

**COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
8:00 A.M. THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2025
CLAY COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTER
3322 15TH AVENUE NORTH
MOORHEAD, MN 56560
IN PERSON & TEAMS**

Members Present: Kevin Campbell, Jenny Mongeau, Cliff Bang, Chuck Hendrickson, Russ Colson, Roger Richman, Everett Nelson, Joe Pederson, Russ McDougall, Wayne Lepper

Members on Teams: Heather Nesemeier

Others Present: Corey Bang, Ella Holiman, Ashley Magelky, Darren Brooke, Mara DeRung, Justin Sorum, Paul Fiechtner, Todd Bratlien

Others via Teams: Julie Kennedy, Mike Earl, Angie Kuehl (Fuchs)

Commissioner Kevin Campbell called the meeting to order at 8:00am and initiated introductions.

Corey Bang made an update to the agenda, moving the introduction of Mara DeRung (new Recycling Outreach Educator) to the end of today's meeting due to staffing.

On motion by Joe Pederson, seconded by Everett Nelson and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the amended meeting agenda.

On motion by Roger Richman, seconded by Russ McDougall and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes from March 6, 2025.

Grant to Update Garage at RRC for Freon Recycling – Corey Bang & Ella Holiman

The garage on the west side of the RRC is not currently heated or insulated. The doors are also too small for our pickup or skidsteer to enter. We would like to use this space for year-round freon removal from appliances, but will need to have heating and insulation as you cannot remove freon when the temperature is below 40*. During winter months we have been storing freon appliances which then creates a backlog that needs to be worked on in the spring and summer. The cost would be around \$30,000 for the updates. Ella has found a grant application (50/50). This would be a good start for Ella to work on grant writing. The application is due on May 1, but unfortunately there is no county board meeting next week to present this to.

Roger Richman motioned to approve submitting the grant application. This motion was seconded by Wayne Lepper and unanimously carried.

Clay County staff have been removing freon for about a year. This has saved the county money as we were paying \$35 an appliance for removal. We get free tanks for the removal from RHI in Fargo. Ella and Brian (part time staff) are certified. We also have Todd Martin that we can hire if we get behind.

Kevin Campbell mentioned that generally these items need to go to the county board due to the cost share, but in this situation with timing and SWAC's support, we are able to submit the application. Corey mentioned that the county cost would be in 2026's budget.

Solid Waste/Landfill Update – Corey Bang

We have sent Burns & McDonnell and Construction Engineers a letter regarding the overhead doors at the RRC not being functional. We are now moving into mediation sometime in June. The next step is arbitration.

Saber Shred out of Mandan approached us a few months ago about taking our tires for recycling. We met an owner at the conference we hosted this month, and prices are lower than Liberty. Saber Shred is in the FM area weekly for pickups. In 2024, we had a count discrepancy with Liberty Tires (they showed about 800 more tires than we collected). Solid Waste doesn't have staffing to stand and count as Liberty loads the tires, but we go off the counts in our accounting software. Our count should be very close with some small differences when we take ditch tires etc.

On March 19, we delivered 190 mattresses from MSUM to Becker County for recycling. MSUM wanted to deliver to the RRC, but we ended up hauling for MSUM and charging the price Becker charges us.

We have also partnered with Furniture Mission of the Red River Valley. They provide mattresses and furniture to community members in need. They are coming every Friday morning to look through our mattresses and ReUse Room furniture and will take any items they deem usable. Unfortunately, Furniture Mission reached out to us a few days after we hauled the MSUM mattresses. We have put them in touch with MSUM for future years.

Ella is in the process of replacing hoses at the landfill. This was the issue with the flare last month and it was sucking in oxygen. She also has received the new LandGem for well testing and it is a much-improved model from our old one.

Corey spoke to the company implementing the collection of boat wrap on April 3. They are looking into the RRC hosting a dumpster at no charge to Clay County. We are not sure that Clay County has a need for this though.

On April 7, Corey, Ella and HR interviewed two summer help applicants for the landfill. They will both start on June 2.

On April 9, the RRC hosted the NDSWRA/SWANA Conference with about 30 attendees. On April 8-11 Ella was in training for troubleshooting leachate pump panels and is now certified. This will cut down on having outside techs come to the landfill for servicing.

On April 17, Corey attended the state Solid Waste work group. They discussed incinerators, composting, and pending legislation. This group will meet quarterly online.

Medical waste was delivered to the incinerator in Perham by accident. The source was identified and it was not Clay County. We have the benefit of seeing everything that goes into the Perham loads on the RRC tipping floor. Other counties are sending a letter to customers reminding them of what materials are

accepted at the Perham plant, but it seems this could cause issues within our community as it would be one of our first communications with customers in this manner (plus Clay County should not have this issue with the RRC).

Corey has reached out to Blue Horizons about putting a solar field at the landfill. It would be 10 acres and on the south end of the closed cell. A one-acre plot could generate \$40,000 of income in a year. This would be a private public partnership, with Blue Horizons paying for the panels up front and Clay County providing the site. We would need to do some site work but cannot disturb the closed cell. Corey has also been in touch with the MPCA. The solar field would offset our energy costs plus potentially supply some revenue.

Solid Waste has been supplying dumpsters for county projects as we have multiple sitting empty at most times. This saves other departments the money needed to rent from a company.

We have limited the Reuse Room to 5 items per person per day, as some customers will come daily and take everything off the shelves.

Last week our landfill operator left the county. Ella is hauling water and Ross is covering the hill at this time. We have received 8 applicants, with 4 looking promising. Interviews start next week.

Perham Update – Kevin Campbell

The March and April meetings were combined for Prairie Lakes. Clay County has been in the negative for quite some time, but is finally in a surplus. Corey and Kevin mentioned that the Perham plant has been great to work with plus the new RRC has made sorting our materials easier resulting in better loads going to Perham.

The financial report continues to be pretty good. There is enough money to make the bond payment of \$1.2 million on May 1. We have \$1.3million in the Internal Service Fund. There was capital improvement of about \$400,00 that has not been billed yet. Hopefully this can come out of our normal operating dollars for the year, if not it may need to come from the Internal Service Fund.

There is a pilot project in Ottertail County going on with ash used in roads.

The nine counties applied for a grant for a study on how we will handle demo materials if the new rules go into effect and private demo landfills close. Clay County would need to contribute \$15,800 maximum. There are thoughts of a regional hub and spoke system. This will give us an additional option for demo disposal if the Clay Demo Landfill closes, instead of it simply going to the Clay County Landfill.

Regarding the bond payment, the principal payment plus interest is made in May, and the November payment is principal only. This is the consolidation of four different bonds that OTC has put out on behalf of Prairie Lakes. Total remaining is about \$17 million.

Jenny added that Senator Robert Kupec is working on an increase in refunds of the Solid Waste Tax to counties. Jenny is very pleased with how Senator Kupec has been open to Solid Waste. Prairie Lakes is sending him a letter of support as he is the author of the two bills regarding Solid Waste.

Heather Nesemeier asked if it would be beneficial for SWAC to send a letter of support of Senator Kupec as well, as the bills would help extend the life of our landfill. Heather stressed the value of our group as it is made up of citizens from around the county who are aware of the process and the impact of Solid Waste in their respective communities. Having the citizens' names on the letter of support could have more weight than elected officials. The letter will be signed by Corey and list all members' names and their town/township.

Heather Nesemeier motioned for SWAC to send a letter of support to Senator Kupec regarding recent Solid Waste bills. Roger Richman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Introduction of Mara DeRung – Corey Bang

Mara is our new Recycling Outreach Coordinator. She has been a rockstar and covered the drive thru, the scale, and worked with a couple schools already. She had an event on Earth Day where she talked with 80 kids. In February she also presented to all Moorhead 9th graders about recycling (about 560 kids in two days). Heather and Joe stressed the importance of connecting with people in the community that have connections to schools, organizations, etc. that would benefit from recycling presentations.

Kevin brought up SCORE funding and how the distribution among towns/townships is determined. He would like to review if any changes need to be made.

Everett mentioned an issue last week with polystyrene scattered on Highway 10 near his home. He picked up 6 contractor bags of litter from this incident. Darren will follow up with the Sheriff to do some monitoring of that area of Highway 10.

Meeting adjourned.