WALLINGFORD REGIONAL SOLID WASTE PROJECT POLICY BOARD

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE April 16, 2019 MEETING

The Meeting of the Policy Board of the Wallingford Regional Solid Waste Project was held on April 16, 2019. Present at the meeting were: Brendan Sharkey, Counsel for the Town of Hamden as proxy for Mayor Leng; Policy Board Chairman Michael Freda, First Selectman, Town of North Haven; and Mayor William Dickinson, Jr., Town of Wallingford.

Others in attendance were: Mark Bobman, Executive Director; Mary Ruder, Covanta; Taylor Pratcher, UCONN; and Robert Norton, Jr., All Waste.

The meeting was called to order at 9:20 a.m. by Chairman Michael Freda in Room 315, Wallingford Town Hall.

I. A motion was made by Mr. Sharkey, seconded by Mayor Dickinson to approve the Minutes of the February 5, 2019 WRSWP Policy Board Meeting, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Freda noted there are no items to discuss in Executive Session, and he invited Ms. Ruder to give her report under Item IV.

IV. **Covanta Report** – Ms. Ruder reported there is a new transfer station operator onsite, Country Disposal. She continued, it's been a relatively smooth transition, we did had an issue with floor traffic and movement on the floor and this has been addressed. Safety is our number one priority, and Covanta continues to monitor that every day. Regarding recent hauler violations, we had three instances of mixed waste origins, and Covanta does not accept loads from multiple origins. Three instances of mix origin loads were recorded, those were reported to Mark, the towns, and the hauler.

Ms. Ruder said with, in the first quarter we had 4 hot loads, all were refused and they were returned to the yard to remove the radioactive material isolated by Radiation Safety Associates. The third party waste inspection is scheduled today, I will send over the last quarter tomorrow so that you have it for your records. We did have a couple of safety violations for AJ Waste, one of the drivers left the tipping floor with his back gate open, and the other one was an injury to a driver where he got out of his truck, stepped on something and it punctured his shoe. The driver was not wearing boots, and the report Covanta sent to AJ Waste stated proper PPE is required . Again safety is our number one priority.

Ms. Ruder mentioned Covanta is reworking some of the driveways from the winter cleaning up for spring. Ms. Ruder referred to her tonnage report comparing year over year results and noted the towns remain the same except Wallingford, which reduced its waste by 18% from last year, and a lot of that has to do with commercial waste.

V.

Mr. Freda asked Ms. Ruder if she wanted to comment on the permit transfer. Ms. Ruder responded Covanta heard back from DEEP with questions for both Covanta and the new operator and we've provided answers to the questions. Joe Vitale says he expects it to take another 4-6 weeks before they send us an approval. and then the regular processes will take place. Mr. Sharkey asked what happened with the floor traffic problem that you described, because Mark had alerted us of a violation that occurred. Is that right, is that related to the congestion on the floor? Ms. Ruder replied that was a separate incident, where All Waste alerted us to the issue via email and a phone call. Mr. Sharkey asked what is meant by "floor traffic." Ms. Ruder responded there were too many people and too many vehicles moving around on the floor. I appreciate that All Waste let us know, since Ms. Ruder does not observe the tipping floor 24/7. Mayor Dickinson asked about the commercial waste from Wallingford and whether Covanta knows where that is going, and Ms. Ruder replied she assumes it is going to Hartford.
Chairman Freda stated he knows there have been personnel changes at Covanta and asked Ms. Ruder whether she will continue as liaison, and Ms. Ruder responded affirmatively.

VI. **Executive Director's Report** – Mr. Bobman said for the first 9 months of the fiscal year the aggregate number is just under 48,000 tons. With respect to commercial deliveries, Wallingford decreased by 40%. A significant increase is observed for Cheshire commercial waste, just over 300 tons fiscal year to date. He continued the patterns fluctuate, times when pricing doesn't affect the volume, for example when haulers can't get into the Hartford facility. MIRA resumed operations on all 3 units in the beginning of March, from November 5 until March 5, 6,000 tons per week utilized 37 different facilities, this was a massive undertaking which utilized transfer stations, resource recovery facilities and landfills during the outages. As of April 1 MIRA raised the tip fee by $9.35/ton, for next fiscal year the range is $83 to $87 for municipal customers. Mr. Bobman said with respect to legislation he highlighted:

a. HB 7298, which Mr. Bobman drafted and submitted to the Environment Committee, with substitute language introduced and the bill was JF'd out of the Committee; he stated there is more work to be done, with at least one amendment and referenced a meeting scheduled with DEEP the following day. He continued, the original intent was to streamline reporting by DEEP, eliminate glass from the list of mandatory recyclables, and to cause DEEP to progress on initiatives proposed as part of the Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy and report on what has been successful;
b. HB 7293 – Mr. Bobman reported the bill addresses MIRA negotiations with Sacyr Rooney following a procurement effort, he stated the Legislature is unhappy with the lack of progress and the original bill called for the Commissioner to order DEEP to enter into an agreement;
c. HB 7294 – Mr. Bobman stated this is the bottle redemption bill, adding juices, tea and other non-carbonated beverages to the deposit program but not wine

and spirits, and increasing the reimbursement to the redemption centers which has been stagnant at the same rate since inception of the program;

d. HB 7295 - DEEP's bill, includes extended producer responsibility program fees on packaging, requirement for hauler reporting all solid waste. Senator Kennedy Co-Chair of the Environment Committee highlighted Amazon packaging, in 2017 there was discussion by a Task Force appointed by the Legislature with a divided vote, DEEP was in the minority, nonetheless they are pursuing legislation, as are other states
e. HB 7410 - Finance, Revenue & Bonding includes a proposal to tax solid waste services.

Mr. Bobman mentioned a recent communication from DEEP, the *Connecticut Municipal Recycling Coordinator News* which discusses community composting and Mr. Bobman said he didn't know to what extent municipalities could take advantage of this program without obtaining a permit. Secondly, he noted the publication includes a statement, "Trash incinerators are also top polluters," and said he believes this is a quote from another source. It's a concern because CT has 2/3 of its waste processed at waste to energy facilities, and the statement is untrue, the primary sources of air pollutants in CT derive from automobile emissions and transport from downwind states.

Mr. Bobman continued, in terms of emerging technologies the crisis with recycling, emphasis in the industry to consider alternatives and other equipment; robotics, advances in optical scanning and detection, improvements in sorting equipment. Some of the facilities being proposed include production of pellets to be used as fuel, a much more complicated and energy intensive process than straightforward mass burn facility.

In terms of emerging technologies the crisis with recycling, emphasis in the industry to consider alternatives and other equipment; robotics, advances in optical scanning and detection, improvements in sorting equipment. Some of the facilities being proposed include production of pellets to be used as fuel, a much more complicated and energy intensive process than straightforward mass burn facility. Some of the new facilities will generate a fuel for combustion elsewhere, for example a cement kiln. In terms of the carbon footprint and material balance, this is unfavorable compared to traditional waste to energy.
Mr. Bobman said recycling facilities are unlikely to stay profitable without capital improvements, and thinks robotics won't work well as a retrofit or add-on because of space limitations and the need for sensors to detect the size and composition of material passing along a conveyor belt. He stated the robotic arms are supposedly faster than humans and are marketed as a way to avoid absenteeism and are robust, operating for long periods of time with major maintenance.
Mayor Dickinson asked what is supposed to happen without markets for the recyclables. Mr. Bobman responded Houston discontinued glass collection and recently brought it back in after bringing in a new contractor. He continued, some communities are discontinuing collection of some materials at their transfer stations, some are charging residents to deliver materials. He mentioned Philadelphia, which has half of its recyclables going to a Covanta waste to energy

facility. Mayor Wallingford asked, what about within Connecticut? Mr. Bobman responded, that was in part the reason for proposing a change in the designation of mandatory recyclables. Mr. Bobman said he believes DEEP is adamant about maintaining adherence to programs such as SMART, and resisting changing definitions or policies regarding recyclable items.

VII. **WRSWP Reserves**

Mr. Bobman provided a handout listing amounts in the reserve fund. Chairman Freda suggested transfer of the operating permit from Covanta to Country might free up reserves, so in theory the Policy Board could liquidate those reserves. Mayor Dickinson stated the Policy Board has no relationship with County Disposal, and Covanta is hiring the firm as a contractor, which has no bearing on the Policy Board. Chairman Freda thanked Mayor Dickinson for making this point.

VIII. **Adjourn**

A motion by was made by Attorney Sharkey, seconded by Mayor Dickinson to adjourn, and the motion was unanimously approved.

_____

Mark Bobman, Executive Director
April 18, 2019