

MINUTES

COUNCIL ON RECYCLING FEBRUARY 23, 2007

RADISSON PAPER VALLEY HOTEL/CONVENTION CENTER
333 W. COLLEGE AVENUE
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

Council Members Present: Neil Peters-Michaud; John Reindl; Charlotte Zieve

Council Members Absent: Jeff Fielkow, Cecelia Stencil (there are also 2 vacancies)

Also attending: Cynthia Moore, DNR

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair John Reindl at 12:55 PM.

Introductions and Announcements: Reindl announced that the election of officers was postponed until the next meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

Reindl said the legislature was in session. They may take up several issues of interest to the Council. Those issues include: removal of PCB's from the Fox River. There is controversy about landfilling vs. vitrification. Another is increasing the recycling surcharge from \$3/ton to \$10/ton. Each RU would get at least a 75% increase in their grant. Another issue is to allow landfill funds for financial responsibility to be invested in bonds of federal agencies as well as in federal bonds. E-scrap legislation may be introduced in April.

Minutes: Postponed

Reports

DNR Cynthia Moore, DNR, said that the agency was working on the governor's budget. Here are some of the highlights. The budget includes a \$3.00 increase in the recycling tip fee. That would take it to \$6.87. \$6.00 would be for the recycling tip fee. The other \$.87 goes to other environmental programs such as groundwater monitoring, remediation, the landfill siting board and others. These other groups would be impacted if there was a fall off of total dollars. The \$3.00 increase would send \$30 million to Commerce to fund renewable energy projects. \$5 million would go for a cellulosic ethanol plant. \$2 million would go to DNR for an Environmental Results project. There is also a transfer of \$33 million from the recycling fund to general revenue. There is no increase or decrease for recycling funding or staffing.

Reindl said that there is also an increase for computer recycling program at Corrections. DNR would get a \$500,000 one time increase related to their office move. UW System and Department of Revenue get minor additions. DATCP will get \$290,000/yr. for the Clean Sweep program and a \$250,000 grant for research into anaerobic digesters. Commerce also gets funding for staff increases related to the energy projects. There is also another \$1.10 increase for the environmental fund. That means a total of \$4.10 worth of tipping fee increases in the budget.

Reindl said another issue is the tax exemption for recycling activities. That is a controversial issue that may exempt all paper companies from property tax. That is not in the budget but will be addressed by legislation at some point

Moore said that the Governor's Task Force recommendations will be presented to the NR Board in April. Later, the group will meet to develop a road map for recycling and solid waste issues. DNR will propose a study group modeled after the brownfields working group to implement the issues the Task Force has highlighted.

Moore said that Rep. Black introduced a tip fee proposal with a \$10/ton increase. The RUs would get 75% more than they currently get, even if that would take them over 100% of costs.

Governor's Task Force on Waste Materials Recovery and Disposal: Reindl said that the Governor's Task Force report was finished. Reindl distributed copies. He said that Tony Vogel, the Task Force Chair, did an amazing job of putting all the material together into a coherent whole. The members were a good cross-section of interests. They reached consensus on the document. The Task Force realizes that the issues addressed won't solve all of the challenges facing the solid waste field.

The vision statement reads: "In a manner designed to minimize environmental, economic and social costs to residents of Wisconsin and beyond, the State of Wisconsin shall achieve and maintain an integrated materials management system consisting of enhanced producer responsibility for products, effective resource recycling and recovery, and responsible waste disposal-all designed to promote ecological and environmental sustainability."

The task force looked at the total cost of material management methods. For example, looking at landfills, you have to add in air emissions, property value impacts and other factors. According to his analysis, landfilling costs come to \$100/ton minus a \$4/benefit for a net of \$96/ton cost to society. For recycling there is a cost of \$100/ton but a \$285/ton benefit for a net benefit of \$185/ton. There is a 27 page analysis as an appendix.

The recommendations follow the mission statement very closely. Some issues were left out because of lack of time or focus. Those include single stream recycling, agricultural plastics and incinerators. The report was presented to the Governor in late December and there was nothing in the governor's budget relating to the report.

Other recommendations included adding an environmental economist position to DNR and requiring UW conservation and natural resources students to take environmental economics.

Reindl asked the members to look over the document and determine how best to use the document to guide the Council priorities.

Charlotte Zieve asked if the Council had accomplished anything. Reindl replied that the Council had made progress on electronics, mercury, and paper- especially stickies. It can be a very frustrating process because it takes a long time to see success. Neil Peters-Michaud said that he started working on electronics legislation 4 years ago and expects to see success in 4-6 more years.

Annual Report: Dan Fields, DNR, said the Annual Report is ready to be distributed. He said the greatest accomplishment this year was with the stickies issue. The recycling compatible adhesives (RCA) standards that the Council subcommittee developed are now, in essence, the national standards. Wisconsin, because of the efforts of the Council, is the national leader on this issue. Reindl will be sending a letter to the Governor and the Department of Administration on the issue. He is also writing an article for a national publication. This is still a chicken and egg situation. Manufacturers won't make RCAs until there is a market. There is not market because no one has produced it. If the state begins to request it, some company will make it to win the bid. Zieve said that people love to recycle. Once they know about it they will do it. Reindl said we are the first state to call attention to this issue. Reindl said we need to get the message out. Contacting groups like Audubon and others is a start. Reindl suggested that we also send it to AROW, WCSWMA, SWANA and ISRI.

Reindl asked what the Council priorities should be for 2007. Peters-Michaud said we should continue to make e-waste a priority. He said that this was a good time for e-waste. Legislation will be introduced soon. Producer responsibility is moving forward. Peters-Michaud wants more feedback on e-waste. He'd like written comments from a whole range of viewpoints. He would like to get the issues out on the table. He especially wants recyclers because they are in the business. He would also like letters from retailers as well. Moore said she would come up with key concepts. Peters-Michaud said we need to create a sense of urgency. He will write a letter that people can respond to. Zieve said she would work on distributing the letter to retailers. Peters-Michaud said it's time to seize the momentum. The time is right.

Reindl said that the mercury recommendations by the Council are not in the budget. A Minnesota bill would ban the sale of several containing mercury products and other contains other provisions regarding mercury.

Reindl put off the discussion of clean sweeps until Jeff Fielkow could attend

Reindl said paper would continue to be a priority. He will send a letter on RCAs. The Council will need to work on an education program.

Moore said that the DNR is looking at the task force report for ideas of items to tackle that would not need legislation, as well as following through on several other ideas. There are a lot of ideas in the report and DNR cannot take them all on at once. It will take years to work through the process.

Public Comment: Moore said that she has heard from a hauler that they are having trouble finding a scrap processor to take washers. The processors say there is too much plastic to make it worthwhile. She wondered if anyone else has heard of this as a problem. None of the Council members had heard about this before. Reindl suggested that she put this out on Green Yes or other list serves to find out if anyone else has a problem. Moore worries that this would fall to municipalities if haulers won't pick it up. Peters-Michaud said that it is not DNR's responsibility to find markets. Moore said that DNR is committed to help RUs find markets. Peters-Michaud said that industry needs to find the solution. It is the haulers job to find markets.

Other Business : The next meeting will be May 22, 2007, at the Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Dr., Madison.

Adjournment: Zieve moved and Peters-Michaud seconded. The Council adjourned at 2:20.

Respectfully submitted by Daniel B. Fields, Department of Natural Resources.