

MINUTES  
RILEY COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 3, 2015  
7:00 P.M.

Riley County Office Building  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Kelly Briggs, Steve Galitzer, Leon Hobson, Charly Pottorff, William Spiegel, Howard Wilson, John Woods, and Monty Wedel.

Others Present: Gary Rosewicz, David Hughes, David Kreller, Denise Biggs and Dave Schafer.

Members Absent: Betty Book, William Clark, Steve DeHart, Dennis Peterson, Dave Shover, Jeff Walters, Ron Wells, Judy Willingham and Fran Zerby.

Steve Galitzer, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

**Sign-in, Introductions** The sign-in sheet was completed and introductions made.

**Approve the minutes of the previous meeting** Monty Wedel moved and Kelly Briggs seconded to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2015 meeting as presented. Motion approved.

**Brush Solutions Subcommittee**

David Kreller presented the following information to the committee:

**PURPOSE**

At the Riley County Solid Waste Advisory Board meeting of June 16, 2015, one of the topics was a presentation suggesting a change in process and fee structure for receipt of yard waste, and brush/tree waste. The recommendations presented at the meeting were by an employee of Riley County that actively works at the Solid Waste Transfer Station. The presentation was made not as an employee, but rather a citizen of Riley County.

This presentation resulted in much discussion at the meeting and ultimately the formation of a subcommittee to review our current processes/fees, determine if legitimates problem exist, and offer any recommendations to the Riley County Solid Waste Advisory Board for consideration and possible referral to the Riley County Board of County Commissioners for review and action.

The Subcommittee includes Kelly Briggs, Travis Hummel, David Kreller, Nick Sheffield, Judy Willingham, and Greg Wilson.

## **BACKGROUND**

It is the understanding of the subcommittee, that going back to the time of closure of the Landfill at the present Transfer Station site, there was an effort to minimize the stream of biomass and organic waste going to the new contracted space. The reasons for this include:

- The need for biomass in the closure process of the prior landfill
- Cost management by limiting the volume of waste shipped out of the transfer station as municipal solid waste (MSW)
- Adherence with KDHE standards of reduction of biomass into newly constructed ‘lined’ landfills that do not rely on decomposition in their operation
- To develop a process of environmental stewardship whereas citizens have a place to deposit yard and tree waste for mulching or processing – for potential reuse and
- To prevent yard and other waste from ending up being abandoned in the storm sewer system or countryside ditches

Historically, the ‘tipping fees’ for MSW included a small rounding up per ton to cover the cost of managing yard and tree waste. Initially individuals, businesses, and political subdivisions (such as Kansas State University or City of Manhattan) were not charged a fee for dumping biomass, so long as it was not comingled with MSW. If it was comingled, then it was all treated as MSW and fees assessed accordingly.

Within the last decade, the rules were changed in that commercial tree service companies are now being assessed a fee of \$10 per ton for brush and tree waste. Kansas State University and City of Manhattan still are exempted from paying this fee.

## **APPROACH**

There were many concerns outlined in the report presented on June 16<sup>th</sup>. The subcommittee elected to focus on only yard waste and brush/tree waste. One issue of specific concern was to address what appears to a lack of definition on what is a ‘commercial’ tree hauler, and the inability by Riley County employees to enforce a fee to commercial haulers that were in unmarked trucks or may be less than truthful about origins of the brush/tree waste.

Our approach was to determine what other communities are doing to see if there was a viable solution we could emulate, or take various aspects of other communities approach to develop our own. After contacting KDHE, they were able offer information on solutions utilized by the City of Topeka and City of Lawrence

The City of Topeka has privatized their process and there is a fee for yard waste and brush/tree waste. It is a split pricing between city residents vs. non city residents/businesses. Pricing is based on size of vehicle or trailer with a \$10 minimum for city residents and \$15 minimum for non-city residents/businesses.

Lawrence has a curbside yard waste collection program funded by the monthly solid waste fee charged to residents. They also have a drop off location that residents can access for \$5 per pickup load, and higher for larger trucks. Commercial lawn care companies can drop yard waste based on an annual fee for the truck, starting at \$50 plus a \$200 application fee. Since 2014 commercial tree haulers have not been permitted to drop.

## **EVALUATION**

As the subcommittee evaluated options, there were several key items that continued to surface:

- Not overhauling our current process, but simply improving it to create equality, especially for commercial users.
- Keeping pricing competitive to limit the volume of waste being received in MSW by refuse haulers
- Assuring that regional users of the facility continued to be encouraged and welcomed to do so to avoid lapse's in property maintenance, dumping in storm sewers or abandonment of in county ditches.
- Honoring written, spoken or unspoken agreements that may exist between stakeholders in the region.
- Reflection on the history of the community and collaborate agreements that have existed, and matching it to the anticipated growth of the region in coming years and decades.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- That no changes be made to the process of receiving and handling segregated yard waste. Current MSW tipping fees incorporate the cost of handling, composting and managing this waste.
- Regarding brush/tree waste, to keep the current program in place but with modification to minimize abuse.
- Assess fees to all users leaving brush/tree waste. NOTE: we feel this is necessary due to the lack of specific definition of what is a commercial user and the challenge of enforcement along with time management of the scale master at the transfer station.
- Rate assessed at \$10/ton with ¼ ton minimum to keep consistent with commercial rates and fractional ton assessments for MSW.
- For those paying by credit card, then the standard Riley County Transactional fee would be assessed in addition to tonnage costs.
- If anyone has a mixed load, then the current process of rating to the highest priced stream would be utilized. Example would be if someone has yard waste and limbs, the entire load would be assessed at the tree waste rate. If someone has limbs and MSW, the entire load is assessed at the MSW rate.
- No discounts on fees would be offered, except that County Leadership could make

waivers to honor existing agreements or in times of crisis to facilitate community and county cleanup.

Monty Wedel stated the City and KSU haven't budgeted for this expense.

Kelly Briggs referred to the chart in Harry Bellman's proposal and the six-year average was 12, 234 loads, 3,277 tons of brush (no processing fees) and 2,349 loads/2,972 tons of commercial brush (processing fees charged). Kelly stated 12,000 unpaid loads is a lot of wear and tear on the scales, and asked why don't you just let them go around?

Gary Rosewicz responded that KDHE requires all loads to be kept track of.

Kelly Briggs asked if a report could be generated showing all of the unpaid loads and wondered what portion belongs to the City and to KSU.

John Woods said this may make KSU reevaluate their methods of sustainability.

Leon Hobson stated he feels the subcommittee got off track. He thought the subcommittee was to come up with ideas on how to identify commercial haulers. Just because a few sneak through, not everyone should be penalized. No one from the subcommittee came to him or Gary Rosewicz.

David Kreller stated when the subcommittee was formed, no one from the County got involved. A citizen who happens to be a county employee that works at the transfer station came to the Committee stating there is a problem.

Leon Hobson said he didn't agree with everything in Harry's report and if everyone will have to pay to dispose of brush, it will end up in MSW.

Monty Wedel moved to forward the subcommittee's recommendation to the Riley County Public Works Department that all users bringing in brush be assessed \$10.00 per ton with a \$2.00 minimum charge. Howard Wilson seconded. The committee voted 7 yays and 1 nay (Leon Hobson). Motion passed.

### **Transfer Station Saturday operation hours**

A Hamm's employee brought to their attention that very little MSW is brought into the transfer station on Saturday afternoons. Hamm's is proposing to close the transfer station at noon on Saturday and decrease the cost of MSW by \$.15 per ton for the change in hours. Gary Rosewicz said that would result in about a \$6,600 reduction but doesn't feel it is a significant savings.

Public Works generated a Saturday Daily Summary showing AM & PM MSW per ton/ # of Tickets, Brush per ton/# of Tickets, CBrush per ton /# of Tickets and Compost per ton/# of Tickets which was reviewed by all committee members present.

Leon Hobson suggested possibly doing a seasonal closing when yard clean up would be minimal.

Denise Biggs said calls come in all the time about operation hours and callers are surprised that the transfer station is open all day on Saturdays.

Steve Galitzer said we need to do what is best for our community, not what's best for Hamm's.

Gary Rosewicz stated staffing is a challenge on Saturdays if someone needs to be gone and assumes that Hamm's encounters the same issues.

David Hughes did research and most transfer stations are not open during the afternoon hours on Saturdays.

Monty Wedel moved to forward a recommended to the Riley County Public Works Department to change the operation hours of the Transfer Station on Saturdays from 5:00 pm to 2:00 pm. William Spiegel seconded. The committee voted 8 yays, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.