

**MINUTES**  
**St. Louis County Board of Commissioners Solid Waste Subcommittee**  
**Northland Office Building,**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor Environmental Services Conference Room #118**  
**Virginia, Minnesota**  
**April 30, 2014**

**Call to Order:** Steve Raukar called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

*Members Present:* Commissioner Mike Forsman, Commissioner Keith Nelson, Commissioner Steve Raukar, and Commissioner Pete Stauber.

*Others Present:* Dave Fink, Diane Hildreth, Mary McReynolds, Mark St. Lawrence, Terry Soderberg, John Strukel and Ted Troolin, Environmental Services Department; Kevin Gray, St. Louis County Administrator; Chris Strub, Northern Minnesota Recycling; Rick Crum and Tom Lucas, Northeast Technical Services (NTS).

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Commissioner Nelson and supported by Commissioner Forsman the minutes of the July 23, 2013 Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting were approved as presented.

**Ongoing Business:** Troolin handed out a copy of the Director's Report. There were no comments from the group on the items Troolin discussed from the report.

Troolin gave a Solid Waste Fee Analysis handout to the group. Troolin discussed fee increases recommended for 2015, the rationale/considerations for the fee increases, general capital plan assumptions, capital plan expenditures, and capital plan revenues. Fees will be discussed in more detail at the next Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting. The commissioners would like to see a comparison of fees with surrounding counties. Discussion from the group on the Solid Waste Division being an Enterprise Fund followed and Administrator Gray will follow up with input from the Auditor's office on working capital. Department staff are working on submitting the 2015 Business Plan to Administration.

Dave Fink gave a PowerPoint presentation and handout to the group on Regional Landfill (RLF) activities. Fink summarized RLF construction projects, re-permitting, irrigation field expansion, landfill gas and leachate management with the group. Department staff completed the permitting process and submitted the permit to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) on July 3, 2013. The MPCA has changed the requirements of the Landfill re-permitting from every five years to every ten years. To date, the permit has not been approved. Department and MPCA staff are working to finalize the permit.

The Department is negotiating a land exchange with the Biosolids Disposal Site Authority (Authority). The Authority is a joint powers entity created between the cities of Eveleth, Gilbert, Mountain Iron and Virginia for the purpose of owning and operating sites for the disposal of waste water treatment sludge. This agreement would allow the Department to expand the County's leachate spray irrigation treatment facility. Commissioner Nelson made a motion to advance a resolution to the County Board to enter into an agreement with the Biosolids Disposal Site Authority for a property exchange that provides each party with land needed to satisfy leachate and biosolids management needs. Support by Commissioner Forsman. The motion unanimously passed. Commissioner Nelson made a directive motion to the Chair of the Solid Waste Subcommittee to draft a letter to the legislative delegation seeking immediate action in evaluating the Department's permit and to include a recommendation. Support by Commissioner Forsman. The motion unanimously passed.

The expanded treatment ponds project draft design has been submitted to the MPCA with the original permit. Treating nitrogen is a major concern of the MPCA at this time. The Department is currently hauling leachate by truck to the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD). Fink went over leachate haulage costs with the group. Department staff have been working with NTS staff to install an environmental monitoring system on the proposed expansion site. The MPCA has approved the irrigation field expansion portion of the permit. The Department is looking at a June 1<sup>st</sup> projected date to spray leachate.

The Department is working with the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) on a Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant for a long term mine land reclamation study for the proposed field expansion site. Fink will update the group on the status of the grant at a future SWSC meeting.

Department staff are working with NTS staff on analyzing both a center pivot above ground leachate spray system and a fixed gun irrigation spray system. Updates will be provided at a future SWSC meeting.

Fink updated the group on the Landfill Gas (LFG) and Leachate Recirculation activities at the Regional Landfill. The Regional Landfill is approaching the MPCA and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) regulatory threshold in regards to methane and will need to at least actively flare methane in the near future. Department staff will be looking at putting costs for methane flaring in the 2015 capital plan.

John Strukel provided an update on the Department's transfer stations and canister sites. The Department will be adding a new canister site in Cedar Valley Township. The site is scheduled to be operational by the end of June. The proposed hours will be Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Department staff had recent discussions with the MPCA, Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) and area counties on how to properly dispose of Sharps. The Department's current policy accepts Sharps from households only. Red infectious waste containers are not permitted at the sites. The biggest concern with collecting Sharps is worker safety. Staff will continue to explore options for the collection of Sharps.

Mary McReynolds gave two handouts and updated the group on recycling programs. McReynolds discussed the current Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) funding, the recycling percentages reported and amounts of recycled materials landfilled in St. Louis County. The Department expanded the recycling stream to include cartons and plastic bag recycling and staff will work with Dana Kazel, St. Louis County Communications Manager on public information advertising. GreenCorps volunteer Allison Sawyer has been providing technical assistance to area schools on their recycling programs. The Department hosted a forum on recycling and Sawyer is compiling the information from the post forum survey to determine feasibility of a future work group.

**Public Comment Period:** There were no comments from the general public at this meeting.

The next Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting was not scheduled at this time. Commissioner Raukar adjourned the meeting.