

**BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
March 18, 2025**

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 March 18, 2025, in the first-floor conference room at the Berks County Agricultural Center, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, Pa. 19533.

The following members were present:

Charles Jones, PE
Michael Gombar, Jr., Esquire
Mr. Ron Rutkowski
Mr. Brian Clements
Mr. Tony Sacco
Ms. Jane Witheridge
Tony Rymar attended virtually

Absent were Mr. Charles Mowbray and Mr. Don Moll

Also present:

Ms. Jane Meeks, Executive Director of the Berks County Solid Waste Authority
Soc Georgeadis, Esquire, Georgeadis Law

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. Clements, seconded by Mr. Gombar, the minutes of the regular meetings of January 21, 2025, were unanimously approved.

FINANCE

a. **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. Clements, 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.

b. Certificate of Deposit

The Treasurer, Mr. Rutkowski, reported that the Authority has two certificate of deposits that will be maturing later this month. The first in the amount of \$100,000 will mature on March 26, 2025 and the second in the amount of \$250,000, which will mature on March 28, 2025. After much discussion with the Board, Mr. Rutkowski recommended that the Board purchase three new certificate of deposits. The first to be purchased immediately using funds from our money market account in the amount of \$50,000 for a three-month term at a rate of 4.15%, the second and third using the funds from the maturing certificate of deposits. Both in the amount of \$150,000, one for twelve months and the other for eighteen months.

Upon a motion by Mr. Clements, seconded by Mr. Rymar the Board unanimously approved purchasing three new certificates of deposits in the amount of \$50,000, \$150,000, and \$150,000 for a term of three, twelve and eighteen months, respectively.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Georgeadis indicated that since the last meeting he has been working with their Executive Director and Chairman on the Annual Recycling Report of the Authority and any other issues that may require his assistance from their Executive Director, that may come up from time to time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 902 Recycling Grant – Approval and update on County applications

Ms. Meeks indicated as previously reported, twelve applications in Berks County have been approved and accepted in the amount of \$1.873 million dollars. All applicants have accepted the grants and we are currently awaiting final contracts from the Department along with the disbursement request forms. Ms. Meeks indicated that some of the projects have already been completed, such as our roof and flooring project, Bernville and Spring Townships yard waste site improvements and the new single operation leaf vacuum purchased last fall by Lower Heidelberg Township. The other eight applicants will begin working on their projects for completion within the two-year deadline.

B. Annual Recycling Reports

Ms. Meeks reported that she has received and filed all of the annual recycling reports from our 73 municipalities, which were due this past Friday. Currently 255,000 tons of recyclables have been reported with information from Walmart, still outstanding. She anticipates that our final recycling number will be approximately 260,000 tons, once all reports are filed.

C. Berks County Solid Waste Authority – Annual Report

Ms. Meeks indicated that copies of the draft annual report of the Authority were distributed to the Board for review and comment at our next Board meeting in May of 2025. Ms.

Meeks indicated that most of the recycling reports have been received at this point, however the statewide report from Walmart is still outstanding. In 2023, Walmart reported recycling over 4,000 tons of recycling at its four stores (three Walmart stores and one Sam's Club) in Berks County. She indicated that she expects the County recycling tonnages to increase from 237,700 tons in 2023 to over 260,000 tons for 2024, once the final reports are received. She indicated that our 2024 Solid Waste Management Plan projected Berks County disposing of 389,127 tons of municipal waste in 2024 and that our actual disposal rate was 343,479, slightly less than anticipated. She indicated that that Plan also projected recycling 255,000 tons in 2024 and she believes we will exceed that number, once final reports are received. This would represent 44% of our waste stream being recycled, meeting the target in our Plan.

Mr. Gombar recommended donating to Safe Berks in honor of our past Solicitor Doug Rauch. Upon a motion by Mr. Gombar, seconded by Mr. Rutkowski, the Board unanimously authorized donating \$100 to Safe Berks, in memory of Doug Rauch.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on upcoming collection events

Ms. Meeks indicated that she has submitted all of the necessary registrations for our spring hazardous waste collection to be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025 at the Governor Mifflin Intermediate School. She indicated that the advertisements will begin running in the Reading Eagle the week April 5th, and will continue through April 19th, in both digital and print format for both our hazardous waste collection and paper shredding event. Our spring collections will once again require mandatory pre-registration and indicated that we currently have 400 registered for our hazardous waste collection and 450 for our shredding event. She indicated that we can add additional time slots if needed, as we get closer to our event.

Ms. Meeks indicated that the Department of Agriculture has allocated \$16,000 for Berks County pesticide disposal, which is collected during our household hazardous waste collections in 2025. She indicated that any pesticides over the \$16,000 limit, will be reimbursed at the 50% rate by DEP, through our Act 190 grant. She indicated that the Department of Agriculture budget increased from 12,000 in 2024 and that she anticipates this funding covering 70% of the pesticides received.

Ms. Meeks indicated that she will limit the number of volunteers for our 2025 collections similar to our 2024 events, since surveying will not be required. All necessary information is being collected as part their registration process. Ms. Meeks indicated that magnets with our 2025 collection dates will be distributed to participants during our spring collections.

Ms. Meeks indicated that Vital Records Control (VRC) will once again be providing the shredding services for our spring shredding event, which will require pre-registration. The spring shredding event will be held on Saturday, April 19, 2025 at the Governor Mifflin Intermediate School. Ms. Meeks indicated that Surge Volleyball club will once again be assisting with our event, as well as the Cumru Township Fire Police.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Meeks indicated that at our January Board meeting there was interest from the Board in touring Cogle's Recycling in Hamburg. After much discussion it was agreed to schedule the tour immediately preceding our May 20, 2025 Board meeting and to advertise the change of location to the Hamburg Borough Hall.

Ms. Meeks indicated that approximately 2,800 residents used our electronic recycling center during the first quarter of 2025 recycling 140,000 pounds of electronics. Over 17.9 million pounds of electronics have been recycled, through our site, since opening in July of 2010.

Ms. Meeks indicated that she has forwarded a copy of our 903 Recycling Grant to the Commissioners for their approval, since these grants must be submitted by the County. The estimate for this grant is \$84,330, which has already been anticipated in our 2025 budget.

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. Jones indicated that the next Authority meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 3:00 PM, which is proposed to be held in Hamburg after our tour of Cogle's Recycling.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3:45 p.m., upon a motion by Mr. Rutkowski, seconded by Mr. Gombar, the Board unanimously resolved to adjourn.