

Valley County Refuse District #1 Board Meeting

Valley County Community Room

November 18, 2023

Call to Order: Board Chairman Paul Tweten called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. Board members present included Paul Tweten, John Fahlgren and Mary Armstrong.

Also in attendance was Refuse District Manager Brian Austin and T&R Trucking representative Rocky Thompon.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: John moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting; Mary seconded; motion passed unanimously.

T&R Report: Rocky reported that they have been very busy with no unusual issues.

Finance Report, tonnages from container sites, out-of-County Contracts; other tonnage across scale:
(thru October 2023)

Brian provided the Board with finance, container tonnage, and materials by category across the scales.

Capital Improvement fund: \$400,000.

Unrestricted cash: \$304,618.46

Expenses YTD: \$319,984.34

Revenues YTD: \$800,150.43

There was board discussion on the big jump in revenues from last month (\$79,429.80) and the discrepancy between the revenue sheet provided by Brian (\$770,393.20) versus revenue sheet provided by Paul (\$800,150.43). With regard to the big jump in revenues, the Clerk and Recorder advised that this is due to the modified accrual basis that is used to account for refuse assessment fees that are included in the tax bills mailed in October.

With regard to the revenue difference, this was due to a discrepancy between the Refuse District's QuickBooks accounting and Black Mountain. They were reconciled, however, not until after the financials were pulled on Brian's 11/06/23 report.

The board discussed the Material Total table for October. The total revenue at the bottom of the table is incorrect because rows 11A through 11N are payments made by the District to T&R for container pickup by site. The Board requested that Brian correct the charges so that the total revenue for the month is correct. (Change the total revenue column for rows 11A through 11N to negative numbers since they are cash out.)

Brian expressed concern that the Refuse District is losing money if not for the additional revenue for construction materials that have been coming in from building demolitions. Paul advised that the financials tell a different story. Unrestricted cash has increased from \$156,760 in October 2022 to \$304,618.46 in October 2023.

Manager's report: Brian reported on some maintenance issues with the scraper that have been fixed. He also advised that the water tank is leaking and will be replaced with a new tank that will cost about \$4000 plus installation.

Assessment update: Paul asked for another reconciliation on the Milk River assessment. The request by Darcia to change the assessment due to a mistaken double billing does not reconcile with the T&R charges for the actual trash pickup. The Board would like a review of the assessment. The Board also reminded Brian to respond promptly to emails he receives from the Commissioners.

The Board requested a detailed review of all the assessment changes that were calculated for the 2024 tax bills at the next meeting. They would like to see a direct comparison between the previous year and the present year by entity.

Review and decision on assessment revisions of refuse fees and discussion of process going forward:

The Board discussed the process for assessment revisions. John moved that all assessment changes be presented to the Board for approval prior to submittal to the Treasurer for action. Mary seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Follow up on details for the US Corps of Engineers Refuse billing and billing schedule:

Brian presented an invoice and email confirming that the USACE billing process is complete. The USACE will be billed in January for the additional refuse that is not reimbursed through their contract with T&R

Trucking. The contract will be revised when it is renewed in 2025 so that all refuse assessments will be billed directly by the Refuse District. The January bill is \$6244.20 plus the \$2310.80 that is currently billed through T&R Trucking. In the past, the USACE only paid \$2310.80 annually, which did not reflect that actual amount of refuse disposal.

Action on Professional Consultant Agreement for calendar year 2024:

The Board discussed the task order submitted by Great West Engineering to provide landfill operational assistance and methane monitoring, for a cost of \$10,800. The services have been provided by another engineer in prior years.

Brian advised that the current engineer had done a great job for him over the years and supports him to continue in this role. He does not feel that the District should pay double for the service from Great West Engineering.

Paul stated that he is not happy with the current service provider and believes we need a change.

Mary stated that she has three issues with the current provider. He does not seem to understand that his customer is the Refuse District which is represented by the Board. The liability insurance issue caused a lot of drama that was unnecessary had he included the Board in his concern over coverage.

She feels that the rate evaluation he did for about \$10,000 was a poor-quality product that lacked robustness and had several errors in it.

Mary further stated that Great West Engineering is more knowledgeable about grant opportunities that the District can take advantage of that will benefit their financial condition.

John stated that he does not want to experience what a neighboring county went through, and believes we need an engineer that communicates effectively with the Board, and also includes a forward view for the District.

John moved that we accept the task order submitted by Great West Engineering and Mary seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Paul will advise Great West.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Chairman Tweten adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m. The next meeting will be December 19, 2023.



Paul Tweten, Refuse Board Chairman