

**Ontario County**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**September 4, 2013**

**Committee Members:** *BAKER, Angelo, Huber, Evangelista, Sheppard, and Singer*

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**Attendees:** All committee members (except Supervisor Evangelista); Tom Harvey, John Garvey, Darlys McDonough

Carla Jordan and Bob Wells (**Casella Waste Management**); Peter Zelif (**Innovative Energy Systems**); Dominick Vedora (**Geneva City Supervisor**); David Shaw (**Finger Lakes Times**); Mr. Paul D'Amico (**City of Geneva**); Mr. Gregory Bendzlowicz (**City of Geneva**)

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Chairman Baker called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., and declared Supervisor Evangelista necessarily absent

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Supervisor Sheppard, seconded by Supervisor Huber to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2013 meeting.

**Solid Waste Management Plan:**

- *Update:* Ms. McDonough reported that there are no updates at this time; waiting on a response from the state.

**360 Expansion Permit**

- *Next Steps:* After the application is signed by Mr. Garvey, it will be submitted to the State for its anticipated return. ***Motion was made by Supervisor Huber, seconded by Supervisor Sheppard directing Mr. Garvey to sign the 360 expansion permit application. Motion carried.***

**Landfill Operational Update:**

- *Casella Waste Management:* Ms. Jordan reported that someone has been seen entering county property at the landfill after normal business hours. They had parked their vehicle on Routes 5&20, walked up and over the berm to enter the landfill and were taking pictures. While taking pictures is not the issue, management at Casella is concerned over the safety and liability of having anyone on the property after business hours when the facility is shut down. Ms. Jordan reiterated that if anyone wishes to tour the facility, Casella Waste Management is happy to provide those tours during normal business hours and individuals may take as many photographs as they desire.

Ms. Jordan reported that a major project will begin as part of the south side improvements at the facility. They will be continuing the green membrane further across the south side from the initial 10 acre membrane. Ms. Jordan further explained that the size of gas collection header is being increased to an 18-inch header and it will be buried. Ms. Jordan wanted to make the committee aware that while these improvements are taking place, there will undoubtedly be odors. She will be sending out information on the global network in advance of the project beginning. This project is anticipated to be between 6 and 8 weeks.

Supervisor Sheppard inquired with regard to the trespass issue mentioned by Ms. Jordan. He began by saying that although the individual parked on the roadside making it obvious there was someone around, there is no need for anyone to be on the other side of the landfill berms after business hours. Supervisor Sheppard noted his concern with the possibility of someone handling sensitive equipment on the property and the liability of having a non-employee on the grounds not knowing the layout of a functioning landfill. Question was asked as to whether a report was filed with the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Wells stated that a report was not filed; however, the license plate number was taken down. After speaking with some of the employees at the landfill, it was determined that the car has been parked in that spot more than once. This information will be provided to the Sheriff's Department. Ms. Jordan added that there are county "no trespassing" signs on the fences, which Casella Waste Management will be enlarging.

Supervisor Vedora inquired whether anyone actually saw the individual taking pictures and whether taking pictures is forbidden. Mr. Walls responded that yes, the employees who were mowing at the landfill at the time of the incident did see the individual taking photographs. Mr. Walls went on to indicate that the problem is not with the individual taking pictures; however, that individual has no business being in the landfill after hours, especially if he needs to climb over the berm to get there. There are liability issues with the individual being on county property after business hours. If that particular individual, or anyone else, wishes to visit the landfill, they are more than welcome during normal business hours and can take as many pictures as they want.

Mr. Walls stated that hydro seeding will be taking place on approximately four to six acres of land at the landfill. There will be three different landscape areas approximately 80 feet across to make the area along Routes 5&20 look more attractive.

Chairman Baker thanked Ms. Jordan and Mr. Walls for the information on the upcoming projects. Chairman Baker proceeded into the issue of gas odors coming from the gas plant, as there has been noted concern that when the gas plant shuts down it coincides with odors. The procedure taken when the gas plant loses power has been discussed at prior meetings.

Ms. Jordan has explained that last week, an odor complaint had been received and later determined that it was not gas related. Innovative Energy Systems checked all their systems to ensure they were up and running, which they were, and confirmed the odor was not coming from the gas plant. It was discovered that road repair work had been done and wet trash was discovered along the road. Ms. Jordan thanked IES for their assistance in determining where the odor was coming from and eliminating the concerns that the odor was coming from the plant.

- ***IES/Seneca Energy LFGTE:*** Mr. Pete Zelif, President/CEO of Innovation Energy Systems (IES) had been invited to the committee to talk about the standard procedure when the power goes down at the IES plant. Mr. Zelif explained that whenever a gas energy plant is built, protective relays are installed. During storm events there are a number of relays that trip; it is hard on the equipment when shut down immediately by a power outage when running at full capacity. Also, NYSEG has the ability to shut the plant down remotely at their control station in Binghamton if and when they feel it necessary. Mr. Zelif explained that there are four IES employees who rotate being on call after hours in the event of an emergency. On call employees are required to stay within 45-minutes of the plant when they are on duty. They also have an auto dial system that begins calling a

programmed list of phone numbers, and will continue the calls until someone acknowledges the call. When the IES employee gets to the plant, they can assess the situation and will call Casella Waste Management if the plant will not be back online and running in less than an hour.

Questions:

What is hard shut down?

A: The machines go down, generators stop turning, and there is no capacity to run power underground.

Q: What happens to the ability to run the methane if the machines go off grid besides using the flares, and how long does is the plant down until the flares go on?

A: Ms. Jordan replied that when the power plant goes down, the electricity to the line that runs the flares also goes down. They have generators to turn on the flares if the power goes down. Ms. Jordan further explained that Casella Waste Management has another flare onsite which is the “go to” flare that is on a separate line from the power plant. There are generators onsite in the event of power failure; however, IES does not have access to those generators, but they have the numbers to Casella Waste Management employees who are close in the area. It takes about 10 to 15 minutes to get the flare on and off.

Q: How long before you decide to start up a flare?

A: Mr. Walls indicated that the decision is case by case; however, if it is undetermined how long it will take to get the power plant back running, a flare would be set up immediately.

Q: With regard to the future expansion of a fourth engine, what happens if there is not enough methane to put in a fourth engine?

A: Mr. Zeliff indicated that there are a number of issues with adding a fourth engine, and one would be the lack of methane. The plant is currently maxed out and is at full capacity. In order to install a fourth engine, they have to apply for an air permit, as well as applying for an utility upgrade, which includes rebuilding a whole power line.

Q: Has a cost analysis been done?

A: Mr. Zeliff stated that a cost analysis has not yet been done. They would need to first acquire an air permit and make sure the gas is available. Mr. Zeliff explained that full load figures change with weather conditions. Methane levels in the 49-51% range is not bad, but indicates that you are pulling in a little more methane than what the landfill is producing. So they have had to reduce production slightly so as to not pull from the waste mass too quickly.

Supervisor Sheppard commended IES for their quick response during the last instance when the plant went down, he felt that procedures were in place to quickly reduce odors and notify area residents that there was a shut down and that there may be odors in the area.

Chairman Baker invited Mr. Zeliff to attend any of the Environmental Quality Committee meetings and in the event there is an issue, he was asked to advise county personnel and/or attend a committee meeting to personally explain the situation. Mr. Zeliff noted his appreciation for the opportunity and reminded the

committee that the plant is generally part of the landfill tour, so if anyone is taking a tour of the landfill, stop in to the plant.

**Other:**

Mr. Harvey reported that a water chestnut invasion was discovered on the West River, and he distributed photographs of what was removed by the collective efforts of the Yates and Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District. Mr. Harvey indicated that Cayuga Lake is dealing with an infestation of over 100 acres and has received funding by the state legislature for its removal. The Soil & Water Conservation District is alerting everyone that it is here and we need to be on a lookout for the water chestnuts in Canandaigua Lake. Question was asked as to how the four pick up loads of water chestnuts were removed, and Mr. Harvey replied that it is by hand using waders to get in the water and digging out the pods. NYS DEC does allow drudging for large infested areas, which is costly. Supervisor Sheppard thanked PJ Emering of the Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District for his quick response to the request for assistance by the Yates County Soil & Water Conservation District in removing the water chestnuts from the West River.

There being no further business to come before the committee, motion was made by Supervisor Angelo, seconded by Supervisor Huber, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Phillips, Deputy Clerk  
Board of Supervisors