

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEELANAU COUNTY SOLID WASTE COUNCIL WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023 AT THE LEELANAU COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER.

Proceedings of the meeting were recorded and are not the official record of the meeting. The formally approved written copy of the minutes will be the official record of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Bahle. The meeting was held at the Leelanau County Government Center, 8527 E. Government Center Dr., Suttons Bay MI.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: L. Bahle, J. Fletcher, T. MacDonald, C. Sharp, K. Ross
K. Cavanaugh, T. Petersen

Members Absent: P. Deering

Members Absent: A. Gale
(prior notice)

Ex-officio Members Present: J. Palmer, M. Bevelhymer

Staff: G. Myer, Senior Planner

Public: D. Doorlag, A. Taylor, K. Cunningham, D. Marbury, T. Dowd,
R. Laporte, B. Krull

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dar Doorlag said she was a Centerville Township resident and a member of CROWD (Composting, Recycling and Organic Waste Diversion Committee). She attended the meeting to see what the SWC is doing and hopes they will support CROWD.

Tim Dowd, from Solon Township, said he has been making the rounds in northern Michigan looking at all of the recycling centers. Dowd said that GFL has an amazing recycling center. The Emmett County facility is a little different because they have a two-stream system and they compost, which is the goal for CROWD. They want to get the best organic waste facility in the country.

Daniel Marbury stated he was from Elmwood Township and that he works for a nonprofit. His work entails support for farmers and other land managers, for private and professional. Marbury said that at a national level the USDA approved a soil carbon amendment as a climate smart practice. This compost or biochar per the amendment has to be verified and there is more than just backyard composting that goes into it. Which is why he wanted to underscore as an economic opportunity for materials management in our region, that this is a job creating potential to divert organic waste from the landfill and turn it into a usable carbon amendment. Marbury concluded by saying he is also a member of CROWD.

Karen Cunningham said she is District 3, Benzie County Commissioner, and she is attending to plant seeds and hopefully partnerships. She serves on the multi-county committee with MAC (Michigan Association of Counties) Environmental and Regulatory and they will be having a speaker on December 8th speaking about biochar. This will be available via their website through MAC

Environmental and Regulatory committee. Cunningham said they have some farmers in the Benzie County area that are doing cottage industries with this, but they know the benefits and have the statistic on how biochar increases their yield that same year. They do have some entrepreneurs that are anxious to be a part of, or partner with, other counties to divert thing from the landfill.

Bob Laporte, thanked the SWC and said he is continuing their momentum for keeping Leelanau County moving forward and elevating their clean energy, clean air, water and soil. He thanked the SWC for setting up some educational sessions on composting. Laporte said they are interested in putting together a county wide compost plan. They need to have municipalities and elected officials there to help individuals with what they can't do alone.

STAFF COMMENTS

Myer thanked Bevelhymer for the recent tour of GFL and said it was very informative. She and fellow attendee, Jenny Herman were impressed with how clean the facility was.

Ross mentioned that she had talked with Galla about getting the information provided at the tour on the county website because there is a lot of misinformation out there on what can and can't be recycled in our county.

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA

Motion by MacDonald, supported Ross, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST – None.

CONSIDERATION OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2023 MINUTES

Petersen pointed out that his name was spelled wrong.

Motion by Sharp, seconded by Ross, to accept the minutes as amended. Motion carried 7-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendation to County Board – tire recycling contract (ERG) mattress recycling contract (BARC)

Myer pointed out that Galla had received a 3rd amendment to the tire recycling contract with ERG reflecting the correct collection dates: June 21, and October 11.

Motion by MacDonald, supported by Ross, to recommend to the County Board to enter into the contract with ERG for tire recycling. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion by Cavanaugh, supported by Ross, to recommend to the County Board to enter into the contract with BARC for mattress recycling. Motion carried 7-0.

Updates

Materials Management Plan (MMP) Materials Management Advisory Committee (MMAC)

Myer said she had not attended these meetings, but Galla informed her that she didn't think the state would be ready to move forward on the update before the end of the year. Bahle commented that it was frustrating, they have to wait until the state tells them to start. They will have to just wait and see what happens next.

Discussion ensued on filling the positions on the MMAC.

Palmer said he went to the meeting in Emmet county, the question is, until you know if you are going alone or with a group, filling the slots is different. Palmer said the whole thing was confusing.

Discussion ensued on the need for both the SWC and the MMAC.

Bahle said the MMP incorporates composting and the SWC supports it, but the question is how do they move forward in the interim 3 years. Palmer said the state might make funding available for start-up companies.

MI Sustainability conference

Bahle said she attended the conference which was really fun and she brought back pencils for members. The conference was held at Tree Tops Resort in Gaylord and over 300 people attended. Bahle said when you looked out into the crowd, there were mostly young people in attendance who were really excited about renewable energy, recycling, and composting. She asked why the conference was held at Tree Tops because people were driving their electric cars and there were no solar panels or charging stations onsite. Bahle continued, saying she attended a session on the tribal initiatives. There was a group from Denmark that looked at biodiversity as a marker of your village planning and success rate. By having a certain species that is part of your environment and if you can maintain them. The keynote speaker was from Goodwill Industries and was really engaging. They can only sell so much stuff at their stores, so they started to analyze what happens to the balance of that material? Is it shipped out of the country or are they trying to use it here. Their plastics go to a place in Muskegon where they make a hydro block used to move water in drain fields and other situations where you want to move water through soil. Clothing is shredded and used for insulation and it is also liquefied into a polymer used in wood products. Another company in Denmark repurposes old furniture. Goodwill took apart an old dresser, sent it to them and asked them to make it into something else for them.

Electronics recycling agreement (BARC)

Myer updated members on the electronic collections, saying that BARC had recently finalized the 12 collection dates and locations which would be released at a later date.

COMMUNICATION/CORRESPONDENCE -Next meeting January 2, 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Barry Krull, Krull Composting, said he interacts with a lot of farmers, vineyards and orchardists. He sells to them knowing what their needs are, what he can do for them. Groups are getting together to be heard more by the SWC and the community. Krull thanked members.

LaPorte said there are a lot of sustainability issues that the county is going to have to be responsible for according to the state. There are a lot of projects in the county that need to be worked on. LaPorte then spoke regarding housing issues in the county.

Krull spoke again, saying that this is all doable with biology, without smells, without methane or sulfites being in the air in the groundwater. We need each other in support of this.

Marbury spoke encouraging members to consider taking on a broader charge, as the SWC, into the Materials Management Plan. Perhaps a new county hire with some responsibilities to help further materials management. Marbury concluded by saying that the MSU extension office are hosting listening sessions across the state. The closest one will be on December 12th in Grayling, at the Kirtland College event center, from 4-6:30 p.m.

STAFF COMMENTS – None.

MEMBER/CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Sharp said she wanted to commend Bevelhymmer, the GFL tour was awesome. She has been talking about it and sharing the information. Sharp questioned if it was possible to share a video on Facebook or the county website? A virtual tour to go along with the presentation. Bevelhymmer said he does not have a video, just the presentation that he presented. Sharp raised the question of hiring a videographer to film at GFL. This is part of their education piece. Ross commented that they could spend some money on a professional to do it, if GFL would allow it. They need to counter misinformation and get better information out to the public. Members would like this on the next agenda. Fletcher commented that it would be commendable to post something on Facebook. It seems like every week a citizen will inquire about glass or composting; the question regularly comes up. They don't have enough reminders going out in the county, visually or in the narrative form.

Bahle mentioned educating the owners of short-term rentals. The tenants may be motivated to recycle, but aren't given the tools. They need to educate the landlords. She would like this added to the next agenda.

Ross shared that the Energy Futures Task Force, has subdivided into three main categories. She and Bahle are serving on the Energy Efficiency Subcommittee and there is a strong overlap or connection to the SWC and the MMAC. It speaks to the need for a sustainability division or department within the county. Ross said they are showing through these committees and the overlap the need for that. She is taking it slow as a new commissioner and working with these committees to make sure they are being impactful. Ross encouraged the SWC members to join CROWD. They would love to have more voices to help them move forward with composting and biochar.

ADJOIURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 2:02 p.m.