

Commissioner Colleen Swedyk opened the Public Hearing at 8:00 a.m. Commissioner Bill Hutson was also in attendance. The Public Hearing was for the purpose of consideration of recommendation amendments to charges and fees imposed at the Medina County Solid Waste Management District Facility.

The following people were in attendance:

Beth Biggins-Ramer	David Hull
Paul Barnett	Patti Wetterman
Jeremy Sinko	
Curtis Perkins	

*Jeremy Sinko* stated that they are looking to increase the commercial gate rate fee from \$50/ton to \$52/ton and the residential 13 gallon bag by from \$1.45 to \$1.75 a bag. This rate increase will help meet the Policy Committee’s goal of having approximately 15% of our revenues as a fund balance.

Public Comment

*David Hull* stated that the bag rate increase of 20% versus the bulk rate at 4% is too much. In the last year, the bag rate has increased over 200% and I don’t think increasing the bag rate more and putting more costs on the little guy is fair. Beth has made the argument that each interaction with the gate house causes an expense, but when someone brings a bag, they only interact with the gate house once – the hauler interacts twice. Their expense is actually half of the cost of the gate house.

*Patti Wetterman* stated that she only makes 1-2 trips to the gate house because most of their trash is recycled – why are we paying more for one visit then the haulers are? The people that use the public trash have an automatic price increase and that is controlled by a contract. The people that opt out of it and use your facility are being charged more –why?

Mr. Sinko stated correct, one of the reasons for this is when you buy in bulk, your pricing is less and when you have one or two garage bags that come through the scale house transactions – there is a cost per transaction which he believes is close to \$0.75 a ticket. The one or two bags that get dropped off at the scale house go up into a roll up and then gets taken up to the transfer port to get accessed. The haulers come in with their 7-10 tons of solid waste in their trucks, they back it in and drop it right on the floor. The larger bulk garbage is one of the reasons that the costs are a little bit more via individual bags that come in. Mrs. Wetterman asked if they are going to be charging them \$0.75 to pay your operation. Mr. Sinko answered that the bag cost is currently \$1.45/bag. He explained that in 1990 when the District opened, the cost per residential bag was \$1.50 and we are currently at \$1.45. In the last 30 years, they were able to hold the cost on the bagged garbage. Mrs. Wetterman asked for a 15 gallon garbage can it would cost us \$1.75? Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated for a tall kitchen garage bag that would be the cost Mrs. Wetterman stated that she was talking about cans. Mr. Biggins-Ramer stated it would be \$1.75. Mrs. Wetterman stated that is not bad actually and inquired about a 30 gallon can. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that the \$1.75 is for a 13 gallon equivalent so you would triple the \$1.75/bag cost. Mrs. Wetterman stated it should be double- it would be cheaper to bring out two 15 gallon cans. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that the pricing goes by 13 gallon equivalents so the 15 gallon can would fall under the 13 gallon equivalent. Mrs. Wetterman stated that they are going to triple it if we bring out a 30 gallon can-that is not right. It is cheaper to take out two 15 gallons. Mr. Biggins-Ramer explained that the charge that is assessed is 13 gallons because that is the size of the smallest garbage bag made on the market- by volume and you would multiply that. Mrs. Wetterman thanked them for the information.

*David Hull* stated the regarding Jeremy’s comment on the cost from years ago – if you remember correctly the gate rate used to be \$62/ton so we are down to \$50/ton, but the bag rate never went down. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that she cannot speak to what went on prior. Mr. Sinko stated that it did go down. During the last increase, it was increased to \$1.45/bag. Mr. Hull stated that is because when you went to 13 gallon bags, you didn’t have public hearings; it used to be \$1.45 for any size bag. In December of 2019, I could take a 30 gallon bag and it was \$1.45. In March, because of COVID, you decreased the size of the bag to 13 gallons without a public hearing. Then you lowered it to a \$1.00 with a public hearing, then you had another public hearing to raise it to \$1.45. The way I see it from December 2019 until now with your proposed increase – there is going to be a 260% increase on the 30 gallon bag of garbage. Mr. Sinko stated that during COVID, 3 bag minimum was implemented to reduce the number of customers coming into the scale house. Mr. Hull stated that you also instituted the 13 gallon bag. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that is right –the facility opened in 1993 and those types of bags weren’t prevalent. You would bring your paper grocery sack of garbage to the facility and over time people took advantage of that. We implemented the safety precautions of recommending three bags per visit, which was an action taken to protect the frequent visitors of the facility, we noticed people were bringing 30-90 gallon bags all paying the same price. By volume, this was not fair and this is when we decided to clarify the price per volume of the bag. Mr. Hull stated if you have a 30 gallon bag that weighs 30 pounds you end up paying \$4.35, which is almost 500% of what the bulk haulers pay to dispose of that bag. With the new pricing it will take the cost to 570% of what the haulers pay. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer wanted to remind the public that a transfer station is meant to deal with commercial solid waste traffic and historically the facility has allowed the public to utilize it as an opportunity for residents not to use commercial collection. We cannot weigh anything under 20 pounds because of the commercial scales – they are not at the sensitivity to define specific weights of smaller volumes. Other transfer stations charge a minimum price of one ton

– if you bring in 1,000 pounds it's at the one ton price and if you bring in 20 pounds it's the one ton price. This happens because (1) the commercial scale limitations and (2) a transfer station is made for large trucks. We are trying to balance a facility that allows an option for residents to dump their trash when there wasn't an availability of curbside collection. Currently, we have five haulers county wide that allow curbside collection, which means people don't have to bring their materials to us. It is a challenge to service two completely different types of customers.

*Patti Wetterman* asked that because the county has decided to go to five garbage collectors under contract the people that want to opt out are being penalized. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that is not true. The haulers that do business in Medina County do it at their own free will. We have about 80 customers that come into our facility – all of which have decided to freely do business in Medina County. Some offer residential only, commercial only or both. At the time the facility opened there was not a large number of haulers freely offering the collection of residential services. Now we have five that offer residential service and this service is a decision of that particular hauler. We have nothing to do with what these companies offer. We have 26 communities in Medina County – two operate their own sanitation departments, five go out for contract and that leaves 19 that leave that decision up to the residents. The district has nothing to do with the private sector coming into the county and offering services to residents in communities. Mrs. Wetterman asked why does the contract that was made between the township trustees and the cities offer an opt out? Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated the contract that Brunswick Hills signed decided to have an opt out option. Mrs. Wetterman stated that Mrs. Biggins-Ramer helped write the contract as well. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer explained that the trustees did come to them and as part of our district services and we offered free technical assistance versus the trustees paying for a private consultant to write the contract. However it was the option of the trustees to have an opt out option. Typically there is no opt out options when a community contracts for curbside service. Mrs. Wetterman stated that it was poor service and a monopoly. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer wanted to clarify that it is not a monopoly- your trustees determined pricing by going out for public bid.

*Paul Barnett* stated that with these transfer stations the contractors with large volumes of waste have to wait, they charge those rates to their customers. For example, Republic has to wait in line 45 minutes to almost an hour and 20 minutes – their operator and cost of equipment is being charged to the City of Brunswick and its residents. When you take a look at what it costs to run the scale house and its operations, those costs need to be split equally amongst those people that are using it. I would rather that the transfer station have a one ton minimum charge to keep the residents out of line so it doesn't delay the commercial haulers and increase costs. Medina County is the most accommodating county I have ever worked in in my life. They do more for the residents of the county than surrounding counties. I understand why they want to let residents come in with a single bag, but the cost of those bags is much less than what it should be. The purpose of a one ton minimum is to keep the 1-2 bags from residents out. Every time a single bag goes through the station it is costing the cities more. Mrs. Wetterman asked if Brunswick City picks up half of the garbage pickup for their residents in their city tax – that doesn't matter because we are from Brunswick Hills and we make one trip a year. We don't tie up the station because we let the trucks go ahead of us. It's not our problem that the trucks have to go through the same spot that we do. They are getting backed up at the dump and not the gate.

*Commissioner Hutson* stated that the Solid Waste Policy Committee looks at the total operations of the transfer and recycling facilities and we calculate a rate based on the total costs. Then we have subcategories for household hazardous waste and for bag drops offs. Our goal is to try to allocate costs where costs are incurred. We do reasonably know what the costs are for each transaction going through the gate house, we know how much it costs to move material around the transfer floor and how much to recycle, etc. We try to balance the charges and make it equitable for all who use the facility. In my opinion, the \$1.75/bag is a reasonable charge for disposing of trash. The concern that we have is that there has to be some kind of standard. If someone is paying for a 13 gallon bag and paying for a 13 gallon bag someone else shouldn't be bringing a bigger bag and paying the same amount. The Policy Committee goes to great lengths to determine costs for residents and commercial haulers and make it equitable for all users. Mrs. Wetterman thanked Mr. Hutson for his response.

*David Hull* stated that York Township has the single hauler with two plans (unlimited and bag program). It is hard to comprehend that the hauler is going to pick up my 30 gallon bag and I only pay \$2.50 versus what the new \$1.75 is going to cost to take it to the facility and drop it off. Mrs. Wetterman stated like they are forcing us to go with their pickup service. Mr. Hull stated yes and they are going to spend all kinds of money trying to set up a separate scale line for residential and the prices are going to be so high they are going to lose customers.

*Curtis Perkins* stated he agrees with Paul Barnett that the trucks that sit in line cost serious money. We should raise the cost to a one ton minimum to help eliminate the longer wait times for the trucks. If you do put in a residential line this would help elevate the lines as long as the residential bags don't tie up the trucks in the dumping area. The lines haven't been bad the last couple of months though. Mrs. Wetterman asked Mr. Perkins where are the trucks waiting – at the gate or at the facility? Mr. Perkins stated we are sitting in line to get to the scale. The trucks sometimes sit on Lake Road waiting to make the turn into the CPF driveway. The tie up is not usually in the back – the operators do a go job getting the trucks in and out. Mrs. Wetterman asked what times are the trucks sitting in line – we have never been in a line when we go out. Mr. Perkins asked if she has been there on a Saturday morning. Mrs. Wetterman answered no. Mr. Perkins stated he tries to keep his trucks off the road on Saturday morning because of the lines. During the week, no matter what time people bring their trash and it ties up the trucks anytime. Mrs. Wetterman stated they go around lunch time to dump their trash. At the most we are down at the dump three times a year. Mrs. Wetterman stated that they should set a date for off times when people can dump their garbage. Mrs. Wetterman asked for Rhonda Beck to send links for the next meetings to her email.

David Hull stated that he took a tour of the facility about a month ago and he was not aware that Rumpke was bringing in outside county commercial waste and recyclables to the sorting facility. How many trucks a day come in from outside the county? Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated that the current contract does allow this and it is between 1-3 trucks per day. The county receives a host fee for this material. Mr. Perkins stated this is nothing new and the only problem he has with it is it tied them up sometimes. As long as the county gets money out of it there is no problem with it. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer stated they are commercial trucks so they are in and out quickly.

Mrs. Wetterman stated that the people at the gate are very nice and very friendly. We have never had any problem with anyone at the gate or with waiting for trucks coming in. It may be beneficial to put out that Saturday is not a good day to take things to your facility to help evaluate the truckers trying to get in. Mr. Perkins stated that Saturday would be a good day for residents to come in because there are very few haulers that come in that day. Mrs. Biggins-Ramer thanked Mrs. Wetterman for the nice comments on the scale house employees.

Adjournment

Commissioner Swedyk thanked everyone for their comments and noted that the second hearing will be on Wednesday, December 15, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. Mrs. Swedyk moved to adjourn the public hearing; the motion was seconded by Mrs. Geissman. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all the commissioners voting AYE. The meeting adjourned at 8:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Rhonda Beck  
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

COMMISSIONERS

OF

MEDINA COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia G. Geissman

\_\_\_\_\_  
William F. Hutson

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Colleen M. Swedyk