

**A REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEELANAU COUNTY SOLID WASTE COUNCIL WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021 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 Perkins. The meeting was held at the Leelanau County Government Center, 8527 E. Government Center Dr., Suttons Bay MI.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** B. Perkins, J. Fletcher, A. Gale (1:05), M. Bevelhymer, M. Harris, L. Bahle, C. Sharp, J. Palmer, M. Lautner.

**Members Absent:** T. Bolin, T. McDonald, P. Deering  
(prior notice)

**Staff:** T. Galla, Director, G. Myer, Senior Planner.

**Public:** Don Gregory (2:00 p.m.)

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Perkins mentioned an email received from Lisa Danto saying she doesn't understand the problem with locating recycling bins on Suttons Bay school property.  
(A copy of the full comments are attached).

**STAFF COMMENTS**

Galla said there wasn't any new information regarding the Popp Rd. recycling site. She doesn't know if there is a movement for a fund raiser to raise the money needed to get that site up and running.

Leelanau School, Glen Lake School, and Empire Village all sent back signed amendments to the recycling site agreement which will increase the host site payment. Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (GTB) as usual will not accept any money. Cedar will be reviewing the amendment next week, although Galla said she has heard they may not renew.

Galla continued, saying the recycling grant is done now. The last cameras from Security 101 have been ordered for a while and they have not come in yet. Elmwood, Glen Lake School and Leelanau School have cameras installed. Empire Village, Cedar and Northport are still waiting. The cameras along with new signs on the bins have reduced the number of complaints staff has received.

**(Gale present)**

Galla mentioned the Michigan Materials Management Grant offered through the state and said the deadline is December 15, 2021. It is offered in two ways: counties apply themselves and receive \$10,000.00 per county, or you go in with regions and one county is the county that oversees the grant, and all of the counties get \$12,000.00. They want you to discuss regional collaboration on materials management not solid waste management. Galla concluded by saying this would be discussed at a regional level first to see if another county wants to apply on behalf of the others.

## CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA

*Motion by Bahle, seconded by Harris, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 9-0.*

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST** – None.

## CONSIDERATION OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2021 MINUTES

*Motion by Sharp, seconded by Harris, to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried 9-0.*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Recycling site(s) to replace Suttons Bay School location

Galla informed members that once the news came out regarding the closing of the Suttons Bay recycling site, staff started receiving emails and phone calls. Some residents said it came as a surprise, even though the issues being raised were covered in the *Leelanau Enterprise* going back to June of this year. Staff received the followings suggestions for a new site:

- Hansen's beach parking lot.
- Leelanau County Road Commission property.
- Herman Park.
- Waste water treatment facility area.
- Library or marina beach area.
- Boat launch near farmer's market.
- Parking lot next to Dames St.
- Bruce Price's property.
- Government Center Campus.
- Charter site on Herman Rd.
- Curbside.

Galla said she met with the road commission manager, Brendan Mullane, and walked the potential recycling site on Eckerle Rd. At that time there was a large pile of top soil there, that would need to be removed. Galla continued, saying we are past the time to do paving for the year, but gravel could probably be used until paving could be done next spring. There is a rough draft agreement between the County Board and the Leelanau County Road Commission. The biggest issue is the insurance. The road commission absolutely cannot pay for anything, and they don't want any lease money. They also can't take on any liability. The attorneys are currently working on language that will work for both parties. Galla concluded by saying that the Suttons Bay recycling site just kept growing over the years. She would like members to consider a couple new sites to help spread things out a little bit. Perkins said there was a noise problem at the Suttons Bay School because of the paved parking lot. When the bins moved to the gravel, they didn't "boom". Also, if they are going to be put on private property, the zoning needs to include recycling. There is nothing in Bingham, Suttons Bay Village or Suttons Bay Townships zoning to allow recycling, according to Steve Patmore, Zoning Administrator. Perkins said they, as a board, should ask these municipalities to amend their zoning ordinances to include recycling.

Bahle mentioned multiple-unit developments, and said they should include recycling bins in their site plans. If bins were required by the townships, this would help alleviate some of the problems.

Harris asked Galla which secondary sites had the most potential. Galla said the Government Center Campus has

been brought up again. The SWC did propose this campus to the County Board in the past, and it was denied. Harris questioned if it was a citizen or County Board member who suggested the campus and Galla replied, both. Galla stated Bingham would be a good area for a site. Perkins said there was a private citizen who had some property available, but it wasn't allowed in their zoning. Perkins stated the horticultural place would also be a good spot. Galla said that site was considered, but the blowing would be an issue up there on the hill. There still is the Popp. Rd. site as a possibility. The County Board has a signed agreement with the township.

Lautner said she would support a motion to continue working with the road commission. That is an excellent site, it is within the village and residential area, the traffic flow is there. It's not too far for Bingham residents. She would also like to continue pursuing the Popp Rd. site because a lot of time and effort has already been spent there. It is closer to Leland. Lautner continued, saying they need to keep pressure on the Village of Leland to find a site up there. This is a community program; these sites are supposed to be in the communities and townships. Perkins stated this was a county program. Lautner said if they could get a smaller site up in Leland that would help alleviate overflow at the Popp Rd. site. Lautner continued, saying she would not support a site on this campus, it needs to be in the communities and villages where people are not going to be driving out of their way to get to it. It may come down to where they have to purchase a spot in some of these areas. Fletcher questioned if Lautner meant that geographically, the Government Center was not ideal. Historically there has been a lot of discussion about a recycling site on the Government Center campus. He respects the opposition, but this site is central to Suttons Bay and Lake Leelanau and is really a great location. Perkins stated that it gets a lot of drive by traffic. Lautner said putting the bins in the paved parking area would be a horrible location because of the pedestrian traffic. The big trucks would be rumbling past the court house and dumping the bins. The sheriff has already said "no" to putting the bins over near their building. Perkins mentioned putting the bins down the drive and Lautner stated that would take some development. Lautner doesn't think maintenance staff is in favor of that at this time.

Bevelhymer questioned why the County Board of Commissioner opposed a recycling site on campus. Their responsibility as a SWC board is to make suggestions that they think are in the best interest of the community. For some reason, in the last fifteen years, this one request keeps getting turned down.

Lautner responded that this site always comes up when nobody else wants it. People have ruined it. Nobody wants a site, so they want to dump it on the Government Center. Sharp said maybe it wouldn't be a problem with the police and county officials driving by all the time. Bevelhymer said he thought a Governmental Center was for a community and there is an 80% approval of recycling in this community. He is personally having a hard time understanding why they can't have a site here if the Government Center is for the community and the residents. Lautner stated that if they get a site in Suttons Bay and one on Popp Rd., they won't need one at the Government Center.

***Motion by Harris, seconded by Bahle, to recommend the County Board pursue the Leelanau County Road Commission recycling site. Motion carried 9-0.***

***Motion by Harris, seconded by Sharp, to recommend the County Board put a recycling site on the Government Center campus as a model of good government.***

Discussion continued regarding bin placement on the Government Center Campus.

Gale questioned where the bins would be placed on the Government Center Campus. He agreed with Lautner, placing them on the paved parking lot would not be good. He is concerned that the County Board will think they want the bins placed on the paved parking lot. Sharp said she hopes that as a representative of this council, Lautner would bring their interests and recommendation to the County Board. Harris doesn't think they should specify where to locate the bins. Gale said as a board, they have been putting money forth to improve other locations. This is property the county already owns and would be a permanent site. Fletcher said the cost effectiveness of this site seems more appropriate than the acquisition of other properties. They are going to

continue pursuing other sites, but this is the permanent model he believes we should have. Gale questioned if there was any other county owned property in the area that would work.

Lautner said that in the past, the Government Center was talked about as being a temporary site until we got our other sites developed. Now we have turned this into a permanent site. This concerns her because that wasn't the intention of the recycling program. She objects to including the wording "as a model of good government" in the motion. Bahle stated they were a victim of their own success. Suttons Bay became so successful with fourteen bins it became intrusive. It would be intrusive anyplace you put fourteen bins. If they can split those bins up, you mitigate some of the noise and the need for the truck to come as often. Harris commented that this area is surrounded by less rental properties and resorts. Some of the other sites are inundated with stuff from people who are only here temporarily.

Palmer said when they started this, before PA 69 and all these different things, it was about partnering with the townships to get these recycling sites. If they didn't push as hard as they have, nobody would have it because nobody wants it, except everybody wants it. They get push back, feedback, they get a site for a while, then there's a problem. For 20 years all they have been doing is trying to find sites. This is a governmental place that is paid for by the community and it seems appropriate to have a site here. Anything owned by the county should support a site. He doesn't understand why the government doesn't want to do it. Palmer continued, saying he thinks all road commissions should have a permanent site. There is just one road block after the next and it's exhausting. All they do is fight to get a site and he is getting scarred up. As a business man, he would pull the plug on the whole thing. If people want to recycle, they can set it up for themselves with GFL.

***Motion on the table passed 8-1.  
Lautner opposed.***

Perkins suggested looking at the fire station in Suttons Bay as another potential site.

#### Membership Number

Perkins stated that they could reduce the membership numbers because they are not updating the Solid Waste Management Plan. Galla suggested seven or nine members. She explained that 14 members are required under the Act to update the plan. If they need to update the plan in the future, they can always add to the number of members at that time. Also, if the numbers are reduced, they do not have to find members to fill each category, those categories can go away. This will allow anyone interested to apply for a position on the SWC board. Galla reviewed the current member terms. Bahle said she would like to downsize to 10 members. Harris said she liked where they were at now with 12 members

***Motion by Harris, seconded by Bevelhymmer, to recommend the County Board not fill the two current vacancies, reducing the number of SWC members to 12. Motion carried 9-0.***

#### Policy on use of Funds (PA 69 of 2005 Funds)

Galla reviewed the document and pointed out the changes that were made to Section 3. Fund Balance, and Section 4. Minimum Fund Balance. Galla mentioned that last month's discussion regarding putting a cap on the amount of money that could be used on a recycling site over a period of years was tabled. That is something members could consider putting into this policy.

***Motion by Bahle, seconded by Bevelhymmer, to accept the Policy on use of Funds with amendments as presented. Motion carried 9-0.***

## Letter to Municipalities – recycling in new developments

Bahle said she will be making this recommendation to the Suttons Bay Township Planning Commission because they are in the process of amending their ordinance. It seems like there is enough pressure right now, that just speaking to bigger housing developments/groups that exist, and say “we have a problem, we can’t find a recycling site. They are too big and intrusive. Work with us and put a recycling bin to handle your own residents recycling.” Harris questioned if this was an appropriate role from a county planning perspective. Bahle stated this would be a step towards curbside since we are too rural to do it. Galla clarified that this would be for a large development, not a subdivision.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** - None.

**COMMUNICATION/CORRESPONDENCE** – None.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Don Gregory said he appreciates what the SWC members are doing in terms of recycling and stated that what happened with the Suttons Bay recycling site was frustrating. With all the different units of government that we have, and places available, it’s frustrating that we can’t get together and agree on something. He appreciates the SWC looking to the Road Commission for a possible site. If you look at it from an environmental standpoint, the Suttons Bay recycling site was located close to downtown which makes more sense than having to drive miles out of the way. To see what the SWC is struggling with in each of the townships makes absolutely no sense from a taxpayer standpoint. We are all paying taxes, there has to be a way to get all the units of government to work together and find a way to make this work. It has worked, it’s shown that the community wants it. It has become so successful that it has created other issues, but they are not insurmountable. There will be some cost involved regardless of where you put it.

**STAFF COMMENTS** – None.

## **MEMBER/CHAIRPERSON’S COMMENTS**

Bevelhymer said he talked to Patricia Soutas-Little who has identified another potential recycling site in Leland. Also, they delivered three of the bins from Suttons Bay to Peshawbestown and one to the Leland site. Bevelhymer continued, saying that Mullane at the road commission was very helpful and let him store half of the bins there. The Suttons Bay volumes have mainly gone to Peshawbestown. The Elmwood site is emptied seven days a week. Bahle stated that the problem with being too successful is that a site becomes a nuisance and they start getting push-back. This is the reason to spread things out.

Lautner said the horticultural research development station came up today and questioned if they should pursue that as a possible recycling site. Perkins commented that maybe Galla could ask in an official way.

## **ADJOIURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned by consensus at 2:16 p.m.**

Dear Leelanau County Solid Waste Council,

As a past active member of the Leelanau County Solid Waste Council, past volunteer educator for Recycle Ann Arbor, a recycler for 40 years, and a Leelanau County and Suttons Bay resident for almost 30 years, I am writing in support for a recycling site location in the Suttons Bay area.

Over the years, our residents have embraced the value of recycling and participation has grown over the decades. I remember a time when Suttons Bay had the highest participation in the county.

I don't understand why it has recently become a problem to locate the recycling bins at the school property, when they have been located there for about 25 years. I understand that you have received complaints about noise, yet I don't know how much noisier it could be compared to the sounds of athletic events, school children playing outdoors, buses coming and going, snow plow truck alarms, school bells, and car traffic associated with the school. It seemed like the best and most central location in our area. In addition, it is a benefit for school children to grow up seeing our community's value of recycling.

I don't know if things can still be worked out with the school, but I hope it could be. If not, I hope you can find an alternate location in the village or township of Suttons Bay.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Lisa Danto