



Winnebago County

The Wave of the Future

**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2025**

A. Call to Order

Chair Doug Nelson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Members Present: Monica Duebbert (via Teams), Frank Frassetto, Kevin Konrad, Howard Miller, Doug Nelson, Tim Paterson, Jim Wise. Members Excused: Mike Easker.

Also Present at the Meeting:

Kathy Hutter, Director of Solid Waste

Cassie Stadtmueller, Operations Manager

Tyler Esslinger, Business Manager

Mike Edler, Director of Facilities

*Kelly Reyer, Education & Outreach Specialist
(11:11a.m.- 11:20a.m.)*

Paul Kaiser, Finance Director (via Teams)

B. Public Comments within the Jurisdiction of the Board

None.

C. Communications Shared by Board Members

None.

D. Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the February 5, 2025 Open Session Meeting Minutes.

Motion by F. Frassetto, seconded by J. Wise, to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2025 Open Session Meeting Minutes. Passed. Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. M. Duebbert couldn't vote due to County Board Rule 11.6

E. Business Items

Action may be taken on any business items.

1. Landfill Gas to Energy Program Evaluation

K. Hutter presented the Landfill Gas to Energy Program Evaluation. She stated to the SWMB that landfill gas must be collected and destroyed until it meets a minimum level of emission, typically within 30 years after placement of final cover and closure.

- *The Solid Waste Management Board has historically supported a Landfill Gas to Energy program (LFGTE) to use the gas beneficially.*
- *In 2013, at the time of final cover installation and closure, the landfill gas flow was calculated at 2,173 cu. ft. per minute (cfm). In 2023, average gas flow had decreased to 523 cfm.*
- *Gas flow continues to decline (the production curve dropped quickly but appears to be leveling out).*

- Significant challenges and changes in conditions will need to be considered for the future of the LFGTE program.

K. Hutter asked the SWMB to consider the following options with Financials:

- Flare only. No power generation beyond 2025, no revenues for operational expenses beyond 2025. This option would Net -\$536k per year; and Net -\$3.6M through 2030.
- One engine operation – Run one engine while staffing is available and gas flow is sufficient. The Flare will be operated simultaneously with the engine to burn excess gas, and to maintain regulatory compliance when staffing is not available. Engine 3 (E3) is at its end of life and will be oversized. However, we may be able to run it seasonally in 2025/2026 or until it has catastrophic failure. This option will Net -\$729k per year; Net -\$4.7M through 2030.
- Two-engine operation – Replace engine E3 with a smaller engine – The benefits are that there is a backup engine for preventative maintenance downtime (through 2030) and two smaller engines can run simultaneously when there is enough gas present. – i.e. using available gas more effectively, in place of flaring (likely only through 2027 regularly, then occasionally/seasonally based on gas availability). This engine is budgeted for 2025 if the Solid Waste Management Board chooses to support the investment. This option will Net -\$775k per year; Net \$5.1 M through 2030.

D. Nelson asked when the gas to energy program started.

K. Hutter stated the program started in the 1990s.

D. Nelson asked if the program had been profitable since its inception.

K. Hutter stated that when the program first started, it lost money. In the early 2000s the gas rates were renegotiated and the program began to turn a profit. Now, in the last few years, the county has not been able to negotiate power rates and Renewable Energy Certificates (RECS), once valued at \$15/MWh, are now worth \$0.50/MWh. Power rates and Recs are not expected to regain value.

K. Hutter explained that Winnebago County currently owns 11,417 vintage 2023 RECs and 8832 vintage 2024 RECs. Solid Waste Staff are coordinating the sale of older RECs in an effort to retain as much value as possible. Future value is expected to be low, due to the growth of other sources of clean energy. The process of coordinating future sales is under administrative consideration.

D. Nelson asked what it takes to produce 1 REC.

K. Hutter explained that 1 REC equals 1 Mega Watt of power.

Discussion ensued among the SWMB.

The SWMB decided to take more time to consider the three options presented. They requested that K. Hutter gather more data on the potential carbon footprints of the three options.

K. Hutter suggested waiting until the new and more efficient flare is installed to get Stack testing for emissions. Options will be considered at a later date at either the April or May SWMB meeting.

M. Duebbert requested that staff look into current utilities regulations and see if the BOW group is interested in initiating legislative action to improve power generation rates for landfill gas programs.

No action taken by the SWMB at this time.

F. Director's Report

1.
 - New Education Tool: The ABC's of Recycling Right! - K. Reyer <https://online.fliphtml5.com/jzvwh/mdef/>
 - Staffing Update - Environmental Compliance Manager position
 - 2023 Wisconsin Act 107 - Update (WDNR alternative method of establishing Owner Financial Responsibility (OFR) for a solid waste disposal facility)
 - Landfill Gas Equipment Replacement Project Update

New Education Tool: The ABC's of Recycling Right

- K. Reyer presented her new education tool: The ABC's of Recycling Right. She informed the SWMB that the community has responded very positively to the book, with multiple municipalities reaching out to let her know they believe it to be a great educational tool. She explained that with the help of Jordan Hiller, an educator from Outagamie County Recycling, they will be updating the book to include back page for every letter with additional information for continued learning in the classroom. The plan from Brown, Outagamie, and Winnebago counties is to send the book to 3rd grade public and private classrooms. The book will include a letter explaining the importance of the book, and include information on additional recycling resources. It will be completed by the end of April 2025. The goal is to have it out in the third week of September for the new school year.
- She explained that the platform where the book is hosted is a one year subscription and also gives feedback such as 439 views, how long spent reading, where the reader found the link, and their type of viewing device.

T. Paterson asked if there is any outreach going to local schools in our area.

K. Reyer stated she is working on coming up with more activities and presentations for all age groups. She is also more than happy to meet any current requests from local schools to present to their students about the importance of recycling.

Staffing Update- Environmental Compliance Manager

- K. Hutter informed the SWMB that interviews were held for the Solid Waste Environmental Compliance Manager on February 11th and February 17th, 2025. Five candidates were invited to interview and three confirmed. All three candidates had experience in environmental site work and working with regulatory compliance. One candidate had the best match for the role and the team. The candidate accepted an employment offer, contingent upon passing drug screening, and will start April 1, 2025.

2023 Wisconsin Act 107

- K. Hutter explained to the SWMB that due to the Emergency Rule status of 2023 Wisconsin Act 107 (WDNR alternative method of establishing Owner Financial Responsibility (OFR) for a solid waste disposal facility), the County will maintain the current practice in reporting long-term care expenses to WDNR and requesting escrow fund reimbursement for 2024 long-term care expenses. The County will

continue to monitor the legislative process and will determine how to proceed at a later date.

D. Nelson asked if there have been any issues in the past accessing funds.

K. Hutter stated that the process requires submitting the appropriate paperwork and Solid Waste Administration has had no issues in the past.

Landfill Gas Equipment Installation Project Update

- *K. Hutter explained to the SWMB that the following activities took place for the Landfill Gas Equipment Installation Project:*
 - 1. The new LFG Equipment is not available for shipment yet, Perennial Energy has revised shipment timeframe of "mid to end of March" per a February 21, 2025 email. During a January 15, 2025 Pre-construction meeting, Perennial stated the delay was due to back-ordered electrical disconnect boxes.*
 - 2. Most of the used LFG equipment did not sell through the County's auction website.*
 - 3. Solid Waste personnel contacted B&B Metals (County's contracted scrap metal vendor) to determine the value of equipment as scrap and have preliminary discussion regarding logistics of removing the equipment from site.*
 - 4. Project Manager from August Winter & Sons and B&B Metals Representative met with Solid Waste personnel on February 14, 2025 to discuss logistics and scrap metal dumpster needs.*
 - 5. Seasonal road-weight restrictions (effective Thursday, March 6, 2025 per an announcement from DOT on March 5, 2025) may further delay the project into May, if shipping weights exceed regulated weights. Perennial has been made aware of this concern.*

Motion by F. Frassetto, seconded by J. Wise, to approve Directors Report. Passed. Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. M. Duebbert couldn't vote due to County Board Rule 11.6

G. Items for Next Agenda

Suggestions from committee members for items to be addressed on a future agenda

H. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

I. Adjourn

Motion by J. Wise, seconded by K. Konrad, to adjourn at 11:30 a.m. Passed. Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. M. Duebbert couldn't vote due to County Board Rule 11.6

Respectfully Submitted,

*Tyler Esslinger
Business Manager*

Approved by SWMB - April 2, 2025