

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: May 14, 2009

**Action Agenda
Item No.** _____

SUBJECT: Orange County Waste Transfer Station Site Search Process

DEPARTMENT: Solid Waste Management

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1) Olver, Inc. Report – Environmental Investigation Activities for Candidate Site 056
- 2) Olver, Inc. Report – Summary of Transfer, Haul and Disposal Evaluation
- 3) Olver, Inc. Report – Preserving Capacity at Eubanks Landfill

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PURPOSE: To engage Town partners in an update and continue discussion from the Board meeting on April 21, 2009 regarding the Waste Transfer Station Site Search Process, including environmental issues and evaluations, hauling and transfer financial analysis, extending capacity of the landfill, and associated issues as may arise.

BACKGROUND: At the April 21, 2009 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting the following reports were presented and discussed:

- Findings of Transfer Station Candidate Site environmental evaluations
- Analysis of alternative approaches, partnerships and methodologies for waste disposal
- Technological alternatives to land filling
- Comments and a report from the Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB)
- Contingency waste transfer alternatives, including a revised estimate on reaching capacity at Eubanks Road landfill

The agenda materials from the April 21 BOCC meeting may be accessed at www.olver.com/orangecounty

At the meeting on April 21, 2009 the BOCC adopted the following:

- Authorized the County Attorney to execute a letter of agreement with Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice to handle litigation as may arise relative to the Waste Transfer siting process,
- Directed County Management to bring back an environmental ruling from the Planning Department on Site 056 once the final State Clearinghouse Report is received.
- Removed the temporary Eubanks Road landfill waste transfer option from further consideration as a contingency option,

- Directed Management to proceed with an Environmental Impact Statement or equivalent for Site 056, and
- Authorized the scheduling of a work session, including inviting the Towns and Solid Waste Advisory Board, to discuss further issues related to the transfer station site search process such as the Site 056 wetlands and biological survey results/status, results of a conversation with the Orange Grove Fire Department, limiting users to the Inter-local in order to preserve space and keep the landfill open longer, and explaining/summarizing the financial analysis of alternative hauling options and of the transfer and disposal system options.

The attached reports provide additional detailed information for the benefit of work session discussions as requested by the BOCC. To expedite review, technical conclusions are summarized below:

Environmental Investigation Activities for Candidate Site 056 (Attachment 1):

- 1) Proposed entranceway road crossing is only site development activity causing a disturbance to streams and wetlands as identified by Hal Owen Associates, Inc. (HOA)
- 2) Construction and operation of proposed transfer station should not present threat to potential habitat of mussel species as identified by The Catena Group, Inc.
- 3) Applications have been submitted to Orange County Health Department/Environmental Health Division for site evaluation for conventional septic system
- 4) An enhanced Environmental Assessment that incorporates additional investigatory activities will be submitted to the State Clearinghouse for regulatory agency and public comment
- 5) Final design for transfer station entrance road will be based on requirements and recommendations of NC Department of Transportation, the County Planning Department, and overall safety considerations
- 6) Contacts with the County Fire Marshall and Orange Grove Volunteer Fire Department have been initiated regarding final building classification and fire protection requirements
- 7) If Candidate Site 056 is selected, a full cultural resources survey will be performed in cooperation with Environment Resource and Conservation Department.

Transfer/Haul/Disposal Evaluation (Attachment 2):

- 1) Direct hauling to an out-of-County transfer station is a viable option but would result in higher operational risks, higher vehicle emissions, and higher direct hauling costs for all jurisdictions except the Town of Hillsborough
- 2) Direct hauling from collection routes to a transfer station on site #056 is viable and less expensive than direct hauling to an out-of-County transfer station for all Inter-Local Agreement partners except the Town of Hillsborough

- 3) It is unlikely a long-term alternative to waste processing other than land filling (i.e., mass-burn, refuse derived fuel, or gasification/pyrolysis/plasma arc) can be developed before the break-even point of building and operating an in-County transfer station option
- 4) Developing a new County transfer station is the least costly option for solid waste disposal over a 20-year planning horizon

Preserving Capacity at Eubanks Landfill (Attachment 3):

- 1) Involves diversion of waste prior to completion of transfer station and significant reduction in landfill acceptance rate once transfer station is in service
- 2) Can be accomplished provided the County continues to follow Approved Landfill Operating Plan
- 3) County would need to continue to comply with reporting requirements, payment of annual fees, disposal tax, and permit renewals as required
- 4) County would see reduction in tipping fee revenue of approximately \$37,400 per month

FINANCIAL IMPACT: There will likely be substantial costs to the County in the overall land acquisition, design, and development of a selected site and the permitting and construction of the actual facility along with any ancillary features the BOCC may authorize. There are also costs associated with the various surveys, appraisals, contingency implementations and other site evaluations that involve outside vendors and consultants.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Manager recommends the Board receive the attached reports, discuss waste transfer station siting issues with the Solid Waste Advisory Board and the representatives of the Towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill and Hillsborough, and provide direction and guidance to County staff as necessary.