

SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE
Monday, May 8, 2023 - 11:00 AM

Joe Pete Wilson, Chairperson

Chairman Wilson called this Solid Waste Task Force meeting to order at 11:28 AM with the following in attendance: Clayton Barber, Stephanie DeZalia, Shaun Gilliland, Ken Hughes, Jim Monty, Tom Scozzafava, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Mike Mascarenas, and Jim Dougan.

Also Present: Hugh Harwood, Roger Preston and Dina Garvey.

WILSON: The main goal today is to talk about implementing Smartsheet use at your transfer station and it's really just an app, a phone based app to communicate with Serkil what you need picked up, when and so we're documenting when you call it in and then they enter when they pull it, so we're kind of closing the gap on the phone call system, but at the same time we're setting us up to see how many pulls you need for cardboard, measure, having the data to measure what gets hauled and then we can add in the how much, the waste. So, it's a pretty straightforward system but to really get the benefit of it, we need to use it system wide and then when we do get our consultant in they've got this data to look at and we're not paying them to go have to track it down, one transfer station at a time. so, it will help you in your day to day operations. It will help us in our system analysis. I'm going to let Jim give a little more in-depth and answer some questions or did that cover it you think?

DOUGAN: You did a better good job. It is about, one, we want to continue to improve the service. I want to be able to hold Serkil or in the future if there is someone else involved other than Serkil, I want to be able to hold them to a standard. I think. Joe Pete, I think with what you guys have done in Keene, we know when Serkil isn't showing up and we know when we make our own mistakes, if somebody didn't call. I think it's happening in other places too, if we're going to do a better job with the service then we need to know those answers.

Then when it comes to the data and the County did receive that small \$20,000.00 grant to do a study. We didn't have any luck hiring any consultants for that small amount of money. So, we need as much data as we can and our goal is to do this study and then turn it into a municipal restructuring grant that gives us dollars towards capital improvements. So, we can do more recycling like people were asking, so we can provide better level of service. If I don't have the numbers, I can't ask for the money. So, that's pretty much told us that's really why we need to do it and I get it that in some places that's a little hard, but you know Hugh really knows it inside and out. I think you've got an operator from Keene here, too, who's using it and I think we can find ways to help all the towns use it.

WILSON: And so, instead of Jim and I telling you about it, I am going to have Hugh come up and explain just a little bit about how it works, how it's based and so I'm going to have to come up here, Hugh. Because Hugh designed and set this up and did the troubleshooting and the

implementation. So, now this is something that we've been using.

HARWOOD: I really hope I'm not going to get too much in the weeds of it, but I can get a technologic with it all. Pretty much, we use a program called Smartsheet. If everybody really knows what Excel is, it's very similar to Excel. It's all cell based, based about formulations. So, basically whatever information you want to put into it, we can tell Excel how do you want to manipulate that data and how do you want to spit it out. The beauty about Smartsheet, it's an online collaborative form of Excel, online and collaborative. So, basically really good for when you have a lot of cooks in the kitchen. It's basically, it's a middleman program that basically you're able to project manage and also you're also able to conduct operations based for tracking, which is basically for Serkil. How we have it set up with Smartsheet, I had a video, didn't seem like to was the best time to kind of present it, but I can easily put something together to detail out how it kind of works. I also help Roger get a little bit more of the operations based for it.

WILSON: Hugh, if you email that.

GARVEY: I can send it out.

WILSON: To Dina, she can email it to all the Supervisors and then they can watch it at their own leisure.

HARWOOD: Yeah, it's a video and I'll put some audio over it, just a little bit of description, but it kinds of goes through what you would be looking at. It's hard for me to talk about something without showing it, but essentially with Smartsheet the attendant only uses one thing, it's a form. The form automatically fills out the actually Excel grid which is what you kind of see in Excel. The form, all the attendant does is, they just have to fill out, which is a drop down menu or their location and what they're requesting to pull. That's the only thing that the attendant needs to know. As Joe Pete was saying, you can have it one your phone, you can have it on a laptop, you can have it on desktop, unfortunately with Smartsheet, this is the one hiccup, it is online. So, you need to have connection to service, so either cellular, Wi-Fi or even Ethernet port. That's kind of the first hiccup, which I addressed at a few different sites, there's possibilities. But, all the attendant does, they go in, they fill out this form and it automatically submits it into what Serkil is using. Serkil is able to see the pull request. It automatically notifies Serkil. Whenever someone does a form, hey Serkil, there's been a pull request, they go in, they see it, oh, it's from the Town of Keene, it's for cardboard. They can also put in comments, saying I have seen a few things, where Roger might put in a request saying this is ASAP, because we have a big venue going on this weekend in our town. So, after that, Serkil, they look at it, they coordinate with their guys, they put in a date then they're actually going to have the pull being schedule and also showing the status of it. So, of course the beauty about this is I have email addresses baked into the Smartsheet. So, whenever Serkil does something, whether they schedule, reschedule, cancel, it will automatically notify either the attendant, or even, I've had Joe Pete, Joe Pete's included on those emails, whenever Roger puts in a pull, it automatically notifies them and if anything does change. So, if they have to reschedule, an act of god happens, it will also, Serkil goes in, they update it and it automatically updates them again, including for the completed. So, this is where the data mining comes from,

as well. So, when Serkil does a pull request and they complete the actual pull, they do into the Smartsheet and they say it's complete and it notifies the attendant, which hopefully they know at that point and then at that point they actually can get an understanding of how frequent are they going to have to request pulls and also depends on throughout the entire year, because you guys, you see a decent influx of tourists. So, obviously during summers you have a lot more of a traffic in your traffic in your transfer stations than you do in the winter. So, you can try and track that, as well, for kind of when you have to do those pull requests, but also, we aren't implementing this yet, but I would like to actually use this for when Serkil puts in their quantities of glass that they're collecting, the weight of all of their garbage that they're putting in. So, basically they're doing it all, right there at that point, rather than just reduplicating efforts over and over and over again, we're actually having Serkil or the company, whoever's going to be maintaining this in the future they can update it right then and there. So, the hope is also, Joe Pete eluded to it a little bit about every single actions that's done under Smartsheet is time stamped. So, when an attendant first puts in the pull request, it automatically time dates and stamps it and then when it actually gets responds to, it gets time stamped and then when it gets completed. So, you actually see a timeline as the processes. So, it puts everything kind of in black and white and also, in my hope, it just allows for us to make sure everything's going smoothly and then also become a data mine.

Quickly, went through that. I'm more and willing to kind of talk one on one, definitely doing the video, as well. Also, if there's any questions?

HOLZER: What's your timeline on implementing this?

HARDWOOD: We've actually implemented with six other towns, Keene, Essex, St. Armand, Wilmington and Schroom. I believe that's all of them. So, we actually have six towns that are using it, actively, right now. Keene is the lead driver on that. We've reached out to a few other towns, I'm good to go. I can spin it up for all other towns. Like I said before, the difficulty really is, I guess the attendant using it, which obviously I would love, every single attendant I want to work very closely with. I went down to the site of Keene to work with Roger. I've been to every other site to work directly with the attendants and also even the Supervisors as well. Other than that, it's connection to internet, so those are the two big key points.

WILSON: And let me jump in on one bigger picture thing, this is a subscription, we don't have to pay for this. Hugh, the idea came out of our conversations, Hugh designed this and set up it with existing software that we already have. So, we're not subscribing to something new. We're not going to have to, you know, this isn't costing us anything. I think in the long run, it's streamlining things.

HARWOOD: Well, even to that end, Joe Pete, is you don't even have to create an account. I just really need to have email addresses, if you don't want to have that kind of communication back and forth between Serkil, if you want to be notified of when like Serkil schedules a date, when they complete it, so there's really no other account that's needed for it.

TYLER: We definitely have issues with several things in Westport, but I would like to meet with you and see how we can overcome those issues.

HARWOOD: Definitely.

WILSON: And I think that after Roger speaks. Roger runs the transfer station in Keene.

TYLER: We don't have Wi-Fi or service.

WILSON: There's some of those technical issues.

TYLER: There is stuff besides that.

WILSON: But, we would be happy to visit, too. Roger could come with Hugh, so when he talks, maybe that will help.

MONTY: Obviously, Lewis shares the County's so we don't take in that picture per se, because we don't, I suppose we could, our electronics are ours, so we can handle that and everything else, recyclables, the compactor, but I guess my question was, as far as not everyone is technology savvy, I being one, and stuff, but if you have an attendant who may not be as savvy and he has the app on his phone, somebody sets him up, maybe he doesn't have an email address himself, could everything do back to the Supervisor?

HARWOOD: Yes, sir or a town clerk. Some, most of the towns that we set up, they don't just have the attendant. They actually have the supervisor and the town clerk for that. I mean Roger's a get, he's a very prime example of how this is just something that will go very easily.

MONTY: I'm just thinking my own attendants, they wouldn't want to get out their email addresses.

WILSON: So, maybe I'll have Roger come up and then we can go back to questions for both Hugh and Roger.

PRESTON, ROGER: I'm not very tech savvy myself, but it's very simple, straightforward. The app's on your phone, he can even help download it. He helped my multiple times. Just click on it, drops down, select your town, another menu, click on it, select what bin you want, you have a little line, you can type whatever you want on it. Like Hugh mentioned, I put, this is urgent, can you get it before this day or, no rush, just need it pulled, you can put whatever you want on it. It's a very straightforward program to use.

WILSON: How long does an average call in take?

PRESTON, ROGER: I can probably do it in 30 seconds on my phone versus a call, which is however long it takes to go through and then the conversation, much quicker. I know our dump is very busy in the summer, don't have time to make a phone call, so things get delayed. This is easy, pull your phone out, boom, boom, done. It's very easy to use, email-wise I have town email, maybe some dump attendants don't, but Joe Pete has it on his, it can go through him, like you

said, town clerk.

WILSON: How does it help you in your sort of day to day, week to week operations?

PRESTON, ROGER: Very easy, I can see how we're running. You know, are we busy or are we slow, keeps track of everything. I can go back all the way to the first thing we ever had pulled and see what we're running. Are we running different this year? Are we busier? Are we not bringing in as much? It's very easy to use. Very nice to be able to look at stuff and once we get the weights that will help a lot with our trash to see what our business is like.

WILSON: And Hugh mentioned this a little bit and I know as you anticipate busy, like a holiday weekend, especially with the cardboard, you've in the past like set it up and put in a note, we're going to need the cardboard pulled before Thursday, so we're ready for the holiday weekend.

PRESTON, ROGER: And Serkil is normally very responsive, I've had issue with Serkil not pulling bins, but once like you said, it's timestamped, I called it in on Monday, it's Friday, they haven't pulled it, I call them and say, what's going on? Sorry, we missed it in the computer or we got busy, a truck broke, something happened. So, it puts the responsibility on them so we know where the mess up is. Is it on us? Is it on them? Any other questions? It's pretty straightforward to use, pretty easy app.

WILSON: Any questions for Hugh or Roger?

PRESTON, ROGER: If anybody wants to look at it, I can quickly show you on my phone.

WILSON: Because it really is just three drop downs?

PRESTON, ROGER: Two drop downs, your town, your bin you want to pull and then just a line where you can write your comments.

TYLER: Have your people get in touch with my people and we'll do lunch and talk about it.

WILSON: Did anybody have questions for Roger or for Hugh?

PRESTON, ROGER: Anybody want to look at real quick for anybody who hasn't seen it?

WILSON: And Hugh's going to send us the video.

MONTY: Would having my attendant do it, add anything, because really like I said, our recyclables go directly into the recycling bin, my electronics are pulled when I call and our trash goes in the compactor that people to put a sticker on. We don't take construction debris, so would it benefit Essex County if we did it?

DOUGAN: I would have to think about that.

MASCARENAS: Are we actually tracking Lewis in terms of how much?

MONTY: It would be the same as Elizabethtown, because we share.

DOUGAN: It gets deducted out, you know the ways the compactor use, for example the recyclables are not tracked, because they just go in the overall bin. But, I think once we start adding the actual billing, like a good example is, you know if Roger called and wanted solid waste pick up today, our goal is when that comes through and comes across the scales is that ticket and that tonnage comes into Smartsheet and that will eventually bill off. Mike and I have been talking about some idiosyncrasies in that the billing of that is done out of his office, down here and should be back up with me, but if we did some of this tracking it would make it easier for everybody. All the towns, their solid waste goes through the Lewis site, so we do a certain amount of forensics based on that to figure out Serkil's bill. At that point, you'd probably be part.

DEZALIA: This is for recyclables and solid waste?

HARWOOD: Yes

DEZALIA: So, all call-ins? There would be no more phone calls, everything is tracked that way?

HARWOOD: Yes

WINEMILLER: I have two things, for St. Armand, we're only opened on Saturdays, we sell punch tickets, so we have paperwork that the attendants fill out and there's a section there where they say, cardboard is full, trash is full, or whatever, that goes to my clerk and then the clerk logs into the spreadsheet and calls it to be pulled. So, that works out really well, but I do have a question for Jim and I don't know if Mike might be able to answer this, too. Recently in the last month, I've gotten two emails from Serkil saying where's the payment for this bill and my first email back to them is, who is this? Because we get billed through the County and we write a check to the County and I told this girl that and then, again, just last week, same kind of thing, where's this bill? We get billed through the County, we pay the County, call the County. So, I'm not sure Serkil is sending me these emails.

DOUGAN: They have a new worker that is working in the office in Lewis and I will look into that.

WILSON: But, having the electronic record, the Smartsheet because then if there's a dispute, you know it's in their system, too and if they're not disputing it when they see it come in, I think it could help you in documenting the flow of, you know, what's leaving when, you know, what's being picked up and being pulled when. It could help with some of that.

MASCARENAS: And you shouldn't be getting any bills directly from them, some towns do have direct C&D contracts with Serkil that they would get directly billed for that don't come through the County, but on anything else you're...

WINEMILLER: Not for St. Armand.

MASCARENAS: No, you're good, just don't pay them.

WINEMILLER: I won't, I have no intention of doing so. I thought it was odd that they were sending me these emails questioning where my payment is. I don't get billed from Serkil, I get billed from the County.

WILSON: So, just using Smartsheet, I think Hugh and Roger are going to be a resource to help each town, you know getting a handle on using it and for Supervisors, I'm happy to talk to you about that. Hugh is going to follow up with the video and we can talk to individual towns about implementing that. So, thank you both.

Jim, I see you gave a handout about glass, do you want to update us on that?

DOUGAN: The front page is some pictures that were taken back in August of 2022, just an overhead view that Mr. Manning used with Serkil when we held them responsible for that glass cleanup and so the next two pages are just some pictures that I took 10-days ago of a couple of those areas that are cleaned up. I wouldn't say it's done yet, I haven't heard from DEC, that is really between the West Family, Serkil and DEC, but I have done a little bit of tracking just to make sure that this is being cleaned up.

The third picture is glass that specifically came from the West property and sitting over at the municipal recycling facility, just up the road that started doing through the crusher.

And the last picture is just the household hazard waste collection posters that are being printed. All of you will be getting some originals and also email those so you can print as many as you want.

WILSON: Thank you, Jim. Anybody have anything else for Solid Waste? Thank you very much, we're adjourned.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER, BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:49 AM.

Respectively Submitted,

Dina L. Garvey, Deputy Clerk
Board of Supervisors