

## **SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE**

Monday, February 13, 2023 - 11:00 AM

Joe Pete Wilson, Chairperson

Chairman Wilson called this Solid Waste Task Force meeting to order at 11:32 AM with the following in attendance: Derek Doty, Shaun Gilliland, Ken Hughes, Jim Monty, Tom Scozzafava, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Mike Mascarenas, and Jim Dougan.

Also Present: Rob Wick and Dina Garvey.

WILSON: Okay, thank you everybody. We'll call this Solid Waste Task Force to order. We've skipped a month here, so we've got to refresh our memories and get back on track. So, the first two agenda items are with that in mind. Getting us up to speed in what's taken place so I asked Jim if he could give us an update on the glass crusher.

DOUGAN: Yeah, Mandela our manufacturer of the crusher, we're trying to coordinate a delivery date and it looks like it's going to be the middle of March, right now. We had, the concrete pad is poured there. We're waiting for some electrical materials to come in that we're going to install ourselves, but we should have that ready for that middle of March date so that when that shows up we'll start to begin to put the pieces together and then hook up the power to it. It should be the middle of March.

WILSON: So, it sounds like that's actually going smoothly. It's great to see that something in the supply chain is moving, so that's good. That's really good news. Thank you.

DOTY: This is just a little bit off to the side, but in North Elba we're dealing with a lot of glass and as you probably know the DEC, were awarded, 12 months, I think it is, to be able to stockpile it before we come up with a plan. It's very easy to see that we will need extended time. So, you can guess where I'm going with this. Once the glass crusher is here, can the County help our glass situation by trucking down here or whatever? Because we had researched a glass crusher and had much the same information that you have presented to us. So, I'm guilty of backing off, hoping that we might be able to use this system. I realize that you've got a mountain to worry about without our little pile.

DOUGAN: Once we get past the West Family glass it's fairly easy for us to keep up with our 150 tons a year. I think we'll go through that fairly easily. So, it's the influx that we're going to have cleaning up 10 years of going to the West Family property and what we've been stockpiling ourselves since the kybosh was put to Serkil. So, we'll see how it works.

DOTY: It could turn into a minimal revenue source. I don't know how many other towns would need the service like ours.

DOUGAN: You're the only one.

DOTY: Okay

DOUGAN: You're the only one that deals with recycling. Everybody else comes through our system.

MASCARENAS: I could tell you, too, Mr. Doty and Rob could help you with this. Not to bog down the meeting, but we're going to put in for the glass crusher for a grant through DEC. Chairman Gilliland and I, Jim, had went up and met with them and they encouraged us to do so. I would think that you should also, try. I think with the amount that you're producing there, you would absolutely be a good candidate to get that. The way the grant works is you can buy it upfront or after the fact when you're name comes up on the list. If it's an eligible item, you get it approved. So, basically Jim and I are looking at this and the Chairman and saying when this thing breaks, we've already got it replaced through this grant. We're just going to keep going with that over the long term. So, it's a good opportunity and if you need help, Anna's department is working on it for us, right now. So, that's a takeback for Rob.

WILSON: Any other questions about the glass crusher? All right, thank you, Jim. We had our little hiatus, so getting up to speed on the Serkil contract would be good. Maybe Jim and Mike could update us on that?

DOUGAN: Yup, the contract was signed, the very end of 2022, the first couple of days of 2023. So, we have that 3-years extension done. The things that we wanted added to the contract, the \$25.00 a ton coming back to the County for any C & D or solid waste that Serkil handles, directly through outside haulers, we are getting that back from them. I have to get January's records from them to start that and it did include, in that contract, the cleanup of the West property, DEC requirements and we have seen plans go back and forth to DEC that have been approved. So, that is supposed to start fairly soon. I don't have a date from Serkil when they're going to start removing that glass, but it was all included in the contract.

WILSON: So, that means with the 3-year extension, we have until the end of 2025 to do our restructuring of our system?

DOUGAN: Correct

WILSON: Did you have anything else to add?

MASCARENAS: No, I'm just grateful that we have a contractor in place and garbage isn't piling up throughout the County. So, I thank the Board for letting us move forward on that.

WILSON: Yes, that's a relief.

I am going to jump to one smaller scale item and then back to the whole system. I've been talking to Casella as we've been going through this process and one of the things with the new food

waste regulations is exploring some type of recycling, composting with food waste and Casella was interested, but what they asked me is to put together a list of towns who might be interested and the trick is going to be the geography of it. In order to service this and make it work, it's going to depend on the layouts of the towns. For a pilot they're not going to want to try and have one town at one end of the county and one town at the end of the other. So, if we get some towns that are interested, they want to follow-up with us and talk about how we might put together a pilot food waste/composting program.

DOTY: Joe Pete, I don't know if these folks realize, we went through a 5-year process of both funding engineering, had everything down. We came up \$200,000.00 short in a \$1.4 million project. So, there is a lot of information on a bio-digester project that started with Tammy Morgan, a biology teacher at the Lake Placid school, working with both Clarkson University and Pace University. So, there is a great start, if you will, on moving this thing forward.

WILSON: Great, thank you.

DOTY: NYSERDA was very involved as well.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, it was Cleaner Greener.

DOTY: And it is still at the top of the list, willing to help this effort go through. Are you suggesting there's legislation on food waste, already to take it out of the landfills? I know we're not far from it.

WILSON: Yes, there is legislation, most of our towns and businesses don't qualify for the current regulation, but I would anticipate that those regulations are going to change and that is one of the things we'll be talking about in item agenda 4, how do we design a system that can adapt to changing regulations? So, the legislation is there and the regulation will be catching up with us.

GILLILLAND: There's one thing, and I was a big believer in the development of composting, my farm, we're really pushing forward working with composting, relieving the use of chemical fertilizers for agricultural uses, but one thing that the super-pro composting people haven't been looking at is the phosphorus in the compost and at the same time we're getting nailed right and left on the phosphorus going into the lake. I was told by DEC that EPA is going to be coming out within the next year with an entire and new TMDL phosphorus notice, everything is going to change. I don't want any towns and stuff be caught in that and all of a sudden they've got a big, huge pile of stuff that they have to deal with. You know, because you can't leave it in a mountain of compost, that maybe caught in some phosphorus runoff regulations. So, I'm not saying turnoff, I'm just saying we need to go into this with a very cautious eye, because we may get nailed and stuff like that.

WILSON: And that's a good point Shaun and it brings up the issue of scale with composting and I think coming from a smaller town, it's got to be small scale. We don't have room to store materials. So, these would be the kind of things we would want to work out if we're going to do it.

What are we hoping to learn? What's the scale we're going to operate at?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, Joe Pete, if I could just recommend if Casella could tell us where they want to go and who they want to do it with, I think we could probably start there.

WILSON: And I approached them.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, if they said, Keene, maybe Elizabethtown, whatever they want and then we could approach those communities. I think if we put it out to every town, they're going to well, we want to do it, we want to do it and then they're going to end up spread out all over the place.

WILSON: That's a good point.

SCOZZAFAVA: For the larger towns, it's going to be very difficult and expensive. Jim and Ike, both know at Moriah Shock, we composted all the food waste and let me tell you, you've got to turn that pile daily. There's a lot involved in it. You don't just throw it and let it sit there. It also attracts rodents and birds and so you know, wherever your transfer station is located, you better take that into consideration. The other thing is that the State of New York is, you know, they want us to do this, I can remember, I was around when the State the New York wanted us all to get into recycling and we had to accept it for nothing, because it would go back to manufacturer. Those days are long gone now. So, I'm not saying not to look it, but it's something that we really need to look into carefully.

DOTY: I should just clarify, real quick; the system I was part of a study on was anaerobic. It is not just composting when you need room to store it. It's a tank that breaks in down and you create power from the methane gas and then the leeching is turned into a dry substance that can be used. A lot lower phosphate levels.

SCOZZAFAVA: I'm surprised schools aren't involved. I would assume they got a lot of food waste.

WILSON: The regulations go by the tonnage you produce and most of our schools, right now, are under it. I think some of the bigger school maybe close, but still, most of Essex County, the businesses, the institutions aren't big enough, but lost regulations are going to roll out, as the systems develop. So, we need to do some learning now, just we can be prepared, you know and not overrun by the demands of the new regulations. As a side, I know last year in the Governor's budget there was an extended producer responsibility code to get revenue from the producers of recycled material and funnel it back to local government. There's another version of that this year and I haven't looked at the details enough to recommend it, but I think it's something I'm going to explore and bring back to this Committee and possibly the Full Board to support. It's a way to bring revenue from the large producers and put it towards the local governments who are managing the waste and it seems like that's going to be done in a way where the money actually gets to our systems, I think it would be worth us supporting that. Because as we pull food waste out of the waste stream, that's revenue we're losing. It's not going over our scales, so we'll be losing a tremendous portion of the small revenues we're generating now. So, this a multi layered

issue. I'll come back to you with more about the responsibility code and I'll follow up with Mike's suggestion strategy and bring that back to you, too.

And then back to the big picture, Jim's working on how to execute a solid waste system study and I want to give him a chance to present that and give us a chance to ask questions.

DOUGAN: Yeah, we have put that last, probably August; we put it out to bid for a consultant, Community Resources secured \$20,000.00 grant with a \$20,000.00 match that we budgeted. So, we got \$40,000.00 and we got two proposals. One was for almost \$90,000.00 and the other one was for \$160,000.00, I think, \$140,000.00. So, obviously we can't use a consultant with the money that we've got. So, we are, right now hoping to find some interns from a program that is specifically going to college for this. Having some conversations with SUNY ESF, down in Syracuse to see if they have any students from this area who are looking for a summer internship that might in sustainable materials management program. Our request for summer interns is going out now to start beating down doors or finding someone like that. It's the only way that we think we can cost effectively stay within that budget, but it's, what we're looking at is a lot of what you just touched on. You know, upcoming regulation, our system the way it exists, right now, you know the request to recycle even more material, the goal of this first grant was to get a report out of it that we would then turnaround and go towards bigger funds, an MRF, right, Rob? That would fund some of the equipment to do the right thing, long term, which might be a bio-digester. You know, the shared services idea, we can talk about that grant more, too, Rob. So, that's what I'm working on right now. Honestly, I would say that study took a back burner, as we were dealing with the glass, the crusher, wondering whether or not we were going to have a contractor that's hauling for us. So, that's what we're focusing on right now.

WILSON: That's great. So, it's sort of a stacking. We get some interns, use the money we have, go after a more substantial grant that will really allow us to do the system design type planning.

DOUGAN: Right

WILSON: And as a tool to help in some of the gathering of information, the Smartsheet that Keene and I think a few other towns are using, how many towns are using and how much of a percentage do you need to participate or everybody to participate?

DOUGAN: We really need to try and get everybody to do that, to collect all that information. There's only four communities that are doing it now, but we really, it's just kind of an easy way to collect the information. I know that Mr. Tyler has said before that with his technology, we'll leave it at that, that there's no way it can happen. But, it's easier than you think. You guys are a little bit separate, but again, you're almost on a regular pickup, because it's almost every day. In order to look at that system, you have to look at, you have to have the information. Instead of spending time and money with a consultant or with interns going to collect the information from every town, this smart system, it automatically is collected and the data is there.

WILSON: So, I'll follow up with you about maybe, about how we can bring in the other, do the problem solving, so we can get the info, because that's the key. The information that, the detailed

information that you're, that the Smartsheet collects.

DOUGAN: Yup, the Smartsheet helps me, not only with the data, but it's also, it helps me, I get a real chance to look at how quickly Serkil is responding to some things. We've all faced that issue and when I talk to Serkil and Serkil says, oh, we haven't heard from a town. Once it's in Smartsheet, I'm able to track it. So, I can get some of that subjective issues out.

WILSON: And I absolutely agree. I follow it, especially since we've invested in trying to produce a cleaner cardboard stream in Keene, because we produce a lot of cardboard. Having it picked up so it doesn't get wet or have to be stored, because we're filled. I mean that Smartsheet helps me hold Serkil accountable, but it also helps me see just what's happening up there. So, maybe I'll follow up with you and we'll work on recruiting the rest of the towns in using this.

DOUGAN: That would be great.

DOTY: Our study, just for instance, on food waste and we used between 30 and 35% coming out of regular landfill trash, we were working with accurate data figures of our geographically area, North Elba counting schools, hospitals, without residential, we were quickly at 1,000 tons a year. So, I mean that kind of data will give you a lot of help in moving forward.

WILSON: So, a 1,000 tons a year of food waste, non-residential?

DOTY: Non-residential

WILSON: Yeah, so the data's going to be really helpful for stuff like that. Any other questions, thoughts on Smartsheet?

DOUGAN: Yeah, well, it's not Smartsheet.

WILSON: Anything, go ahead.

DOUGAN: The contract with Franklin County landfill is, I believe it's up at the end of 2024. The next time I have a committee meeting, I'll give you that information, exactly. They also have, every year, our tipping fee goes up by a \$1.00 per ton. I have not been the person that's billing the towns, that was through the County Manager's office in the past. I don't know if you guys have seen any of those increases or not, I am going to look at those closely. I don't have a good answer, but I know it went up again in January and so I'll come back to this committee and tell you where we should be. If it's covering that cost, or if that's an increase to the towns.

WILSON: Alright, thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: We did increase, two years ago, maybe.

DOUGAN: We did increase a few years ago.

SCOZZAFAVA: We had to increase, obviously.

MASCARENAS: Right, but what Jim's saying is we're getting an annual one from Franklin County. What we're not sure is if we're passing that on to the towns.

SCOZZAFAVA: When the County increased there might have been slacked built into it, I'm not sure.

DOUGAN: There might have been with what Dan did, I'm not sure. I've got to look at that. There was a large increase, Tom about replacing equipment. So, I don't know if in Dan's final numbers if that was taken into account or not, but I just want you to all be aware of it.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, it's not a significant amount either way.

DOUGAN: It's 8,000 tons a year, so it's \$8,000.00 a year.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, total.

DOUGAN: It's out there and I don't have a compete answer today

WILSON: Anybody else?

Thank you everybody, we have a lot starting to build up again, thank you.

**AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER, BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS SOLID WASTE  
TASK FORCE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:55 AM.**

Respectively Submitted,

Dina L. Garvey, Deputy Clerk  
Board of Supervisors