

**BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Board of the Berks County Solid Waste Authority (the “Authority”) was called to order at 3:00 p.m. on September 17, 2024, at the Berks County Ag Center, 1238 County Welfare Road, 1st Floor meeting room, Leesport, Pa. 19533

The following members were present:

Mr. Charles Mowbray
Mr. Ron Rutkowski
Mr. Brian Clements
Mr. Don Moll
Ms. Jane Witheridge
Charles Jones, PE
Michael Gombar, Jr., Esquire

Absent were Mr. Tony Rymar and Mr. Tony Sacco.

Also present:

Ms. Jane Meeks, Executive Director of the Berks County Solid Waste Authority

The Chairman declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public chose to speak.

MINUTES

Upon a motion by Mr. Moll, seconded by Mr. Clements, the minutes of the regular meeting of July 16, 2024, were approved.

FINANCE

Treasurer’s Report:

Mr. Rutkowski distributed the Treasurer’s Report and invoices for payment and reviewed them with the Board. Upon a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Witheridge, the Board approved the payment of all invoices, ratified the payment of invoices previously paid and accepted the Treasurer’s Report.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Mowbray indicated that Mr. Georgeadis was not available to attend today's meeting and had no report to present.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Update on fall collection events

Ms. Meeks reported that both the paper shredding and household hazardous waste collections are on schedule for October 12th and October 19th respectively, with all arrangements completed. She indicated that these events will once again require pre-registration, however no one will be sent away for not registering. She indicated that we currently have over 1,000 people registered for the fall collections. Ms. Meeks indicated that Conrad Weiser is not able to assist this year with our paper shredding event and that Ron Rutkowski has assisted in obtaining the Surge Volleyball Club from Fleetwood to assist at the paper shredding event on October 12th.

b. Electronic Recycling Contract

Ms. Meeks indicated that the first year of our contract with Green Chip will expire on December 31, 2024 and recommended that we renew the contract for the first of two one-year contract renewals. Ms. Meeks indicated that the current contract is a one-year contract with two, one-year options for renewal. Ms. Meeks indicated that Green Chip has agreed to renew the contract under the same terms and conditions, which includes all of their pricing.

Upon a motion by Mr. Clements, seconded by Mr. Gombar the Board unanimously authorized exercising our right to renew the existing contract with Green Chip, for the year 2025, which is the first of two one-year renewal options.

c. Office Space

Ms. Meeks indicated that she had previously met with Larry Medaglia, Deputy Chief of Operations Officer and Rex Levengood, Director of Facilities and Operations for the County, to discuss office space for the Authority, under phase two of the construction schedule at the Berks County Agricultural Center. She recommended that the Board tour the proposed area after today's meeting. She indicated that the proposed area is 400 square feet, which is ample room for the Authority and more than what is required under our Agreement with the County.

d. Bern Twp – Yard waste upgrades

Ms. Meeks indicated that Bern Township has started construction of their upgrades to the yard waste site and that the site will remain closed for two months, while construction is completed, which includes land clearing, fencing, security, and access gates. Once complete the site will be free of illegal dumping and will have enough space to grind on-site and therefore eliminate the expense of transporting yard waste in 30-yard containers for processing. Securing

the site will also reduce the number of non-residents and landscapers using the site, which will greatly reduce their operating costs.

e. House Bill 2241 – Portable Battery stewardship Legislation

Ms. Meeks briefly reviewed the highlights of House Bill 2241, related to the types of batteries that will be part of this legislation and how it would affect the Authority operations. This Bill will also help to educate and encourage residents to recycling more of these types of batteries thereby removing them from the waste stream which will reduce the number of fires currently caused by these batteries entering processing and disposal facilities. Ms. Meeks indicated that PROP (Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania) is encouraging Counties to contact the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee voicing our support for this Bill.

Upon a motion by Mr. Gombar, seconded by Mr. Rutkowski the Board unanimously approved sending a letter of support to the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. Ms. Meeks indicated that she will work with their Solicitor to draft this letter and will distribute to the Board for comment.

f. 901 Planning Grant – remaining costs of Solid Waste Plan

Ms. Meeks explained that the Authority incurred excess legal fees in the development and approval of the County Solid Waste Management Plan, in the amount of \$4,640. She indicated that she had previously met with PADEP to discuss these expenses and the Département agreed to allow the County to submit a new 901 planning grant application covering 80% of these costs. She indicated that on September 5, 2024 the County authorized submitting this grant and we are currently awaiting approval.

Mr. Mowbray asked how much the Authority had spent on the development of this Plan and how that compared to prior Plans. Mr. Mowbray asked their Executive Director to research this and to include this information in the minutes of this meeting.

1990 Solid Waste Plan - Prepared by the County prior to creation of the Authority – cost unknown

2006 Solid Waste Plan - \$ 120,106 – DEP – 901 Grant \$ 96,085

2014 Solid Waste Plan – Prepared by Staff and Intern – No direct expenses incurred

2024 Solid Waste Plan - \$ 32,432 – DEP – 901 Grants - \$ 28,287

g. Update on Solid Waste Management Plan approval

Ms. Meeks indicated that as discussed at our last Board meeting, a meeting was held between the Authority and PADEP on July 19, 2024. The Department agreed that legal staff from DEP and the Authority were invited to attend the meeting. This meeting was extremely productive with both parties agreeing to final language, on the last of DEP comments on our Plan. This ultimately ended with our final approval being received on Monday, July 22, 2024.

Ms. Meeks indicated that both electronic and hard copies of the Solid Waste Plan have been sent to our municipalities, Planning Commission, County Commissioners and County Clerk.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Meeks indicated that she is continuing to assist our municipalities with filing their 904 Performance Grants, which are due December 30, 2024 and must be filed through the DCED website, as was the case in prior years. She indicated that she has assisted sixteen of our municipalities with their applications to date.

Ms. Meeks indicated that PADEP is completing their final review of the 902 equipment grants that were submitted this past spring and she anticipates those grants being awarded later this fall. She indicated that Berks County has twelve applications totaling \$1.9 million.

Ms. Meeks indicated that she assisted both Shillington Borough and Spring Township with their bid specifications for both trash and recycling contracts, which will begin in January of 2025. She indicated that both municipalities received a total of five bids and they are currently reviewing and preparing for award.

Ms. Meeks indicated that most of the other items outlined in her report have been discussed throughout today's meeting and offered to answer any questions that members may have, regarding her report.

Next Meeting Date

Mr. Mowbray indicated that the next Authority meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 3:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:00 p.m., upon a motion by Mr. Clements, seconded by Mr. Jones the Board unanimously resolved to adjourn.