

Board Minutes for the Board of Sanitary Commissioners Meeting of October 4, 2023

THE BOARD OF SANITARY COMMISSIONERS conducted a regularly scheduled meeting.

Board members present; Stephen Brand, President; Adam Leach, Vice President; Michael Wolfe, Board Secretary; David Smith, Board Member; and Tim Overton, Board Member.

**Department managers and staff present;** Joe Rhetts, Legal Counsel; Deana Cox, Financial Manager; Phil Reagon, Sanitation Superintendent; Rick Conrad, BWQ Director; John Anderson, District Engineer; Jason Ingram, WPCF Superintendent; Jason Donati, Sustainability Coordinator; Melanie Lanich, Insurance; and Maggie Bales, Executive Office Manager.

**Public present:** Linda Bicksler; 520 S Nichols Ave.

**Consideration of Minutes:** Mr. Brand entertained a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Leach moved to approve the Board Meeting Minutes as submitted for the meeting of September 20, 2023. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion was passed (5-0).

**Consideration of Claims:** Mr. Brand entertained a motion to consider the register of claims totaling \$1,071,519.14. Mr. Leach stated a claim on page fourteen of fourteen a payment to E&B Paving for paving on the Riverside drainage project totaling \$416,614.86. Mr. Smith stated a claim on page twelve of fourteen for the purchase of AEDs for our facilities in the amount of \$13,772.28. Mr. Brand stated on page eight of fourteen the twelfth levee mow is listed. Mr. Overton moved to approve the consideration of claims. Mr. Leach provided second. Motion passed (4-0).

**District Administrator Update – None.**

**Department Head Update – Phil Reagon, Sanitation Superintendent.** Mr. Reagon stated leaf pick up season is coming soon. He stated the dates are not set in stone; it will depend on Mother Nature. Mr. Reagon stated that typically leaf season pickup will run from the last week of October to after Thanksgiving. He stated trash routes Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will have leaf pickup on Wednesday afternoon and trash routes Thursday and Friday leaf pick up will be Saturday morning. Mr. Reagon stated that last year we picked up 253 tons of leaves and the street sweepers picked up 335 tons for a total of 588 tons or 1,176,000 pounds of leaves. He stated that we take them to ECR where the leaves are debagged and put on win rows to be used at a later date.

**Department Head Update – Jason Donati, Sustainability Coordinator.** Mr. Donati stated an update on the recycling program changes. He stated we have two new 2023 LaBrie automated trucks that are wrapped with the recycler mascot and a 25-year emblem to represent 25 years of recycling. Mr. Donati stated we have been doing residential recycling for 25 years. He stated that we received the largest grant from IDEM's Recycling Market Development Board of \$468,798.00 to help offset the cost of one of the automated parts of the recycling trucks and for some the 7,000 blue totes. Mr. Donati stated this grant required a 50% match from us, which we exceeded with the purchase of the chassis of both trucks and the automated part of the other truck. He stated we also purchased some of the 7,000 blue totes to fit the goal. Mr. Donati stated that the final paperwork has been filled out and filed, we have checked all the boxes with IDEM. He stated that the invoice has been sent for the reimbursement check. Mr. Donati stated we received \$50,000 from the Recycling Partnership. He stated that this is a reimbursement grant specifically for marketing and education to get to the goal of 12,500 households to sign up. Mr. Donati stated this grant has helped with the direct mailer cards and technical assistance with imagery and evidence-based research. He stated that he meets with the team every two weeks to talk about the game plan and how we are moving the program forward. Mr. Donati stated that we have spent about half of that

so we will be asking for some of the reimbursement from them. He stated the rest will be used to target he Monday and Tuesday routes that have lower participation. Mr. Donati stated that there was a live video on Facebook where Jason and Phil were on site with the two recycling trucks on Thursday, which is the largest load so far. He stated the live stream video showed the trucks dumping and we pulled items out of the pile that did not belong as an educational video. Mr. Donati stated this was a very effective video and was very popular. He stated this video will be downloaded and kept for future reference. Mr. Donati stated a quote from the Recycling Infrastructure and Economic study that IDEM did, talking about how the state has reached about 19% diversion from landfill with a goal of 50%. He stated this is a goal for us to achieve as well, 50% participation of 12,500 households and 50% diversion. Mr. Donati stated in the past we have fluctuated between 32% to 36%. He showed a video from 2022 when the Blue Bag program was still going. Mr. Donati explained that the video shows a lot of loose cardboard. He stated that last year with the trucks dumping all this material together, the cardboard was going to the landfill. Mr. Donati stated the cardboard was not coming in to be recycled correctly. He stated 30% of the Blue Bags had recycling and the rest had contamination or trash. Mr. Donati showed a video from 2023 of the recycling trucks dumping a lot of good material. He stated our marketing and education is work and the decision to do the opt in program was good. Mr. Donati stated the upfront education was helpful. He explained that the loose material skips the Blue Bag process entirely and goes straight into the recycling stream. Mr. Donati stated we will be able to capture more recyclables. He stated in eight weeks there has been 137.8 tons (275,600 pounds) of commingled recycling has been picked up, 7,116 households are participating, and 6,000 less tons of trash. Mr. Donati stated we are diverting a lot more material with the use of the blue toter. He provided a quote from Jason King, MRF Manager at East Central Recycling; "This recyclable material coming in with this new program has been the least amount of contamination I have ever seen in a commingled residential program. We are excited to see so much good material coming in and the new program is off to a great start!". Mr. Donati stated that we got a lower tipping fee for the first three years for recycling and trash so that will help offset the cost of the start-up of this program. He stated East Central Recycling is excited about this program and how quickly it is growing. Mr. Donati stated we created a Recycling Advisory Board that consists of a driver, a state rep, solid waste representation and member representation from the community. He stated there is an update meeting scheduled with them in two weeks. Mr. Donati stated this has been helpful to bounce ideas off them and get feedback. He showed a graphic of what is and what is not recyclable. Mr. Donati stated in the future, what is accepted may expand and the public will be notified. He stated for those participating to not be a wish cycler. Mr. Donati stated even if you wish it was recyclable to not put it in the toter because that leads to contamination. He stated the 11-gallon kitchen container has been successful. Mr. Donati stated that the first 10,000 will get one of those. He stated shredded material is not good in the blue toter and will lead to contamination. Mr. Donati stated those who sign up will be eligible for free shredding at East Central Recycling. He showed a graphic of the new Recyclor mascot. Mr. Donati stated that the recycling toters have been used for public events. He stated a lot of material was collected for recycling instead of going to the landfill. Mr. Donati explained that downtown areas are offered recycling and that continues to expand. He stated the downtown areas will be picked up Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Mr. Wolfe stated that this was a very cool update and is happy to see the results that you guys have been able to get with the program. He stated this has been a long process and a lot of effort. Mr. Wolfe explained that he is impressed with the early progress in the numbers and would like to continue to see this get better. He stated as the advisory board comes together, he is interested to see what the most common contaminants are and what the data will show. Mr. Overton stated that it is always nice when you exceed expectations. He appreciates all the hard work to make it happen. Mr. Overton asked about what continuing education for those who are enrolled in the program looks like and what are the plans for the future. Mr. Donati stated with the opt in program we got about 85% of the emails so there will be an ongoing emailed newsletter with updated information. He stated that we may even come up with incentives for those who participate. Mr. Donati stated that with the technology of the RFID chips in the new blue toters and the address attached to it we will be able to capture a lot of good data. He stated this data can be put into Cartegraph and used to incentivize those who participate. Mr. Leach asked if we are at substantial

completion of delivering the totes. Mr. Donati stated the first wave was about 4,700 deliveries and the second phase was about 2,000 deliveries. He explained that now we are in the third phase or post second wave madness where we are doing some in house deliveries. Mr. Donati stated we are almost all caught up. Mr. Smith thanked Jason for the update. Mr. Brand stated being overwhelmed with the numbers is a good problem to have rather than the opposite. He asked if ECR offered tours to the public or to anyone who wanted to tour ECR. Mr. Donati stated yes, ECR offers tours. He explained that we have talked to them about inviting the board once all the advancements and upgrades are made to their facility. Mr. Brand asked if this is saving money. Mr. Donati stated that upfront there are a lot of costs. He stated that he thinks once it gets settled it has the potential to save money. Mr. Donati stated there are a lot of moving parts in the beginning. He stated the overall costs of the Blue Bag program was \$100,000 in blue bags expenses, \$16,000 in postcards twice a year, and \$40,000 for disposal of waste to energy. Mr. Donati stated there are savings there as those expenses will not be there anymore. He stated long term there is opportunity for savings.

**Old Business: None.**

**New Business: None.**

**Additional Board Topics:**

1. Mr. Wolfe stated that the employee survey is ongoing for those who might be listening. He stated that we appreciate the feedback we have gotten so far. Mr. Wolfe explained that we have gotten some good candid feedback and participation is getting there. He stated the preliminary feedback and participation numbers will be posted to the informational boards. Mr. Wolfe stated that hopefully this will encourage participation.
2. Mr. Leach stated that the folks of MSD continue to do a great job. He stated that for the employees who do watch this that he wants to iterate communication remains key. Mr. Leach explained that it is something that as we are doing good and going about our days, it is exceedingly important for employees to communicate with their supervisor and/or department head. He stated that not necessarily always coming to the board. Mr. Leach stated that without communications we do not know there is a problem and therefor cannot fix the problems. He stated that some of the results of the surveys are rooting to communications not being handled as well as it could be. Mr. Leach explained that the survey is one part of the communication process. He stated the more that is put out the more we can institute to a higher level to start addressing those. Mr. Leach stated that if you do not communicate then we cannot fix the issue, and if you are not communicating then no one will know that there is an issue. He acknowledged Deana Cox for doing a great job at the City Council meeting.
3. Mr. Brand stated that he understands that we are at less than 50% participation so please continue to encourage employees to participate. He stated that there is one department at 100% participation. Mr. Brand stated that late last evening he received an email from City Councilman Aaron Clark. He stated that at the public comment section of the City Council meeting there was a Muncie resident raised the condition of the property owned by the Muncie Sanitary District. Mr. Brand stated that as per usual Harvey was already ahead of it and had been out to the property to pick up some debris. He explained that they plan to send a Bob Cat. Mr. Brand stated that there is a unique condition with that property that a portion of it is also owned by the railroad. He stated that the materials that were left on the property do not belong to the Sanitary District, they belong to the railroad. Mr. Brand stated that the railroad has their own way of doing business, but we are proactively working on that today.

**Public Comments:**

1. Linda Bicksler, 520 S Nichols Avenue, stated that she lives right at the Nichols and Godman intersection just south of Ball State and it is a nice area with proximity to Tillotson. She stated that there is a corner and she just spoke with Todd Huxhold. Ms. Bicksler provided pictures to the board of the piles. She stated that they do not know who the piles belong to. Ms. Bicksler stated that she called several years ago about the same issue. She stated that no one knows who dug the enormous holes on the property owned by Ball Stated Foundation. She stated that we have an interesting place, and the thing is no one knows who the piles belong to. Ms. Bicksler stated that they do not belong to the Sanitary District. She stated that there is sand sometimes many sometimes few, but they are blowing and blowing all over her car. Ms. Bicksler stated that her car is recently having some electrical issue. She stated that it is sad because that intersection is looking nice now with little shops across the street and a grassy area. Ms. Bicksler explained that the area is cobalt dairy that is historic. She stated that they used to draw milk bottles and horse-drawn carts from that place, it used to be farmland. Ms. Bicksler stated that this should be a community center. She stated that Todd Huxhold stated that he could put dirt on top and plant grass because the aera is not wide. Ms. Bicksler stated that the property is 60 feet at an angle, easement. She stated that whoever put the piles there knew what they were doing because they put them on the Sanitary District land. Ms. Bicksler stated that at Washington and Madison they have a small piece of artwork, and the area is paved. She said not to tell her the area is too small to do something. Ms. Bicksler stated that there are problems south of us with the bar where they throw trash and sometimes have big Ball State parties. She stated that there are many other facts and problems with this, but we are picking up the trash in our area. Mr. Brand stated to confirm that we are out working in that area, and we realize that it is not our material, but we are out picking it up. He stated that Harvey is committed to cleaning it up and we will do our best. Mr. Overton stated that he appreciated the activism and that makes the community better. He stated that the area is getting cleaned up because of what she has done.

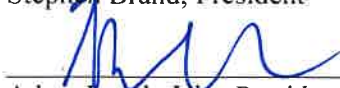
**Adjourn:** Mr. Brand stated our next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. in the City Hall Auditorium. Mr. Brand stated he would accept a motion to adjourn. Mr. Overton made a motion to adjourn the meeting for October 4, 2023. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Maggie Balés, Executive Office Manager

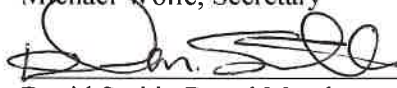
*Approved by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners  
Muncie Sanitary District*

  
Stephen Brand, President

  
Adam Leach, Vice President

  
Tim Overton, Board Member

  
Michael Wolfe, Secretary

  
David Smith, Board Member