.

HODGSON: And if you look at it, their trash is more than double the Town of Schroon's, because of that.

DOUGAN: Because, of that, you know, so Todd showed a picture there of one of the trailers what was a good example of a relatively bad one. We've got pictures of relatively good ones; okay, with places that take more trash than that one does, more recyclables than that one does, it comes down to an attendant. Again, when I said we're going to have to rip the Band-Aid off, we've got to all talk about our own role in this. Some of it is County and some of it is each town and some towns aren't going to be as invested if the State's already paying a big portion of it. Derek's got recycling under control, C&D's coming, I didn't even know C&D was coming and was going to be a problem before long.

DOTY: Only because we can't dig another cell, we're maxed out.

DOUGAN: Absolutely, understood. So, I want your issues, both from a County, from a service standpoint and your station itself, Ike. I want both. I want to hear complaints and I want to know what they are so I can solve this permanently; okay? That's where we want to go with this.

WILSON: Because, I can't help but think that we're going to have to have more uniformity of operations. A lot more uniformity of operations and it's going to, again, be a balancing act, too, for smaller towns or like Minerva/Newcomb that are such an outlier, but you know to get these things

under control so we can manage them for the next 5-10 years we're going to have to agree on some operational things that have been left to the towns in the past.

MONTY: I think we're going to need to manage it a lot longer than 5-10 years, we've got to get the foundation built, so it can be managed...

WINEMILLER: Indefinitely

MONTY: For 25 years or 50 years and if we keep bandaiding it, I don't think.

TYLER: With the problems that the systems has now...

LEWIS: I voted no when they wanted to put it in Lewis anyway.

DOTY: Todd, in order for any of the towns to move ahead with the 3 questions, is it safe to assume legislature is going to take food waste out?

HODGSON: These are things that we're going to have to deal with in the future.

WILSON: It's already a law, the regulations are going to be rolling out.

DOTY: I mean revenue is going down, we know our costs are going up.

GILLILLAND: The other thing you have, too, I was told and I can't remember who told me this, they expect another five years on the Franklin Landfill.

WOOD: And then it's Pennsylvania?

GILLILLAND: We don't know where it's going after that. That's one of the impetus for us is to reduce the tonnage that's actually going to the landfill.

DOUGAN: Our contract with them ends on 2024, with Franklin County and I have heard that they're getting pretty full and that so when they get full their issue will become ours.

WILSON: And that's why I think we were talking about, you know a system that responds to the demands of new regulations, we have control over costs and staffing and equipment, if we have to adapt to that, you know if we've got to truck farther.

TYLER: It's frustrating that we're sitting here with all these problems and it's all been a State mandated problems, basically.

MONTY: Think about everything that goes on in Government.

TYLER: We've got to work to fix their problem.

WINEMILLER: Well, part of it is, how do you, I understand that you're supposed to be composting, that's a law; right?

WILSON: It isn't hitting our sized facilities, yet.

WINEMILLER: Right, but I'm just saying, are we supposed to be tearing open their trash to see if they threw their coffee grounds in there. How do you police that? How do you even police recycling? You know, if they bring in black garbage bags it could be full of recycling, how are we supposed to do this?

TYLER: Enforcing, that's an Albany thing that they mandate all this stuff, but then they say...

WINEMILLER: Figure it out.

MONTY: Frankly, I'm not going to ask my attendants to go through people's garbage.

WINEMILLER: Thank you, me either. Me either.

MONTY: Not going to happen.

WILSON: But, if we make a system that's relatively easy to recycle and saves you money.

WINEMILLER: Right

WILSON: But, if you're still scaling your trash, so it's costs you, one of the big reasons we got rid of zero sort, people loved it, because it was easy, you just fling a bag in, but 40% of it was trash that wasn't going over our scales, so we were losing revenue because it wasn't going over the scale and then we were paying for contaminated zero sort. It was over \$2,000.00 a month we were losing just on zero sort and in a teeny operation, that's huge. So, but to get back on track, Todd.

MASCARENAS: Can I ask one question and I apologize, something that would help me a lot, and we probably don't know this number and maybe we could get, we have a couple private haulers in our County, what kind of trash are they handling? So, when we speak about cost and you speak about people that are paying for a system and aren't using it, there's a large number of our constituency that are absolutely are paying another source to get rid of their garbage.

WOOD: And they're paying a lot.

MASCARENAS: And paying for a system that they're not using. So, how much garbage are they

taking out of our system and I know the reasons why; I can tell you personally, it's affordable for me to do it. I have a private hauler. It's about the same cost as if I were to take to my thing, the difference is they come to my house and I don't have to spend a Saturday doing such.

WILSON: And if they haul directly to Franklin County and dump it, we don't get any revenue and we're losing potential scaling. That's where having a solid waste district where all solid waste generated in our county would have to be disposed of here, so at least it would go over our scales.

HODGSON: So, let me just say this, we need to have an email, so that these issues can be logged into there and so that I can end up with creating that mission statement. I don't know if, Joe Pete, I don't know if you want all that go to you or whether we just have like a designated site or something that we can put that information in.

DOUGAN: Why don't, they've been asked to email this, so email this and then have everybody respond to that email.

HODGSON: So, that way we can...

MONTY: Then you'll have the individual emails.

HODGSON: Okay, so that's Task One. Task Two; this is the grant award to Essex County, actually there's one mistake here, on the grant award, it's the grant and then it says award, that award is actually a match. It's a \$20,000.00 match that is carried, actually, in DPW's budget, Jim carried that in the budget that was passed. So, it's a total of \$40,000.00. Now, what is this \$40,000.00 able to be used for? It is specifically for an engineering study. This specifically is aimed out a local government efficiency. So, that is the charter according to the application that has already been submitted and we received the award. This is the current description here. It's a shared services to reduce the cost to the taxpayer, specifically to explore things like food waste, recycling, composting, some of the very things, Davina, that you brought up are in this description. So, that's going to require a bunch of assistance, probably for whoever is the consultant on this job, that's going to require the assistance of your towns, because of the data that you guys have and the data that Essex County specifically has, scale data. So, we have a little bit of data collection to assist whoever the consultant is and that is the identified need. So, as you're looking through this presentation, please read this aspect of it. This is what it's aimed at. So, this is the deliverable to Essex County to try and help us and how this is a small seed or a program that gets much better. That program has millions of dollars available to assist us to get there. So, these are the first steps to getting to a much bigger program.

WILSON: So, this is the entryway for us for the long term stuff. I don't think we talked about the timeline in this, probably isn't going to help us with the Serkil decision though, just because of the timeline for a consultant to do this right. So, we'll be kind of on our own in the short term with Serkil, but for the long term this will help and it gets us in the door for future LGE and MERF and all these

other grant programs that it can help us with.

MASCARENAS: The program we use for EMS.

HODGSON: Yes

WILSON: Yes

MASCARENAS: So, just for Supervisors that have been here for a while that was in the first step in that application.

DOTY: So, could Todd or Joe clarify for me, the equipment was bought and owned, the tractor trailers, the containers, the scales, compactors, that's owned by Essex County?

HODGSON: That's correct.

DOTY: If Serkil is taken out of the contract, can't you buy some time and we start hauling?

HODGSON: Yes

DOUGAN: We can.

MONTY: Well, that means hiring.

DOTY: Well, hiring.

MONTY: You've got to get more employees.

DOTY: Well, exactly.

TYLER: Good luck with that one.

HODGSON: That would be a rough Monday, but we would get through it.

WILSON: And maybe some of those Serkil employees would want to work for the County.

DOTY: Of course, I'm just looking for an extension, because the timeline you guys, is impossible.

WINEMILLER: It is.

WILSON: Yeah

DOTY: Along with that, you mentioned maybe millions are available to help get set up. So, bio-digesters will become something that's feasible?

HODGSON: So, this is, we address this now in this report and that gives us the direction.

DOTY: Okay, I get it.

MASCARENAS: I got one approved, years ago, bio-digester through Cleaner Greener.

DOTY: We have a design ready.

MASCARENAS: It was for you, you were supposed to get it.

DOTY: Yeah, we came up \$200,000.00 short and in today's market that's a Band-Aid. We worked 5 years to put that program together.

MASCARENAS: Yeah

HODGSON: So, this is the schedule for the grant. So, we have to actually act pretty quickly. There's a grant agreement, execution that is in March, next month. So, we need to go out to RFP very quickly, from what I need from this Task Force, I need the listed partners, we are going to need to revise that list of partners. So, there's going to be three towns that participate and participation looks something like this; some data gathering, something like a Smartsheet for instance; which has been the mechanism that the Town of Keene and the County have worked on to create communication with our contracted hauler, the County and the Town. So, I don't want to put words on your mouth on how well it's worked or not, but it was a start.

WILSON: Yeah, so as a step that the Town of Keene took to managing our recycling hauling, Todd and you helped us set up a Smartsheet, it's mobile, so our facilities manager can just put in a request for the glass container to be hauled, the cardboard, the recycling trailer and we know when it's submitted, when it was responded to and then we can enter in the tonnage from each type of material or when there was a problem. I can remember when there was poor maintenance of it, was the cardboard baler and you know, it gives us good documentation about when Serkil is, has problem and it has worked well and our attendant and our manager both really like it.

TYLER: I just want to throw out there. We've been, I see these grants for this stuff all the time, we participate in them and we got \$100,000.00 in Westport for a thing, for an engineering firm who didn't do shit. They didn't do anything. They came and we threw some numbers and they got \$100,000.00 for doing, we didn't know anymore before they started than after. So, how are we going to know is this is going to do anything?

HODGSON: I think it's because, you know, the County's...

DOUGAN: Todd and I have left that engineering firm.

TYLER: I am serious, these people get these grant monies and they don't do anything with them.

GILLILLAND: But, you got that study and put it in the package to get the rest of the money from the State.

WILSON: And I think though that...

TYLER: I understand that Shaun, but that was the problem with when we got, we were supposed to get more money, because they were supposed to come up with a plan and didn't.

GILLILLAND: The same thing happened to me with I and I.

TYLER: Exactly

WILSON: But, I would say though, with the sense of urgency we have, the impending doom for each of our operations and the County operations, like I'm not going to spend this money and let them give us some, you know, canned report, because this is too important to me.

MASCARENAS: And I think that anybody that comes to us is going to run out of the door, not wanting the job. But, I look at to Todd, I look to Hugh as experts. I think sometimes at the town level it gets difficult, because you were contracting with that expert and they're supposed to be guiding the process and sometimes that doesn't work out in your best interest. I think having a staff of engineering here at the County that can ask those questions from a professional level, I mean often you had to be sitting at the table as the Planner, who everything I learned from engineering was through osmosis and I would pick up on sometimes, but in order to really get to the heart of what needs to happen to need your own experts and I think we have them. Do they have the ability to do it all on their own with their current workload? No, but do they have the ability to guide a process in some firm that supposed to be? I think they do, not to say that we don't get crap, but I think we're in a better position to guide it than a town is with the resources that we have in place, as opposed to a community.

WILSON: And it's a mandatory step, as Shaun said, we've got to do this or we're closing the door on all the future support.

HODGSON: So, what I need is just a recommendation from this Task Force to go out to RFP. The budget portion of this is already been approved. It was in the approved budget, so a direction from you guys and we're ready.

WILSON: Do we need to establish the pilot towns before we do that?

HODGSON: We do.

MASCARENAS: Do you need your goals to develop the RFP?

HODGSON: I need those, too.

MASCARENAS: Task one.

MONTY: So, do you have in your mind, Todd, three towns that you think would be good pilot towns?

HODGSON: Because we already have process in Keene I would recommend them. I'm not sure, I'm not looking at Joe Pete, so maybe he's shaking his head no, but because there's already process there, so it's easy to show and that's what I would be looking for, is just actually what is happening there. So, if you have a communication problem with Serkil maybe you want to volunteer to be one of those towns. If recycling is something that is very, very important to you, maybe you want to be one of those towns.

DOUGAN: Let me, let me give you one thing to think about, okay, if we're really going to look at this data, okay, Joe Pete, himself has looked at even what his attendants do and is being critical of himself, being critical of the town at the same time. So, if you're going to be part of this pilot you have to be willing to look at that, also. Not just what is Serkil doing or not doing. That whole Smartsheet, the spot where I've been these past few years is the guy that gets the call when Serkil didn't show up and what I hear is, so and so my attendant made a phone call and then I hear from Serkil, no we never got a phone call from so and so and I never know what the real answer is; okay? And many times it's Serkil, but sometimes it's not; okay?

MONTY: Absolutely

DOUGAN: So, if you're going to part of this pilot, be willing to look at yourself, again, I use the analogy, rip the Band-Aid off, here, it's, I'm just a rental equipment agency right now, is what I am. I put scales and compactors on your sites and Serkil drives all kinds of equipment to them, runs it into the ground and your operators, some of them do a great job and some don't care and so all I get is complaint calls, I never get anybody that calls and says how wonderful things are today, oh, sorry Shaun.

MONTY: I was just thinking, because of the situation of us sharing that with Serkil, I don't know how accurate that would be for us. You know what I'm saying?

DOUGAN: I don't know that you need people to commit today, I mean if you're on this Committee then you'll be involved in it the whole time, as far as discussion, if there are people here that what

to. I mean you're kind of giving yours up.

WINEMILLER: No, we didn't give ours up.

DOUGAN: Okay

WINEMILLER: And actually I want to speak to this, so I got, right before Christmas, I know it's late, I'm sorry, I'll be fast, right before Christmas I got a call from the owner of Serkil, who is, I've never spoke to.

MONTY: Tony

WINEMILLER: Rich

DOUGAN: Richie

WINEMILLER: And he said that our recycling trailer was full of trash and they were charging us for another thing of trash and etc., so back and forth, back and forth and what I found out was, people were taking their, we charge by the bag, they were talking their bag of garbage, throwing it in the recycling trailer, so they didn't have to pay the \$2.00 or \$4.00 for a bag of trash and so I went down there and I worked it and I was appalled and shocked at what was going on down there and it was life altering experience to say the least. So, we are now committed to having two people on, we're only open Saturday, 8:00-4:00, we've got one person taking care of trash and one person who's the recycling police; okay? So, we're going to pay two people. Now, I apologize if I offend anyone, I am so furious right now that I am paying another person to police the plastic and you're telling me that they're sending it to the garbage.

GILLILLAND: That's a national issue.

WINEMILLER: Well, that's bologna, it's bologna.

GILLILLAND: It's still, it's way above our paygrade.

WINEMILLER: I understand that, but it still makes my blood boil when I'm trying to be proactive, hire another person, pay another person and they're throwing it away anyway. Why I am bothering?

TYLER: There goes your warm and fuzzy feeling.

WINEMILLER: Thank you, it makes me very upset, it makes me angry.

DOUGAN: So, you're volunteering to be one of the pilots?

WINEMILLER: I will be a pilot, but I don't know how that would help you, because we are the smallest one.

HUGHES: Maybe a large, medium and small town?

WILSON: Yeah, one from each in that first slide.

DOTY: Well, actually, I think using me is not a good idea, because we have a set system and we don't want somebody disproving a set system. Now, I do think you should utilize Shannon, though, because her knowledge is unbelievable and I am sure we will help anyway, but I hope my point is true and that I don't help the cause, because that's one faction that is kind of clicking.

HODGSON: Yes

GILLILLAND: I agree with you, Tom's facility would be very good for the large. I'll talk to him.

WINEMILLER: I mean if you want something a little bigger, I mean ours is the smallest, so I don't know if that's good.

HODGSON: That would be in the small category.

WINEMILLER: I am happy to do it.

TYLER: A small, medium and if you get Tom you get the large.

HODGSON: So, we just should have that finalized, as that was pointed out. These are really details that we need to have in the RFP, so those three systems and those goals for going on the RFP. Task Three; we are looking to, besides being a volunteer for the pilot program we're looking to, try to as many facilities that agree, implement Smartsheet or communications. This will help our data collection effort, because every time there's a pull and gets logged and now we actually see information that we don't for recycling from each town. As you notice from the first slide, although there is a bulk recycling number, we don't actually have data on what is received from each town and that's, so that's something that I would...

DOTY: We do have that.

HODGSON: So, that is handled totally outside of the County system and it works very well.

HUGHES: Is Smartsheet an actually application?

HODGSON: It is, it's a web application.

HARWOOD: So, essentially it's an online, Excel, basically automation so it communicates.

HUGHES: So, you need an iPad or an iPhone.

WILSON: We're doing it on the phone and it's really easy, it's easier than making a phone call.

DOTY: One other fraction of recycling I should mention. As revenue goes down, you've got glass. There's no market for glass.

HODGSON: Yes, yes

DOTY: We use our option through DEC to stockpile for up to a year and we're looking at glass crushers, right now.

HODGSON: Yes

DOTY: And we're holding off on a major investment until we make a trip to Jefferson County that does it for that whole area. It's an expensive piece of machinery to run, but again it has a cost to running it and a loss in revenue. So, do you put it in the garbage and take the revenue.

TYLER: I heard there's a place in Essex that will take it.

MONTY: That's Willsboro.

WILSON: But, then you use the product for like road fill.

GILLILLAND: Yeah, if you mix it with sand, with natural sand it makes road bed stuff.

DOTY: Right, and we have all the information, but to spend \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00 you've got to be prepared.

HODGSON: And that's what you see in red, everything in red are things that are more or less decisions or coming decisions; which are regarding glass. That is a very big issue.

So, anyway, that's really the end of things, I think. So, I guess, if we could. I will email the presentations, both of them out to the committee members here or actually I will probably do that through the minutes and so forth. So, I will send that to you.

GARVEY: That will be great and I will disperse them.

HODGSON: So, that way when you send that email, my email will be in there, as well and that way you can email with the items for Task One, Two and Three.

WOOD: I am not a committee member, but I am Town of Schroon, got a lot of unhappy people, that's why I'm here, including our employees, which why I didn't volunteer our town, but I would love to get this so that all our Board members are pretty new, two are brand new, two have two years under their belt and that's it, so this will help them understand. Thank you.

HODGSON: Okay, anything else?

WILSON: So, just to make sure that we don't leave the LGE grant to the last minute, if we meet in, well next week I got a Recruitment and Retention, if we wait two weeks is that too long?

HODGSON: Well, what I will do is I'll begin to work another, what we need to go out on the street for the RFP and I will have some sections that will just bolt on some of the mission and the pilot.

DOTY: So, we'll be getting that in an email?

HODGSON: Yes

MONTY: Would it be wise to try and get something ready for DPW or just wait until Ways and Means?

DOUGAN: Because, it's specifically budgeted...

MASCARENAS: Right

DOUGAN: Because it's specifically budgeted, I don't need approval from the Board to go out to RFP. I don't need approval.

WILSON: Yeah, it's just this group that needs to forward the recommendation.

DOUGAN: We wanted this committee to know what we were going to ask.

MASCARENAS: What did the application say we were going to do? So, what were the goals, objectives, initiatives in the grant application?

HODGSON: Right in the slideshow.

MASCARENAS: The was a small application. What are your deliverables?

HODGSON: So, there is a report that is a deliverable out there.

DOUGAN: The report was about looking at the efficiencies of this is; okay? Is really what it was, so it's data driven to look at where can you have efficiencies. One of them might be, some of it does go

back to the operations in the Serkil contract, but it won't be the focus of it.

MASCARENAS: The application wasn't that well defined.

DOUGAN: That's right, the application, if you will even remember there was a Board resolution to even apply for it we applied for it and it was due like a week later. So, Community Resources applied fairly quickly to even go after this.

WILSON: So, if I schedule a meeting for March 28th, no February 28th, two weeks from now, is that enough time, but too much? Does everybody feel that would work?

GARVEY: So, Housing follows Ways and Means. So, you do could it following Housing.

WINEMILLER: But, then you're holding up others.

HUGHES: What's before Ways and Means?

MASCARENAS: EMS

GARVEY: Yes, EMS, which is about a ½ hour, they're at 9:00. You could do it at 8:00?

WINEMILLER: But, we could also do a Go to Meeting. I could set it up, Ken could set it up. We could meet anytime, right from our own office. We don't have to be in here.

MASCARENAS: It is difficult to jam everything in Mondays.

WINEMILLER: It is.

WILSON: We could aim for like the Wednesday of next week to get it in a little earlier.

WINEMILLER: We could the 23rd and set it up for 1:00 or something. I could do a link.

WILSON: Any change you could go Zoom? My computer does not work with Go To Meeting.

WINEMILLER: I only do Go To Meeting.

DOTY: I am out on the 23rd, I have two public meetings.

WILSON: The 24th then, would a midday meeting on the 24th work, Jim, Todd?

MONTY: What is midday? Afternoons are usually tough for me.

WILSON: Like 11:00 am, then?

MONTY: That's fine.

WILSON: 11:00 AM on the 24th, is that good Davina?

WINEMILLER: I can do 11:00 AM, do you want to set it up then, Joe Pete and do Zoom?

WILSON: What do people prefer? If I'm the only non-zoomer.

MASCARENAS: Everything works for me.

MONTY: Whatever's fine.

WILSON: So, I'll schedule a zoom for the 24th and 11:00 AM

GARVEY: If you send the link, I can forward.

WILSON: Thank you everybody, this is going to be a hardworking group, so thank you for your time and energy and passion.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 12:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board