

GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT MEETING

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 15, 2022

The Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District Committee held a publicly posted meeting on **Thursday, December 15, 2022, at 8:00 A.M.** at the Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 315, 400 Slocum Road, Dartmouth, MA.

1. Call to order / Salute the flag

Chairperson Beauregard called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. and led a salute to the flag.

2. Legal notices

Chairperson Beauregard read the following statement:

“Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 Daniel Patten and Kelley Cabral-Mosher, members of the District Committee, are participating remotely in this meeting.

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 participating remotely that if their remote connection is lost, that they should attempt to log back in. The time they were disconnected and the time they signed back in will be noted.

OPEN MEETING LAW RECORDING ANNOUNCEMENT

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 or transmissions are being made whether perceived or unperceived by those present and are deemed acknowledged and permissible.”

Mr. Beauregard noted that 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 – present, participating in-person.

Daniel Patten, yes – present, participating remotely via video conference.

Christine LeBlanc, yes – present, participating in-person.

Ken Blanchard, yes – present, participating in in-person.

Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes – present, participating remotely via video conference.

Michael Gagne – absent.

Also in attendance: Scott Alfonse, Executive Director; Leonor Ferreira, Secretary; Matthew J. Thomas, District Counsel.

David Bonnett, Geosyntec Consultants, Marissa Perez-Dormitzer, Meg Hebert, Anthony Novelli, and Tom King, all participating in-person (8:00 a.m. to 9:39 a.m.) ; Bill Gaffigan and Giorgio Castro, Geosyntec Consultants participating remotely via video conference (8:00 a.m. to 9:33 a.m.); Shawn Peckham participating remotely via video conference (8:00 a.m. to 9:33 a.m.);;

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. November 17, 2022, regular session

Motion to approve the regular session minutes of November 17, 2022, made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. Roll Call: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, absent.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

- b. November 23, 2022, regular session minutes

Motion to approve executive session minutes of November 23, 2022, made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. Roll Call: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, absent.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

5. Warrant Report and Ratification

- a. Warrant No. 9-23 (November 21, 2022).

Motion to ratify Warrant No. 9-23 dated November 21, 2022 made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. Roll Call: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, absent.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

6. New Business

- a. Solid Waste plan update by Geosyntec Consultants

Motion to receive the solid waste plan update made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard.

Mr. Alfonse noted that Mr. Bonnett would provide an update for the Master Plan which is near completion. Also presenting is Mr. Gaffigan and Mr. Castro. Hardcopies of the presentation were distributed to members.

Mr. Bonnett noted they've gone through multiple tasks to help identify the needs of the District and that after much input from District staff, they were ready to provide a financial model and provide scenarios with a look ahead.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (SWMFP Background Tasks and Framework) slide, reviewing the tasks and objectives. He noted that the District engaged Geosyntec Consultants to conduct a Strategic Solid Waste Management Facility Planning project and it has been a process over the last 15 months.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Key Findings and Takeaway) slide. He noted that the Financial Position and Market Position of the District are highly favorable. There's no debt which is rare nationally among 1,500 to 3,000 agencies, and the required reserves are fully funded. He noted that the key takeaway or challenge is that 6.5 years of airspace remains as the end of FY22. This defines the window of opportunity for executing critical strategic initiatives that were evaluated in the process to secure the best position in the next 5 to 20 years.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Long-Term Financial Planning Task) slide noting tasks 1-6 results. The District's mission and goals informed a 15-year Strategic Financial Plan, and evaluated six (6) potential strategic actions.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Scenario Analysis) noting the various scenarios which consisted of 15 potential strategic actions which were evaluated and mapped into four long-term financial scenarios. Scenario 1, Status Quo, showed that no changes were made and financial result. Scenario 2, maximize the amount of airspace in short-term by expanding the existing footprint but no provisions are made for solid waste reduction and long term disposal options. Scenario 3, Ash for Trash which

would be redirecting solid waste to an incinerator extending the life of the landfill by having less volume. Scenario 4 would be an expansion by developing a rail transfer capability so that at the end of the landfill life it would be extended beyond the 6.5 years. There would be a plan to take it to a landfill outside of Massachusetts at the lowest possible cost.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed the (Scenario Out Comparison) slide noting the difference in scenarios 1 to 4 and reserve implications.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed the (Task 1.7 Take Aways) slide noting the long-term financial framework.

Mr. Bonnett recapped the information presented by Mr. Gaffigan. There are a lot of assets (the airspace, and reserves) and they are limited because the waste continues to come in. He noted that they can adjust the waste, and that has an impact on revenue. If nothing is done, the District will run out of airspace, and it is going to pull from its reserves which will eventually be depleted. He noted that the model Mr. Gaffigan is using is an Excel spreadsheet that allows for different inputs which can change the scenarios. The scenarios show not only the status quo, but three other scenarios. He noted that there are numerous other scenarios that can be run, but they chose to run these three because they think it helps to compare either when the reserves run out or when the District will run out of airspace. He noted that there are constraints that limit the expansion, but the District does have options for expansion. Those options cost money, but there are reserves to handle construction and that will extend airspace. He noted that when airspace is depleted, the rail option is very popular and it is something that the District can start planning now.

Mr. Beauregard asked if the rail option was financially, economic or environmentally feasible, and if it could be done from where the District is currently situated. Mr. Bonnett said yes, and noted that like expansion, there are a few alternatives. Mr. Beauregard asked if it would be trucked to a different location. He noted the rail line that runs through the New Bedford Industrial Park and asked if it could be tied into that. Mr. Bonnett noted that it could be, and he noted the scenario that they were looking into which was a nearby facility that had been permitted and not constructed. Mr. Beauregard asked where the location was, and Mr. Alfonse noted the two (2) locations. Mr. Bonnett noted that the trash for ash is another concept. He said that this would involve negotiations with a third party.

Attorney Thomas noted for the record these are all just potential options for the District. The District isn't deciding any one of them. They're looking at all viable options, and just because one is being discussed it does not mean that it will be decided upon. All options need to be considered. Some of the options may be more favorable than others. That will be a conversation that has to happen with the city and the town. To get there, the District must go through a full analysis. Nobody in the public should take from this that because something is being discussed that it is being intended.

Mr. Bonnett noted that a lot of scenarios have been looked at, but only a few are being presented.

Mr. Blanchard asked if trash for ash scenario would require a transfer station. Mr. Bonnett said yes, noting that there would need to be an agreement with a party for the solid waste hauling, and the incinerator facility would need to agree also. Mr. Blanchard asked if material would be trucked directly to the incinerator facility or would it be dropped off at a transfer station first. Mr. Alfonse noted that a transportation cost analysis would have to be done.

Mr. Alfonse asked what the rationale was for preserving airspace for a short amount of time if the District were to go to rail haul. He noted that it was one of the options that Mr. Gaffigan mentioned, and why would be the advantage of keeping that airspace. Mr. Bonnett noted that a rail strike was a reason, and that District would want to keep some capacity. That airspace would be increasing based on what they've seen and airspace costs are rising significantly.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Strategic Plan Elements) slide by reviewing each strategic element and action items.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Strategic Element Descriptions) slide.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Airspace Management – Action Items) slides on pages 10 and 11. He reviewed action item 1 to 4 (AI #1 to AI #4).

Mr. Beauregard asked if when Mr. Gaffigan referred to option #3, the additional airspace in the Northwest basin if he was referring to cells 7 & 8 or is that something different. Mr. Bonnett noted that cells 7 & 8 are recognized by MassDEP as an expansion, and it would be a modification to the permit. Mr. Alfonse noted that there was previous discussion about these cells and that they may not be feasible for expansion because of the size and cost to construct. Mr. Bonnett noted that the wetland restrictions (finger cells) and the cost is high for the amount of airspace. There was previous discussion about the western basin being an area that could be piggybacked over the existing cell 3/4. Mr. Beauregard asked if in those scenarios were not tied to cells 7 & 8. Mr. Bonnett agreed.

Mr. Blanchard referred to action item #3 (800,000 cubic yards), and asked if it could be converted to tons. Mr. Gaffigan noted that it would be 500,000 tons of additional capacity.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Reserve Management – Action Items), Reserve Management strategy, AI #5 to AI #7, slide.

Mr. Gaffigan reviewed (Diversion and Contingency – Action Items), Diversion and Contingency strategies, AI #8 and #9, slide.

Mr. Gaffigan concluded the presentation.

Mr. Bonnett summarized by noting that the District was provided with various scenarios, but that they chose to focus on a few scenarios to get an idea of what the look ahead looks like based on the population growth, how much waste is coming in historically, and then tweak it during negotiations with commercial haulers. There's a lot of variability. There is a timeline showing the "sweet spot" to make different decisions that will impact the long term longevity of the District.

Mr. Alfonse asked if Geosyntec considered the 20% reduction in outside solid waste the lowest that the District could go without harming its financial position. He asked if that was the "sweet spot" or is there any consideration for going below it. Mr. Gaffigan noted that it would be possible to go lower depending on what happened with other elements.

Mr. Beauregard asked if there was anything that they came across that the District hasn't thought about. Mr. Bonnett noted that District should coordinate with MassDEP. He also discussed limitations for solar due to limitations of the electric grid. Mr. Bonnet noted revenues from landfill gas will decrease once the District stops taking waste. He noted that the cranberry bogs are buffer and wetlands are considered constraints.

Ms. LeBlanc asked if District goes forward with the scenario of expanding the basin and starts looking towards rail, how would that impact the tonnage price for the town and the city. She asked if Geosyntec anticipated 20% or 10% increase over 10 years or 20 years. Mr. Bonnett noted that there's some risk with the rail and that it would be difficult to quantify, but the assumption is that it can get accepted. He noted that it's all about the timeline. He did not offer estimated assessment costs to the city and town. Mr. Alfonse noted that member communities would be assessed the true cost of solid waste disposal.

Mr. Novelli asked if solid waste was shipped by rail what would be the role of the landfill. Mr. Gaffigan described the role of the District if solid waste was going to a rail. He noted that the District would be adding infrastructure to enable movement of solid waste by rail or other partnership - whichever is more practical. Mr. Novelli asked if the District would be in charge of managing the transfer station. Mr. Alfonse noted that because there currently isn't a transfer station that could serve that purpose. Mr. Novelli asked if tipping fees would still be paid to the District. Mr. Alfonse agreed.

Mr. Patten asked what the closest operational rail station in Southeastern Massachusetts that is sending solid waste out of state. Mr. Bonnett noted trail stations that were permitted and operating

in Southeastern Massachusetts. Mr. Alfonse said facility that is currently being permitted in New Bedford.

Mr. Beauregard asked what Geosyntec's role would be moving forward. Mr. Bonnett noted that it was to get the District through the bumps in the road and look at the model and tweaking it to make sure to run the scenarios that the District needs to help inform the decisions.

Mr. Alfonse thanked Geosyntec representatives and described the reason why Geosyntec was chosen for the project.

The Committee thanked Geosyntec Consultants representatives.

Mr. Gaffigan, Mr. Castro, and Mr. Peckham signed off at 9:33 a.m., and Mr. Bonnett left at 9:39 a.m.

- b. Award contract for temporary labor services.

Motion to award the temporary labor services contract to BJs Service Company Inc. made by Ms. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo.

Mr. Blanchard asked if the contract could be done for three (3) years instead annually. Mr. Alfonse noted that there was an option to extend on January, and any extension is in the amount equal to the minimum wage increase.

Motion to approve made by Mr. Blanchard, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. Roll Call: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, absent.

Motion passed 5 – 0.

- c. Director's Report

Motion to receive the Director's report made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the report.

He noted the recent MassDEP policy clarification regarding the landfill closure or post closure accounts where post closure monitoring doesn't stop after 30 years.

Mr. Alfonse noted the cost for software and hardware for the committee member tablets.

- d. Items which could not have been reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

None

7. Set meeting Schedule – March 2023

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

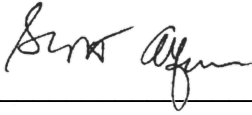
8. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. Roll Call: Chair John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Ken Blanchard, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, absent.

Motion passed 5 to 0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 a.m.

Approved by vote of District Committee on January 19, 2023.



Scott Alfonse, Executive Director

MEMOS

- 6. Memo – District Committee meeting
Handout – Strategic Solid Waste Management Planning Update – Crapo Hill Landfill Long-Term Financial Plan Summary - Presentation by Geosyntec Consultants
- 6b. Memo – Award Temporary Labor Services Contract
- 6c. Memo – Director’s Report
Attachment – Commercial and Municipal Tonnage – June 2021 to Nov. 2022
Attachment – Income Statement