

The Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee

held a meeting on **Wednesday, August 9th, 2023** beginning at 6:00 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Mitchell, Davis, Oswald, Simmons

ABSENT: Corbin

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Director Deery, Safety Service Dir Lundy, Engineer McKillips, Public Works Sup Conner

1. Approval of the Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes ~ July 12th, 2023.

Mr. Oswald moved, seconded by Mrs. Simmons to approve the 'said' meeting minutes.

2. The matter of a Resolution to Adopt the Solid Waste Management Plan for The Lorain County Solid Waste Management District.

Referred By: Lorain County Solid Waste Dir Blevins

Brandi Schnell, Community Outreach Coordinator for Lorain County Solid Waste Management, office location is 226 Middle Ave., Elyria.

Ms. Schnell will speak on the LC Solid Waste Management Plan and the Resolution they are requesting to be ratified. Basics about it, Ohio House Bill 592 was passed in 1988 and its revised Ohio's outdated laws on Solid Waste Management. It required that every county in Ohio be part of a Solid Waste Management District. LC Management is a single County District which is all of Lorain County and also includes all of Vermilion, even though half of Vermilion is in Erie County.

The bill emphasized the need to reduce Ohio's reliance on landfills for the disposal of waste and increased solid waste reuse, recycling and minimization efforts. One of the requirements is that they create a plan for residents for a planning period. Lorain County's planning period is ten years and each planning period they need to make sure they have enough space for garbage that's produced by the residents. They need to implement programs that aim at increasing the recycling rates and reducing the reliance on landfills. They also need to provide 100% access to recycling; which Lorain County does provide either thru curbside or drop-off recycling facilities. The plan that they are asking for, is for each community to ratify is going before all of the 34 political subdivisions in Lorain County to look over and approve. The entire document is 300 pages and they have created an executive summary to be reviewed. That summary includes the programs that they are currently participating in. One is the Lorain County Collection Center which is in Elyria and they're trying to meet these goals. The Plan shows all of that information. They have to go out for ratification when they update this plan and they need approval by 60% of the population of the county. It must include the Lorain County Commissioners approval, LC Management District Policy Committee approval and the largest city in Lorain County has to be part of that 60%. The ratification period is August 1st through October 30th. They would like to ask Elyria to consider this ratification.

Mrs. Davis asked if they've spoken to the City Administration since we have our own sanitation department.

Ms. Schnell said Elyria along with Oberlin are in a unique position, where they have their own sanitation departments and they take their disposal to Republic Services Lorain County Landfill. Some Lorain County communities have contracts with Republic Services.

Other communities are part of the Lorain County Consortium which is made up of smaller townships and that bid was awarded to Rumpke which is currently servicing those communities.

Mr. Oswald said we should find out from our Sanitation Dept., if what we're doing with our collection is working because it's been an issue.

Chair Mitchell asked a question regarding recycling; if there is anything in the load that shouldn't be, it contaminates the whole load, is that correct?

Dir Lundy said that's the problem they run into. He wanted to point out some ideas that can be discussed in the future, he's not proposing anything but when it comes to contamination of recyclable products or bins. There have been initiatives launched where residents would have to opt in to participate in recycling and there wouldn't be contaminated bins going to the landfill.

Ms. Schnell said the City of Oberlin moved to an 'opt-in' program since their recycling bins were heavily contaminated. They hit the reset button and stopped recycling for a period of time and went back to the residents to give them the option to opt-in. Maybe 25% of the population will do the recycling the proper way and opt-in. Now the city has a data base of direct communication with the residents who have opted-in and are recycling and if there are contaminations those residents can be contacted and reminded to do it correctly. Lorain County Solid Waste got a grant from the EPA and they went around bin to bin to check for contamination and those bins would be tagged with an 'oops you made a mistake' tag and mark what they did wrong. So, they are being educated at their bin and giving them an opportunity to fix it. Those programs can be effective. Elyria's had those kinds of issues because they are taking those right to the landfill and being charged a contamination fee right at the gate.

Law Dir Deery said she believes what the Lorain County Solid Waste is doing with their plan update is the district is overseeing everything, not just Elyria sanitation vs Oberlin vs Lorain, a big piece of what they do is education. The recycling center on S Abbe is one thing that everyone should take advantage of.

Mrs. Davis said it sounds like a good program. Elyria has a lack of education for the residents about recycling and she would like the city to be involved. She thinks we need to hear from the supervisors of the Sanitation Dept.

Chair Mitchell said there had been talk about putting a newsletter in the water bills which would talk about recycling. Did that ever happen? Part of the problem is residents just might not know. If we could figure out a way to educate residents, maybe that would be the costs down.

Dir Lundy said that those folks at our Sanitation Dept work very hard and it must be frustrating for them when they see things put in the recycling bin that shouldn't be in there. He said he is not proposing that we go to the opt-in program. Though it's something that Council may want to look at maybe next year and maybe it could be an approach we could try. Educating residents is important, such as a resident who had paint cans out for pick up and when he called he was told to take them to the recycling center and our center is one of the best in Ohio. The challenge they run into all the time is being able to turn around and find a company who's willing to take those recyclables and sometime they have to pay someone to take the products. The frustration with the overall solid waste program is that a poorly negotiated contract with Republic Services by the previous administrator Tom Williams basically was giving away the store which led to fewer dollars for grants and resulted in the environmental enforcement unit that has been brought numerous times saying they will call the environmental enforcement units to look into it.

They're not there anymore because that money's not there. That program is hobbling along as a result of an extremely negotiated contract by former administrator, Tom Williams. The staff there is highly dedicated. The Director Blevins pulls the rabbit out of the hat every day. the recycling effort is just so frustrating.

Mr. Oswald thinks it's a good idea to put educating material in with the water bills.

Ms. Schnell said the opt-in program has shown success in other communities. Another thing is to put labels on the bins. She also said that as the outreach coordinator, she will go to council meetings, senior centers, schools, rotary, other organized meetings to help educate residents. The recycling center on S Abbe is open three days a week and year-round and with their own staff. That collection center coordinator, Thomas Patrick III is in attendance. They have contracts that they go out to bid for such as latex paint that is recycled into more latex paint. They pay to recycle and dispose of scrape tires. They do get monies back from shredded paper and cardboard, but it doesn't off-set the cost of what is paid out. This is a planning document for the whole county and they look at the budget and go through programs and do an annual report. This document is required by the Ohio Revised Code. The Ohio EPA had already looked at this plan to see that they met all of their goals before they sent it out to the communities and they said that this is a very well written plan and they are meeting and exceeding goals higher than what they require. If a plan is unable to be ratified by that district, the EPA will write the plan for that district. So, they want to hear what everyone has to say, implement those programs and educate residents.

Mr. Oswald moved, Mrs. Davis second to authorize the ratification to the 'said' Solid Waste Management Plan.

MOTION CARREID COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

3. The matter of the purchase of [2] vehicles for the Fire Department.

Referred by: Safety Svc Director Lundy

Dir Lundy said the Fire Dept needs replacing 2 vehicles, pick-up trucks. There are supply chain issues to find availability of equipment. Joe Strohsack was able to come across of the 2 vehicles that we need right at Elyria Ford; an F150 and an F250. Issue 6 Funds were set aside for the purchase of these vehicles and \$130,000 was budgeted and these 2 vehicles will come in at \$114,649.

Mrs. Davis asked if the Fire Dept really needs these 2 vehicles? We just ordered a million-dollar truck. And if they're going to keep the other 2 in operation why do they need new ones?

Mr. Lundy said Joe Strohsack manages the fleet and he's real conscientious about whether something needs to be replaced.

Chair Mitchell reminded everyone that these have already been approved in the budget. The amount is to not exceed \$118,000 for both vehicles.

Mr. Oswald moved, Mr. Corbin second to authorize an ordinance to purchase the 'said' trucks from Elyria Ford for the Fire Dept. not to exceed \$118,000.

MOTION CARREID COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

4. The matter of the Penfield Avenue Storm Sewer Improvement Project.

Referred by: Engineer McKillips

Engineer McKillips said this is to advertise and award a contract for storm sewer on Penfield from Foster Ave. to Lowell St. The estimated budget is \$500,000 and it will utilize CDBG Funds in the amount of \$250,750. The remaining \$249,250 will come out of the Storm Water Fund. This block is phase 2. They did already install storm sewers on Penfield between Foster and Oakwood. This is a continuation of this project. Each property will receive a yard drain in the front yard because the street doesn't have curbs. There will be swales in the front yard and they'll have a lateral to connect to downspouts or backyard drains, so it's an overall improvement for the drainage. Emergency clause is requested.

Mrs. Davis moved, Mrs. Simmons second to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to advertise and award a contract for the 'said' project.

MOTION CARREID COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

5. The matter of Professional Services for Design & Inspection Services for the Murray Ridge Water Tower Improvement Project.

Referred by: Engineer McKillips

Engineer McKillips said they are looking to enter into an agreement with Burgess Niple for design services and plans for improvements at the Murray Ridge Water Tower. The agreement will also include construction inspection services after they get a contractor to look at repainting the outside and the inside of the tower, perform safety upgrades and install water quality improvements inside the tank. This is requested emergency clause.

Mr. Oswald asked how many water towers we have in the City?

Eng. McKillips said we have six water towers. She said there will be one or two more that will need maintenance upgrades in the next few years.

Mrs. Simmons moved, Mr. Oswald second for an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement for the 'said' Water Tower Project. Not to exceed \$82,000. Emergency clause is requested.

MOTION CARREID COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Chair Mitchell asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mrs. Davis moved to adjourn the Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee Meeting and that motion was seconded by Mrs. Simmons.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED

*Respectfully Submitted by,
Colleen Rosado, Secretary/Administrative Assistant*