

GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT MEETING

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

1. Call to order.

The Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District Committee held a publicly posted meeting on **Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at 12:30 p.m.**

District Committee members participated remotely.

Chairperson Beauregard read the following statement: "Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 23, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, as extended by the Governor's March 31, 2020 Order, this meeting of the Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District's District Committee is open to the public, but attendees are required to socially distance. All members of the District Committee are participating remotely. Those members are Ken Blanchard, Michael Gagne, Christine LeBlanc, Daniel Patten, and John Beauregard.

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, any person may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting or may transmit the meeting through any medium. Attendees are therefore advised that such recordings and transmissions are being made, whether perceived or unperceived, by those present, and are deemed acknowledged and permissible."

Chairperson Beauregard reminded members that texting and private chats on the video conference platform are not an acceptable method of remote participation. He also wanted to make sure that all members could be heard when they are speaking and if any member cannot hear another member to please let him know. Finally, he informed members that if their remote connection is lost, that they should attempt to sign back in. The time they were disconnected and the time they signed back in will be noted.

2. Legal notices

Chairperson Beauregard noted that the legal notices of the meeting were posted in Dartmouth and New Bedford more than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

3. Roll call of members

Chairperson, John Beauregard; yes

Daniel Patten, yes

Christine LeBlanc, yes

Ken Blanchard, yes

Michael Gagne, yes

Also present Scott Alfonse, Executive Director; Lee Ferreira, Secretary; Attorney Matthew J. Thomas, District Counsel; Adam Sandahl, CMA Engineers, Project Manager; William Straub, CMA Engineers, Principal-in-Charge; Bob Grillo, CMA Engineers, Geotechnical and Landfill Engineer; Bruce Haskell, Langdon Environmental Permitting; Jeff Murray, HDR Engineering, Solid Waste Planning.

4. New Business

- a. Interview consultants for solid waste planning services

Chair Beauregard welcomed the CMA Engineers representatives.

CMA representatives referred to the Strategic Solid Waste Management Facility Planning Services presentation.

Mr. Sandahl, Project Manager would be the day-to-day contact for the project. He has 20 years of experience (mostly on solid waste projects), is a P.E. in Massachusetts New Hampshire and Maine, and a MassDEP 3rd party inspector.

Mr. Straub, Principal-in-Charge, reviewed CMA's presentation slides (History of Solving Challenging, Unique, and Complex landfill Problems and Other Landfill Experience, Recent Massachusetts Projects).

Mr. Grillo would be the engineer for the project. He reviewed the presentation (Expansion Concepts, the Tier 1 Concept and Tier 2 Concept).

Mr. Haskell with Langdon Environmental, would be the Massachusetts permitting and solid waste contact and discussed his background.

Mr. Murray, Associate Vice President with HDR would manage project planning and discussed HDR's background.

Mr. Beauregard noted that during the presentation Mr. Grillo said that "it would extend the life 13 years". He questioned if that meant 13 years from now or did that mean 13 years from the potential closed date, which is in 7 years.

Mr. Grillo said that it's a 13-year extension to the landfill's end date.

Mr. Beauregard said that one of the objectives is to determine the maximum amount of waste the District should accept to meet its operating and capital expenses. He asked about CMA's experience in this area.

Mr. Straub responded performs similar services for nearly all its public landfill clients. HDR also has experience in that area.

Mr. Murray described the rate study work performed by HDR and how it might fit into the project. He summarized some of the issues he feels the District faces.

Mr. Straub described some of the diverging interest of their clients (retain capacity for the long term or maximize revenue).

Attorney Thomas noted that on page 10 of their proposal they talked about the project approach. He said that assuming they were the successful bidders, if they could quickly describe how they would approach the project (how would things be ordered, what would happen first, and how would that happen) and secondly, how would they handle the planning on the buffer land.

Mr. Sandahl replied that CMA would review permits to understand restrictions. They would also review data (tonnage). Early on, they would meet with District staff to finalize the District's expectations for the strategic use, solid waste management, and financial plan.

Attorney Thomas asked about buffer lands. Mr. Sandahl described the importance of buffer land for potential wetlands mitigation.

Mr. LeBlanc noted that in the presentation (Tier 1 and Tier 2), they talked specifically about "mechanically stabilized earth" (MSE) walls and asked about their experience with similar projects.

Mr. Grillo noted their experience with an MSE wall where zoning restricted height. He noted that they proposed something unusual and ultimately it was not approved. The result was a smaller MSE wall.

Mr. Murray said that they have completed projects using waste material, including a 30-foot-high MSE wall. They are permitting the first MSE wall project in North Carolina to provide more disposal capacity. The alternative was to buy out adjacent parcels, encroach further on residents. The city and the permitting authority for an MSE wall to gain additional capacity. He understands it can be an expensive solution, but is practical for sites with constraints (wetlands, buffers or setbacks).

Mr. Haskell described some of the MSE wall projects in Massachusetts. He noted Langdon's experience permitting MSE wall at a Massachusetts soils landfill and said they would be able to assist CMA and HDR in a similar capacity.

Attorney Thomas asked what kind of financial assurance mechanism (FAM) was used for that.

Mr. Haskell explained there was an "add on" to a post-closure FAM, including geotechnical inspections. It was a significant addition to the to the financial assurance for that site, but the site is an unlined landfill with no gas collection. It doesn't have all the components that the District has as part as its financial assurance.

Mr. Blanchard noted that in their proposal they spoke about “piggybacking” on capped cells to take advantage of capacity gained due to settlement. He asked if they could describe successes they’ve had and describe the increases in capacity.

Mr. Grillo replied that the capacity realized can be substantial. On one site, slopes were settling approximately 1 to 2 feet per year and there is a potential to increase the slope when the areas are backfilled. He described liner materials that help make this more viable.

Mr. Alfonse noted that he viewed this as a planning study with an engineering component and commented on HDR’s work on similar projects (RIRRC). He asked someone to explain the rationale behind the project team, with CMA as the lead and HDR as a subcontractor.

Mr. Murray explained that HDR understood it did not have the local experience CMA and Langdon offer, but did have the experience nationally that the District is looking for. He described the relationship between HDR and CMA and his connection to CMA. He noted that he was not involved in the work for RIRRC, and it was led by HDR’s Boston and New York offices.

Mr. Straub said he felt CMA’s work for similar public entities and their proximity to New Bedford is a strength. He noted CMA’s technical landfill experience. He recognized that CMA did not have as much focus on the economic evaluation but recognized this and teamed with Langdon and HDR, knowing both of those individuals and having worked with them. It was natural for CMA Engineers to take the lead and being supported by some very strong individuals and ESS, and it they didn’t go into it that much but it’s not unusual for CMA Engineers to put comprehensive teams together.

Mr. Beauregard thanked the presenters.

CMA Consultants representatives signed off at 1:27 p.m.

The committee proceeded to interview the representatives with Geosyntec.

Representatives from Geosyntec signed on at 1:27 p.m.

In attendance: David Bonnett, Geosyntec; Youngmin Cho, Geosyntec; William Gaffigan, MBA, VCA, Geosyntec; Jeremy Morris, Geosyntec; Ann Martin, LEC Environmental Consultants, Geosyntec.

Chair Beauregard welcomed the Geosyntec Consultant representatives and introduced District staff.

Geosyntec representatives then referred to the Strategic Solid Waste Management Facility Planning Services presentation.

Representatives of Geosyntec reviewed its presentation to the District Committee.

Mr. Beauregard asked if Geosyntec would be the sole firm on the team. Mr. Bonnett said it would but would use a consultant for the wetlands.

Mr. Beauregard asked if the “mechanically stabilized earth” (MSE) berm was the only solution to the District’s issues or if it was one of the possible solutions.

Mr. Bonnett explained it is one option and described Geosyntec’s experience. He suggested it may represent an opportunity to gain significant airspace in cells 7 and 8.

Mr. Ramsey added that Geosyntec would also look at how to raise diversion levels so not everything would be disposed into a landfill. He explained that Geosyntec has experience developing diversion strategies, maximizing airspace and managing materials.

Mr. Gagne asked if the Westminster/Fitchburg landfill was owned jointly by Westminster and Fitchburg. Mr. Bonnett said it was and it is operated by Waste Management. Mr. Gagne asked about the remaining landfill life. Mr. Bonnett replied that if they do nothing with it, they have three years left. Mr. Gagne asked about the financial position. Mr. Bonnett said he could not comment on the position of the two municipalities. Geosyntec’s client is Waste Management which is financially strong. Mr. Bonnett explained that there is a host agreement and money from the tipping fees is paid to the two municipalities.

Mr. Blanchard reviewed Geosyntec’s proposed approach to the waste characterization study and asked what communities’ data they use for the study.

Mr. Morris said that it's going to come down to identifying communities and data that are close demographically and geographically to the District and use recent (last five to ten years) data. He noted Geosyntec did this for Barnstable County and were able to identify about 7 or 8 recent studies. He described data available on Massachusetts waste-to-energy facilities. They would also use tonnage data for entities delivering material to the landfill.

Mr. Ramsey added that a site-specific waste characterization study over several seasons is expensive. They often find that the data doesn't change much between the community in question and nearby communities. He said the value of specific data may be outweighed by the cost savings from taking more general approach.

Mr. Beauregard noted the importance of the financial analysis and emphasized the District’s interest in determining the minimum amount of waste the District must accept to meet its financial obligations (often referred to as the “sweet spot”). He asked about Geosyntec’s experience in this area.

Mr. Gaffigan described the District’s current mix of customers (member communities and non-member customers) and summarized how the District is using its “fixed asset”. He said the approach to this depends on whether the District is looking at a small or large expansion, and the type of asset the District wants to develop. He noted the District’s strong financial position. He asked Mr. Beauregard what other types of things come into his mind when this topic comes up?

Mr. Beauregard said as we get closer to reaching the end of landfill capacity, there is greater pressure to preserve remaining capacity for member communities. However, the District

realizes significant revenue from its outside customer, and has sometimes relied on that revenue. He explained the District needs to examine how much outside customer waste it needs to accept to meet its financial obligations.

Mr. Gaffigan said they will be able to answer that question. He described some of the potential benefits of the process, including the potential to involve stakeholders in funding a larger expansion (as opposed to a small expansion), and the potential benefit to stakeholders of this planning process.

Mr. Bonnett noted the District's tiered pricing for member communities and outside customers. Mr. Beauregard said that system still exists.

Mr. Gaffigan noted that in 1995 when the District was established the landfill, it went into debt to enable it to afford to build that asset, and it has since then been paid off. The result has been this benefit that's lasted for 30 years of low disposal rates for its community members.

The Committee thanked the Geosyntec representatives

Geosyntec representatives signed off at 2:09 p.m.

Mr. Beauregard noted that the board would rank, discuss and make a determination after the April 29, 2021, meeting.

The Committee and staff discussed the review process and agreed that all would provide input on the results of the proposal review and interviews.

Attorney Thomas noted the importance of this planning process to the District.

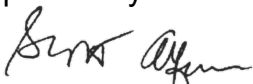
5. Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. Roll call vote: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Michael Gagne, yes; Daniel Patten, yes.

Motion passed 5 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m. on April 28, 2021.

Approved by vote of District Committee on 7/15/2021



Scott Alfonse, Executive Director