

**Charter Township of Van Buren  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING  
Wednesday October 20, 2010**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brownlee at 7:00 p.m. Present: Brownlee, Debuck, Gibson, Merritt, Wilson, and Tomaino. Absent/Excused: Board Representative Jahr. Staff present: Director Swallow and Secretary Grishaber. Audience: Zero (0) members.

**Approval of Agenda:**

**Motion Wilson, second Debuck to approve the agenda with modifications to add discussion of fluorescent bulb disposal and updating the environmental page of the Van Buren Township website until completed.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion Gibson second Merritt to approve the Minutes from August 18, 2010 with corrections.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Correspondence:** Chairman Brownlee commented on the yearly Hazardous Waste Day, stating he was disappointed that it did not seem to be very busy. Next year he would like Van Buren Township to better promote the event.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Item #1: WAYNE DISPOSAL PERMITS REVIEW**

Director Swallow informed the Commissioners that Wayne Disposal received their final approval letter for the renewal of their license to keep the landfill up and running. Enclosed in the Commissioner's packets are responses MDNRE prepared following the public hearing. The second piece of correspondence are comments from the Township's environmental consultants, BCI Engineers, following their review of the permit application and plans for the proposed expansion at Wayne Disposal. The existing landfill site operated by the Environmental Quality Company (EQ) would be expanded to the West of their property and the plans propose depositing waste over some of the closed landfill cells on the site. The proposed expansion would also cover the existing parcel of vacant land that contains a wooded wetland area. They are working on a mitigation plan for the existing wetlands. The Township's consultant had concerns about ground water monitoring and settlement over the closed landfill cells. EQ responded they would submit more information on the settlement calculations, with the primary concern being the strain put on the landfill liners on top of the closed cells. The Commissioners stated they don't want to see this site operating indefinitely with the treatment of hazardous waste.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Item #1: WASTE MANAGEMENT BIOSOLIDS DISPOSAL**

Director Swallow informed the Commissioners that Waste Management Inc. that operates the Woodland Meadows landfill has had a biosolid material disposal agreement with the Township since 2008. Swallow noted the technology has changed and handling of this material is considerably better than in the past. The wastewater treatment plants are able to dry the waste and add lime or polymers which significantly reduce odors and solidify the sewage sludge. Waste management has been handling the waste well over the past two years and the Township has not received any complaints directly related to the biosolid waste. Jack Rowe with Waste Management stated they are receiving more requests from wastewater treatment plants during the winter months to increase what they take in and they have more of a demand on a daily basis. Currently, the Township has approved Waste Management to take 250 tons a day at the Woodland Meadows landfill. Waste Management is requesting an increase up to 450 tons a day from November 1<sup>st</sup>. thru March 31<sup>st</sup> every year. Rowe stated the waste is handled by covered trucks and they travel to straight to Woodland Meadows with no stops made in between each haul. He continued that if there is a problem, Waste Management is willing to stop taking the waste or modify their handling procedures. This is the same commitment they made to the Township with the original approval back in 2008.

**Motion Wilson, Second Debuck to recommend approval of an increase in biosolids disposal by Waste Management at the Woodland Meadows facility with conditions of not more than 450 tons per day, not to exceed 10% percent of the total waste received at the facility, for the period November 1<sup>st</sup> thru March 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**Motion Carried.**

**Item #2: Draft 2011 Developmental Services Budget**

Director Swallow discussed with the Commissioners how all the budget cuts have impacted Environmental services. There has been about a 75% budget cut since 2006 which has significantly reduced staffing. The Township no longer offers services such as battery recycling or workshops and public education and outreach activities. Many other environmental activities have been eliminated due to budget constraints. Without resources and staff, the Department is simply unable to support environmental activities at the level it has in the past.

**Item #3: ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Commissioner Debuck nominates David Brownlee to continue as Chairperson.

**Motion Gibson second Wilson to elect and approve David Brownlee to Chairperson.**

**Motion Carried.**

Commissioner Gibson nominates Anthony Tomaino to continue as Vice-Chairperson.

**Motion Gibson second Wilson to elect and approve Anthony Tomaino as Vice Chairperson.**

**Motion Carried.**

**Item #4: FLUORESCENT BULB DISPOSAL**

Chairman Brownlee has concerns about the safe way to dispose of fluorescent bulbs due to the mercury. Director Swallow informed the Commission that Waste Management offers a program where you buy the recycling boxes. While they charge a fee, it includes sending it to appropriate recyclers. They can also be disposed of at the Township's yearly hazardous waste day. Chairman Brownlee would like more research done on the subject. Chairman Brownlee wants fluorescent bulb disposal to stay on the agenda.

**Item #5: UPDATING ENVIRONMENTAL WEBSITE**

Commissioner Gibson stated he looks at the Environmental Website for Van Buren Township and some of the information is out of date. Director Swallow informed the Commissioners that the Township I.T. person does most of the updates, when information is provided. Next month there will be more discussion about the subject on the agenda.

**Motion Debuck second Wilson to adjourn at 8:30pm.**

**Motion Carried.**

Next Meeting Date: December 15, 2010 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Grishaber  
Recording Secretary