

**NORTHEAST KINGDOM WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

March 14, 2023

Meeting held remotely via ZOOM and

The District Office at 224 Church Street, Lyndonville, VT 05851

Paul Tomasi opened the public hearing for the 2023 proposed budget at 6:00pm. There were no members of the public present on the call or in person. No comments on the proposed 2023 budget were received orally or in writing.

The Board meeting was called to order @ 6:38 p.m. by Nick Rivers, Board Chair

Present: Nick Rivers (Albany & Irasburg); William Douglas (Barnet); Paulette Routhier (Bloomfield, Brunswick, Maidstone); Bobbi Brimblecombe (Cabot & Marshfield); Bob Sandberg (Corinth); Walter McNeil Jr. (Danville); Fran Batchelder & Irene Dagesse (Derby); Kirwin Flanders (East Haven); Brian Carroll (Glover); Timothy Dailey, Sr. (Groton); Dave Sanders (Jay); Steve Gray & Marcus Berry (Lyndon); Jan Clausing (Newark); Steve Barrup (Newport Town); Gina Vigneault (Norton & UTGs); Jack Smith (Sheffield & Wheelock in person); Emily Cayer (Stannard); Elizabeth Hubbard (Sutton); Gaston Bathalon (Troy); Richard Stodola (Waterford); and Jacques Couture (Westfield)

Absent: Brighton, Brownington, Charleston, Concord, Granby, Greensboro, Guildhall, Holland, Kirby, Lunenburg, Morgan, Newbury, Peacham, Ryegate, Topsham, Victory, and Westmore

Staff present- Paul Tomasi, Executive Director

Visitors – Amy Ash-Nixon (Caledonian-Record); Oscar Paredes (NEWS 7)

Updates to the Agenda – none

Approval of Minutes – Motion & 2nd to approve the minutes of February 14, 2023. The question about towns' liability for closed landfills. Should be moved under the "NEWMOA Presentation – Old Landfills" heading. It inadvertently was placed under the budget discussion. Motion approved.

2023 Budget Vote – Motion that the Board of Supervisors approve the 2023 proposed budget in the amount of \$885,280.00. 2nd. Question: Why has the line item for office telephone increased by nearly triple? Answer: It includes figures for phone and IT upgrades. The IT upgrades are lumped in there because we don't have a separate line item for IT upgrades. Question: How were we able to cut our Worker's Comp expense so dramatically? Answer: Our rating dropped because of past claims being removed. Question: Have we ever offered health insurance before? Answer: We have in the past, but dropped it around 2008 because the health exchange was supposed to make things more affordable. The plan was to provide some sort of basic coverage for employees in 2023, but the money in the proposed budget does not go far enough. The thought was we could take the money we had been collecting for the baler and use it for health insurance. This amount would not be sufficient to implement a viable health insurance option for 2023. We may revisit the issue of the per capita assessment and health insurance later in the year. Question: What happens to unused monies in the budget? Answer: Typically, it would

get used in another line item. In this case, we may need to create another reserve account because this funding is collected as part of the per capita assessment. Motion approved.

Increase Signing Limit – The current signing limit is \$2,000 (the point at which a 2nd signature is required for writing checks). The request is to increase it to \$2,500. The Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System contributions and Paul’s paycheck will require 2nd signatures if the limit is not increased. Motion to extend the signing limit to \$2,500. 2nd . Question: Will there be any changes to the people authorized to be the 2nd signature? Answer: No. Motion approved.

Updates –

Administrative Rules Review – This process was started some time ago. Paul will provide the Executive Committee with copies of the draft as provided by the Vermont League of Cities & Towns. Paul will distribute those items to Executive Committee members later this week.

Financial – February was a good month for the District because we received a grant reimbursement check for \$37,000. The District still has a little bit of a deficit, but as we move into the snow-free months, surcharge revenues typically pick-up. The District has had several issues with our 2 older trucks. Repair costs involving emissions control, lift-gate issues, and ABS systems have contributed to increased repair costs. The District is exploring a grant opportunity from Senator Sanders office with the hope of purchasing a new vehicle. Question: Do we have money set aside for trucks? Answer: Yes, our capital equipment fund serves that purpose. The District will also be looking into the possibility of leasing a truck as part of the 2024 budget cycle.

Grants – The District is still waiting on a decision from the USDA regarding the grant for the purchase of the foam densifier. A decision is expected in April 2023. They have informed us that we have submitted everything necessary for the grant. The Town of Lyndon is making available some of their Federal ARPA money (\$300,000). The District will be pursuing about \$12,000 to help pay for the foam densifier. Question: How do the grant match up with the people who are selling us the machine? Answer: The seller of the foam densifier has been kept in the loop regarding our grant efforts and has said they are fine with waiting until the grant funds come through. Question: Has the District shipped foam yet? Answer: No, but we have enough material. We’ve been told that we may be able to take advantage of a truck coming north and headed to Sherbrooke. We will be working that out with the receiving location and hopefully be able to report on our first shipment at the next meeting.

Clothing – Most towns who have requested a clothing collection container have received one. Jay, Norton, and Westfield are all interested in getting clothing collection containers. The District will follow-up with Apparel Impact. There was some concern about the location of the clothing collection container in Lyndonville at the District facility. It has been placed outside the facility, but inside the fence in order to discourage the drop-off of unacceptable materials. The District will look into whether or not the collection container can be placed inside the warehouse. Jay and Westfield are willing to share one container, so that 2 are not needed – one at each facility.

Compliance – Our ‘new’ compliance investigator, Christina Titus, has conducted several audits of haulers and identified over \$11,000 in unpaid surcharges. The District is working with 2 haulers to establish payment terms for the monies owe the District. The District tries to conduct 4-5 audits per year in order to subject all haulers to an audit in a 4-5 year period. The audit program typically takes in more money than what is budgeted on an annual basis.

A follow-up on NEK Community Compost...they have changed their name to Blume Farm. Outreach Coordinator, Shannon Choquette, and Paul have visited the site met with the owner operators. The District did register the site and their hauling operations with conditions. They had deposited several yards of organic material on either side the path leading down to their chicken feeding area. We instructed them to move the material as soon as possible, but no later than March 31, 2023. The District will be contacting them on March 24, 2023 to assess their progress.

Other Business – Brian Carrol (Glover) sent a message through ZOOM indicating this would be his last meeting as the Waste District representative from the Town of Glover.

Question: How accurate is the information on the State's list of closed landfills? Answer: Paul will reach out to VT DEC and inquire about the accuracy of the locations and how the information was compiled.

Motion to adjourn, 2nd, approved @ 7:12pm

Respectfully submitted, Paul Tomasi

There is a video/audio recording of the March 14, 2023 meeting. It is available upon request.