

**Solid Waste Alternatives Program Advisory Council
Des Moines Public Library (Central Library)
September 18, 2009: 9 a.m.**

Minutes

9:00 a.m. Meeting Begins

12:15 p.m. Public Participation Period (3 Minutes Per Person)

Scott Smith - absent

Approval of Agenda

DECISION ITEM

Motion and 2 nd to approve agenda (adjusting times to account for late start) Unanimous Approval
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Introductions

9:00 a.m. Interview with RMT

INFORMATION

9:15

Jim Wink with RMT – Project manager for overall project. Point of accountability and facilitator with the project. Will be the one interacting with the council and the pilots. 15 years experience, science background.

Curt Madsen – Senior Project manager, 30 years experience. Did work with the State of Wisconsin, then moved to the private sector, is an engineer. Has done work with counties, resource recovery studies, waste sorts, design/permit landfills, beneficial use of landfill gas, member of SWANA in the past, good exposure to the whole picture, gives quality assurance to the project.

Q: (Tom) This is a unique opportunity nationally...how do you view this...as being a national leader, what approach will you take to do this?

A: I'm a systems person, I believe the right size can fit into all operations including solid waste. We can adapt systems to fit to goals. There are different types of systems we can adapt to. We have big/small, multiple locations, etc. a lot of different situations that we can make fit into the system.

We have better intuition as to how county managers struggle with programs. We can make it efficient but still allow control of the systems. You have to go to the top of the manufacturing chain and work with them to be more aware of the products they manufacture and think less not more on how they produce these things.

Q: (Shelly) We have a uniqueness in this state. We selected 6 diverse pilots. How would you approach it differently with you one on one assistance with a smaller area vs. larger urban area?

A: We need to sit down with the stakeholders. The framework you develop is sensitive to the stakeholders' comments. Small companies worry that they can't do this. You are adapting it to work for small companies. Curt has experience on what the companies are trying to do. It can definitely work with small or bigger. We expect the range. There will be a core approach then we'll work with each pilot to get them to the same goal...but it will be different based on each pilot's situation.

Q: (Leslie) EMS is going to change comprehensive planning annually. How do you foresee putting together what they'll do for their annual report?

A: EMS will be a part of comp planning. There are parts that are working. The annual plan will be parts that we'll use from the comprehensive plans and other parts will be brought out along the way. The comprehensive plan will still be a significant part of it.

Q: (Mary) Pilots differ in location, size, staff, etc. How will you deal with a pilot that needs more assistance than others?

A: As we interact with them and the council there may be the need to shift and focus on planning area's that have a greater need. The approach will be fairly standard but there may be more interaction, meetings, phone calls, etc.. to get areas over the hump.

Q: (Jen) How will you help us stay on schedule?

A: We'll make sure we're all on the same page with the council. Then setting up standard agreements on approaches for communications. We have to be adaptable, together we will work to keep them moving. Building a relationship to work together on a goal. Work together, adapt, work around schedules. There's a human part of it.

Jim works with various industries, each group has a different (biased) view. You get perspectives from the 6 groups, then pull staff together to see if the document will fit the intent of the 6 and the council as well. Everyone is on the same page, they have the chance to have input on the document and incorporate into it and adjust as necessary.

Q: (Sara) Are you giving them fish or teaching them to fish? How will you teach the pilots to evaluate and continue the improvement beyond just the document?

A: You need more than just the document. It's the mentoring that goes with it. Securing leadership and champions of each area. Be a teacher. Lots of training and understanding of concepts. Helping them understand the pieces. It's a common approach, a similar agenda, but it's hands on and being a part of it so they have ownership and embrace it. Customize and make it fit their needs.

Q: (Sherry) Give an example of a time when you've done work with a local unit of government on establishing a goal. How did you do it and what was the outcome?

A: We've done work with a local municipality with multiple systems and programs. We worked to prioritize their systems. Through evaluation and talking (similar to this project), then systematizing it. Use what you have and make it more efficient.

Q: (Sherry) What was the greatest challenge?

A: It was a range of systems, there were different angles and differences on how people worked with each role.

Q: (Sherry) What was the outcome?

A: They got the idea of what they can change with the staff and resources they have. Don't keep looking at the same issues a year from now and 5 years from now. The deliverable was a report.

Q: (Tom) Does your company have a culture of continuous improvement?

A: We were founded by 3 members and that was the philosophy engrained from them. We have systems built with quality, engineering, science, and standards on putting together reports. And we walk the walk, we review our environmental impact. Use of paper, etc. Bio-fuels, renewables, and solars, are transforming our business.

We've gone through 6 sigma training. We have clients that come in with a green factor for scoring.(focused on reducing footprints) They want to work with a firm that meets their goals. What is our footprint?

Q: (Shelly) There is a need to educate the pilots. It's new to the council too. How will you educate us as we go along, and what is our role in assisting you?

A: You have a big cross section of experience. The knowledge you have will be used. We will work with you on adapting to the process. Curt has been walking the walk from different angles. I want to help the council get to their goals and bring them to the pilots.

You have things that are working. We hope to add to the framework that is developed. Based on the framework, the 6 groups, and the people we have here we can incorporate flexibility as we go through. It represents a lot of people's input.

Q: (Leslie) We have a lot of strong personalities. What happens when there is disagreement?

A: It's not easy, but you need to listen to the different parts. We need to define how we're coming to agreements. We're the 3rd party. We'll be sure we've heard all the parts, and we'll listen, recognize, then realize the need to move on.

Q: (Mary) Flexibility when working with pilots is stressed in your proposal. How will there also be consistency from one pilot to another?

A: We will review the approach with the council and initially with the pilots. We want buy-in from the get go. Then there will be tools established, skeletons of systems and procedures, then customize the parts from there. It will adapt based on their culture, but will still be meeting what we want for the overall process.

Q: (Jen) How many projects do you have going on at one time, and how many are you in charge of?

A: At any one time, Jim has 5-10 projects varying in size. We adjust tasks based on project size so that it is manageable. There is a large variability based on project size on how many projects are going on at once. I will manage staff on the team, adjust workload as necessary so that we adjust to get the right match.

Q: (Sara) You keep going back to having some customization by each of the pilot areas. What if I said there are no written outputs, and the outcomes/success are solely on demonstrated changed systems?

A: The RFP had different interpretations. The concept could be to work with the education role to show how to do it but not provide the tools. It can work that way too. We will get a sense from the comprehensive plan information and what the pilots share on what would/wouldn't be a good way to work. We're proposing one way, but we can adapt and readjust the approach to mentoring/education.

Curt – I've seen a lot of reports that just go up on the shelf. We need to identify the leader that understands what EMS is and is constantly voicing out loud the plan, do, check, act, approach. You have to keep it simple so that the cheerleader for each planning area is presenting a simple message.

Sara – The keep it simple approach is important, better than having a document to dust off and redo every 3 years.

Jim – it's not about the report, it's still having a skeleton that's repeatable to look back at. A simple structure to allow them to develop/expand. But not another binder that sits on the shelf. It's an adjustable type of approach.

Q: (Sherry) There are a lot of resources available. One goal we've discussed is inventorying and getting pilots access to these services that are spread across different levels of government. Give an example of working with a firm across multiple levels of government?

A: We did work with an organization where everyone did it their own way. They faced civil/criminal penalties. We helped them with the framework, then connected them with resources such as the cities they worked with and the resources existing locally within the agency. There is a tremendous opportunity through this process to tie it all together.

Tony Colosimo arrived. (9:50 a.m.)

Q: (Sherry) How would you advise this group to inventory what is out there?

A: You probably have a good sense of what some of that list is. But the ability to connect the university side and community side, with the agencies and infuse it with this process shows them this works. Economic Development is also an important part of this in my opinion.

Q: (Tom) Who is the main contact...is there a number of people or will Jim be the face?

A: Jim will be the single part of accountability. Everything from the schedule, financials, etc...Jim is the point of contact. Then he will work backwards with a team. Within the team there are members that have specific duties and are watching over what I do.

Q: (Shelly) If you aren't finding the "cheerleader" how do you build that person? Does this person need some authority to make some decisions, beyond just being a motivator?

A: Identifying and reading people is important. We can find that person with the skills needed and build them into the leader we need. We need to work through the management and leadership of that operation. Certain people will have limitations, but we find the right person and develop them. We definitely need someone with leadership/management side, but they have to have accountability and skills.

Q: (Leslie) Please clarify. You'll do an initial phone call, then with the face to face meeting is it all of them together or one on one?

A: It depends on who the pilots are. We'll learn from you on what works. We want to get the background of each planning area, but if we can get them all together there is a lot of power of working together...there are logistics to think about. We set it up as individual meetings or not. There is some benefit to bring them together. The council can tell us how well they fit together.

Q: (Mary) The bottom pilot has 5 full time employees, the top one has 60. If you found your "cheerleader" but then got a sense of hesitancy, how will you address that if it happens?

A: It would be dealing directly with that individual to understand what is going on. It's getting them to believe it's worth taking the time...not us telling them to. We have to figure out what it is and work through the issue. Be very direct and work through it. Education and mentoring the parts. See the pieces and understand where we are going. There will be a lot of what's in it for me. And that's a big part of the message we'll bring. When people get it, they are a part of it and they own it.

Q: (Jen) What were your most favorite and most difficult projects?

A: Jim – we did work with a company with civil/criminal issues. Kind of scary...they were dumping things in rivers, the FBI was involved, etc. What was cool was that there are good people there. Grabbing concepts and work through it...from really old guys to people in the offices, etc. It was also most challenging. Working with leadership that didn't want it. To find a common ground, the challenge was fun to work with the good people to figure it out.

Project I don't like – Fumbling with your own understanding in projects toward the beginning were challenging...taking that initial step into the process was difficult.

Curt- We were working to expand a landfill. There was a state ecological feature down gradient, and an existing landfill was impacting that site. During this project the landfill switched project managers and RMT was the original out of the gate for interpreting the new rules...we ending up getting the feasibility determination and the expansion would protect the state feature...we went through hurdles to get it approved.. The new project manager didn't appreciate our services and didn't use us for the following steps. No matter what I did, trying to explain to this person the hurdles we overcame to get to this point, he didn't want to work with us.

Most favorable - Has done work with a county solid waste manager on projects around the state. And he has seen everything we've done for him through all these years. Planning, financial, etc...considerations. He's appreciated the efforts through all these years and can operate in a cost effective manner. There is a level of trust and high communication.

Q: (Sara) In the EMS legislation, there were 6 required elements. Do you personally need expertise in each of those to make this project successful?

A: No – it helps to understand what we're trying to do when we go through it. But I don't think so. They know their business. We'll take them through the process. We'll guide them through that process. The resources we have will help them understand how that works.

Curt – Yard waste is always pretty straight forward, HHW comes in all sizes and shapes, larger facilities may have a place available all the time smaller may just have a one time drop off time, Water Quality – regulations help to control that, Green house gas – there are new reporting requirements that are coming out, Recycling- product manufacturers to try to change ways, education – that's valuable lot of efforts through that over the years...it's fairly well established, but a renewed emphasis with a new program.

The innovations with this group in connection with the agencies and universities, there's the opportunity to infuse it with different ideas and approaches.

Q: (Tony) You can understand the dynamics of the council. You have fights that go on like we have here, how will you work with these groups?

A: There are definitely some dynamics. We have years of experiences. We'll figure out a way to move us forward. The understanding of the different places that people are coming from is helpful. We talked about understanding the issues. We are a 3rd party that can see the sides and help to move forward.

Q: (Tony) And if pilots aren't performing we can work on that?

A: Yes- we can see what's going on and figure out a solution. We may deal with it on more personal levels and work through them. There doesn't have to be a wall, we will figure it out and work through it.

Q: (Mary) Clarify in my mind why this council should hire RMT?

A: The people we're bringing are passionate EMS Systems people. We work with single sites/multiple sites. Solid waste folks like Curt allow synergies to come together. Sustainability things are now connecting to landfill gas, bio-mass, etc. which is what we're trying to do. There is a compliance part, the other part is besides the passionate...we approach it to being fun. There are challenges, but there's a neat opportunity to change the way things are done.

Curt- We do a lot of work with industrial areas too. One client has air regulations that impacts them. We are aware of those issues and the efforts there. There's the whole dynamic of where the solid waste field is going. There should be flexibility built in to look at the whole picture at all times. It can be utilized year after year.

We'd love to work with this group and the pilots. We'll get it figured out and the objectives you're trying to accomplish.

10:30 a.m. Interview with Gresham Smith and Partners (GS&P) INFORMATION

10:50

Jason Repsher– Is in the national office. Has 18 years experience. Will be a technical resource on issues.

Laura Fiffick – 17 years experience 10 in the EMS arena. The first EMS was in 1999, she participated as a pilot. They walked through an EMS with EPA. She was hired by Dallas to coach a number of departments (including Sanitation).

John Lengel – Environmental Stewardship, has 20 years experience. His job is to provide senior technical oversight of the project.

Q: (Sherry) With these applications we want to enhance/develop programs to get connected with citizens...give an example of a successful education program you've developed?

A: In Dallas we decided to do outreach to our citizens and have a consolidated outreach education. We partnered with our webmaster and developed a comprehensive site. (Green Dallas) to give out information and have a point of access for information. It was critical to put things out and also get feedback on the comments/concerns. Also measuring those concerns and how we did those. Branding is very important. With Green Dallas...people think of recycling, the environment, etc.

Q: (Tom) Laura – all of the documentation was overwhelming to us. How do you weigh the documentation vs. the goals achieved?

A: EMS is about environmental improvement. If you get caught up in documents and signatures, etc....you're missing the point...Environmental improvement is the key.

Q: (Shelly) Why should we be creating the additional emissions to hire you as your firm? (Logistics of flying/travel, etc.)

A: I have been a pilot. I know what it feels like and I've also coached employees through that process. It's important to have 6 successful pilots. I won't be back and forth all of the time. We have that in mind as well. I would stay for a week at a time with this in mind.

Q: (Leslie) There is mention of "significance criteria", would we use this?

A: We already have the 6 areas of interest. We sort of already have the significance criteria...it's still important to look across the board at all environmental impacts and as a pilot rank them.

If immediately they don't address the other issues, they have EMS as a tool moving forward to address some of the other "non priority" areas.

Q: (Mary) Pilot projects are all over the board. (Staff, budget, etc.) How will you work with a pilot that may need more time/coaxing as we go through the process?

A: Conference calls with each pilot will show us who needs the support and extra time. We can adjust the time while I'm here as necessary.

Q: (Jen) Site visits to each of the pilot projects are good. If you're on a site that you see something obvious, how do you help the pilot "get it" and make those first steps in a situation where they don't have it?

A: We work with the pilot and talk about options and what other ways you could be doing things. You address it right there and then to address it immediately on site. We'd use the resources already available too.

Q: (Sara) of the 6 required elements, do you personally need experience in each area?

A: No – you need to have some knowledge of each of the areas, but then it's working with the pilot on what's working and what needs done, then bringing in the technical expert to propose options.

Q: (Tony) Do the 6 elements have the same value or are they weighted?

A: It's different for each pilot. It depends on what the pilot is doing what they've done, what the council's goals are, etc. We'll also look at where they can make the most improvements.

Q: (Tom) Give an example of where you've successfully changed a culture, and an area it didn't happen.

A: Dallas – there was no communications, environmental wasn't on anyone's mind other than the core areas, through EMS we changed the culture. Departments talk to each other and find synergies with each other. Parks and recreation gets compost from the zoo for example. The environment is part of everyone's performance plan. It wasn't easy, one department (fire) didn't care much about the program or EMS. I worked with him to find ways to embrace EMS and get his job done better. The last meeting with him they have a program called "burn a buddy" where they identify environmental infractions.

Q: (Tom) Are there any areas outside Dallas you've worked with?

A: We're working with the Columbus, Ohio Department of water utilities on EMS right now. I do some EMS like assistance. I'm working with a small county on setting up a goals, training, objectives, etc. program.

Q: (Shelly) What if you can't find a "cheerleader"?

A: We have to find a way to incorporate what is important to them. If you can't find anything then find a replacement if necessary. The council needs to know if a pilot is failing, we want 6 successful pilots.

Q: (Shelly) Would continuous improvement involve changing the lead person?

A: Yes it could.

Q: (Leslie) When I have to evaluate the annual reports, how do we make sure they get it and do what they need to, but have something on file to evaluate?

A: The number 1 goal is environmental improvements. Look at what they're doing, measuring it, find the right metrics and see if its working...we need that documentation. It's systematic too, how many people did we train, how many got it, etc.

Q: (Mary) 12 month is a large commitment, how many other projects do you have going on at the same time?

A: Right now I have 3 other clients and my dedication to this is at least 25% of my time.

Q: (Sara) On the budget and the final report, explain the time commitment.

A: The ongoing annual report and the final report will have some similarities. The final report will have lessons learned, and ongoing documentation for the future for example policies, objectives, etc. What worked and what didn't. So the next entities that decide to do this, will have guidelines to make it easier..

Q: (Jen) Give an example of your favorite and most challenging projects?

A: My favorite project was the first time I'd ever worked on EMS. It is beyond just compliance and sustainability. It was interesting hearing what worked and what didn't. And building a network of resources across the country to rely on.

Difficult: The city of Dallas was a very negative environment coming in. EPA hated us, the media was bad, and trying to get 11,000 people to have a green beating heart was difficult. It tested every facet of my abilities.

Q: (Sara) Your budget includes the least amount of time and labor, but the most amount of time with the council directly. Why is it split like that? Does that give you enough time with the pilots?

A: A lot of our time and focus is to talk and learn together because they learn from each other. They need time to share their stories, but also time apart to discuss specific issues. We're going to have policy decisions to get the pilots through a successful process. It's really a balance of time with the council to get it set up.

Q: (Jen) What is your company's talk on continuous improvement?

A: We've been working on our EMS for almost a year. We have a sustainability officer in the company, so it's a huge part of our area. We're now involved with the people we work with on the issues that we're in tune with. We also look at cost efficiency and getting the best bang for our buck to make a difference.

Q: (Sara) Operators (potential EMS leaders) can be fairly blunt and it's not a suit and tie environment, are you OK with this?

A: Yes – I toured the city landfill, rode with police officers at night, I had to get in to the organizations and what they do. You have to get in to where it is. That's where you really see where there are areas of improvement.

Q: (Leslie) Why should we pick you?

A: We have been here and have learned and understand your challenges, we can hit the ground running. We bring a unique team. We have a national perspective also in mind.

Q: (Scott) There's a lot of emphasis on websites/internets/etc. What's required in your expectations? Some of these people have limited technology access.

A: In a perfect world we'd have everyone upload assignments from a shared website. However we understand not everyone can do this, we can use the fax machine, and assist with getting things posted. I can send them the information as needed. It's not mission critical to have internet access.

Q: (Tom) Laura is the point of contact..who's next if she were to leave?

A: Laura is a unique person, by getting this it would help to keep her longer...she is very valuable to us. She has someone assisting her side by side that will be helping her as we go along. He's learning every day from her.

Q: (Jen) We're going to be reaching out to other organizations in areas they don't already have experience in, how will this work?

A: EPA called Laura and asked how Dallas can be more sustainable? They had 3 years to make real environmental measurable improvements. I got on the phone and started calling resources. We turned \$250,000 into \$4.4 million. The worst someone can say is no, so call and ask.

Final Thoughts:

I'm excited about this. I'm very passionate about EMS. It is a model no one else has done anything like this. There's nothing to make real measurable improvements. Gresham is 100% behind us in supporting us. We are excited for the opportunity. We want to promote this as much as you'd like within and outside the state to be the model. There's very few solid waste agencies that have used this approach out there. This is going to be a great model for other states to look at. Get away from the typical diversion goals and look at what we can really do to enhance environmental protection but stay within the budgets and limitations.

RFP Final Selection

DECISION ITEM

Tony Colosimo left early, but left his vote with the chair.

Discussion:

You can't go wrong with either one. They are both good companies.

Motion to hire GS&P as the consultant

My question is serious about Laura. Laura is the key. Her experience is what we are trying to accomplish.

She nailed the answers.

Is the computer based communication an issue?

It's part of continuous improvement. Eventually they need to have it. That may be part of EMS is to get that.
The logistical challenges aren't enough to cancel them out.
They understand the legislation better than RMT. Government entities as business, etc. GSP recognize how we do things.
Go after low hanging fruit
She's passionate about it.
It's precedent setting in the nation.
Change the way the state does business. Or being a national model? What's our goal? That's what we'll become, but that's not necessarily the goal. Think globally but act locally.
RMT – they referred to individual meetings with pilots as worse case scenarios.

Motion and 2nd to hire Gresham Smith and Partners (GS&P) as the consultant Roll Call Vote - motion carries 8-0

GS&P: Tony, Leslie, Jen, Mary, Sara, Shelly, Sherry, Tom
Motion carries unanimously

Turn score sheets into Becky...no need to send in interview notes.
Leslie/Brian will work on the contract.
Brian will call those that aren't selected.

The recommendations go to EPC on 10-20-09 We need a scope of work, but not a signed contract for this point.
We need to discuss setting our next meeting.

Rationale for selecting the pilots

See handout.

We need more substance, this is a new approach to solid waste planning areas, all have strengths and weaknesses, etc. The rationale discusses the challenge. We want to do as much as we can with our resources.

Suggestion is to start with more of a positive approach...it was a hard process to narrow it down. We had 8 good applicants.

Brian will work on the EPC brief and get it out to you...he will put some reasons into it.

Letters – Send letters to the pilots. Here's who we are recommending at the Oct. EPC (subject to EPC approval). It's not a reflection of them and encourage them to apply next time.

Leslie will work on this (get Jim's SWAP example letter).

Scheduling Future Meetings

INFORMATION

- October 20, 2009 Environmental Protection Meeting
- November 18, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
 - Kick-off Meeting, GS&P with Council
- November 19-20 9:00 a.m.
 - GS&P with Pilots (council representative is not required, but preferred)

Future Agenda Items

- Presentations by those with resources. (Al Bonini, etc.)
- How to disseminate/share successes/problems learned from this process (another workshop?)
- Annual Report: Content, Criteria, Enforcement for no progress (put this info in rulemaking?)
- Timeline of pilots? When will more be added on?
- Chair elected for one year. (Sara elected 1-6-2009)

Adjourn

DECISION ITEM

Motion and 2 nd to adjourn Unanimous approval

Homework

- Leslie/Brian will work on the contract. (RFP)
- Brian will call those that aren't selected. (RFP)
- Leslie will work on the Pilot letters, recommendation, and notify those who didn't qualify.