

VIRGINIA: County of Lee, to-wit:

At the Recessed Meeting of the Lee County Board of Supervisors in the General District Courtroom of the Lee County Courthouse on January 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. thereof.

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. D. Leonard, Chairman
Larry Mosley, Vice Chairman
Sidney Kolb
Robert Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Charles Slemp, Jr.

OTHERS PRESENT: Dane Poe, County Administrator
Jeny Hughes, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS ABSENT: Stacy Munsey, County Attorney

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO SOLID WASTE AND
RECYCLING COLLECTION**

The Lee County Board of Supervisors held a public meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the General District Courtroom of the Lee County Courthouse in Jonesville, Virginia. The purpose of this meeting was to solicit public comment on proposed changes to the Solid Waste and Recycling collection schedules and programs. The Solid Waste Committee has submitted the following recommendations to the Board for their consideration:

1. Reduce Solid Waste Convenience Center hours during the months of November through March to 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. for employee safety.
2. Close all Solid Waste Convenience Centers on Sunday.
3. Close the Solid Waste Transfer Station (Old Landfill location) on weekends except for the 2nd Saturday of each month and open every Saturday in April and October.
4. Eliminate the recycling program entirely. Since eliminating plastic from recycling, paper and cardboard collections have decreased by over 60% and prices continue to fall.

5. Close the Hurricane Bridge and Hunters Gap (Rte. 70 at Middle Wallens Creek Rd intersection) unfenced collection sites or consolidate into one fenced location.

Gary Collingsworth, Transfer Station Superintendent, reported that the Solid Waste Committee recommended the changes by researching the cost burden on the County, how to cut costs on the illegal dumping at the Convenience Center sites and employee safety.

The Chairman opened the floor for public comment and advised that each speaker would be limited to a three-minute time-period.

David Thompson, Ewing, stated that the committee did an incredible job and he agrees with all of the recommended changes. He also stated that Montgomery Store employees have been picking up litter along the roads in that area and asked if the litter pickup program had been discontinued.

Mr. Poe stated that the litter pickup program is through a contract with VDOT and the Sheriff's Department with off duty deputies volunteering to work on their off days. Litter pickup has restarted at the Wise County line and will continue throughout the County.

John Cheek, Dot, stated that Convenience Centers have that name because they are convenient to the public and closing early would put the public at an inconvenience; he understands concern on safety but does not see how closing early would ensure employee safety; and that if the cost of recycling is not offset the program should end.

Charlie Carter, Flatwoods, stated that the committee had good recommendations about fencing and control, but if the centers close on Sunday people will dump their garbage somewhere else. He would like to see his tax money used to keep the County clean. He stated that he would hate to see the recycling of cardboard end and would like for that to be continued if possible.

Amanda Herb, Hurricane Road, stated that if the Hurricane site were to close it would make it hard on the citizens that live nearby. She suggested building a fence and installing cameras to ticket the people dumping illegally.

Keith Warren, Sugar Run, stated that closing the centers at 6:00 p.m. and on Sundays would hurt the working citizens. He asked how the Board could close a site before opening another location.

Shannon Taylor, Seminary, addressed the Board about the proposed site in Seminary and asked that the matter be added to the agenda for next month.

Mr. Leonard stated that the Board could take a few questions now.

Mr. Taylor stated that he has concerns about the site being so close to his property. He stated that he has a good lead with VDOT on another location and asked the Board to delay a decision on the proposed site.

Paul Peters, Route 70, addressed the Board about the Hunter's Gap site stating that he would like to see the site closed due to the illegal dumping and trash thrown out all over the ground. He stated that he wished there was something he could do about the dumping but there is not anything he can do.

Mr. Leonard stated that it is everybody's responsibility to do something about illegal activity.

Tyler Strouth, Hurricane Road, stated that Lee County is a beautiful place and a few people are ruining it for everyone, people throw trash all over and that is what the tourists see when they pass through. He added that the biggest problem is educating people about littering.

Mr. Mosley stated that the Litter Coordinator goes to the schools to educate the students. He added that at the Hurricane Bridge site, there used to be a fence behind the dumpsters and it was torn down once and stolen once.

Jack Warner, Flatwoods, stated that there is a certain type of person that does the illegal dumping and littering and they going to do it no matter what changes are made.

Mr. Mosley stated that Sunday is usually the biggest day for scavenging.

Allen Hubbard, Seminary, asked that inmates do a clean up at the Olinger site.

Amy Hubbard, Seminary, stated that the Olinger site could be closed and let people use the Dryden Center. She does not want the view of a convenience center from her house.

Mason Johnston, Jonesville, stated he uses the Hurricane site and people will continue dumping whether the dumpsters are there or not. He added that the dumpsters could be cabled together to keep them from being pushed into the river.

Mr. Mosley stated that if the site were closed, it would be filled in and there would not be a place to pull off and dump trash.

Mr. Poe stated that at the few sites that have been closed over the years, it is coordinated with VDOT to do everything that can be done to prevent a car from even pulling over on the property.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that the times cameras were used, they were stolen.

Roger Waddell, stated that it would take time and training for the public to get used to the proposed changes. He added that there needs to be changes made for the safety of the employees and the illegal dumping at the unfenced sites.

Mr. Leonard asked how many instances have there been with the convenience center workers.

Mr. Waddell stated that anytime someone that is illegally dumping is confronted it almost turns into a verbal fight.

Mr. Leonard stated that if someone thinks their life was in danger it needs to be reported to the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Waddell stated that County employees are under scrutiny from every side, and if tickets would be written for stuff that is reported, it could slow some of this down because news travels fast.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that cases have been brought to court but there are bigger priorities and the litter cases are thrown out, and it gets hard to keep doing it when it is thrown out before it even comes to court.

Mr. Leonard stated that part of the job is to report illegal activity.

Mr. Waddell stated that he hopes the Board will do something, the sites at Olinger and Jasper are getting a lot of Wise County garbage and the tax payers should not have to pay for out of county or out of state garbage.

Karen Carter, Flatwoods, asked who the Litter Coordinator is and what he can do.

Mr. Smith stated that Harold Michael is the Litter Coordinator.

Mr. Poe stated that there is only one person in the position of Litter and Recycling Coordinator and he would have to catch someone in the illegal act before he can write a citation.

Ms. Carter asked if he could ride with the garbage truck drivers to catch people in the act.

Mr. Leonard stated that the Litter Coordinator has not been working full time since September and is working on a restricted basis.

Ms. Carter asked if someone could be deputized to write citations.

Mr. Poe stated that any County Deputy could write citations.

Mr. Kolb asked how many tickets were written in 2019 by any County employee.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that the Town officers would come to the Transfer Station to write tickets, but several were dismissed in court. The County deputies are spread farther out and have a hard time catching people in the act.

Mr. Kolb stated that there is no reason any County employee or citizen cannot charge someone, you can go to the Magistrate and take out a warrant. Mr. Kolb recommended that Mr. Collingsworth get in touch with the General District Court Clerk and get a monthly report on how many tickets are written for littering, dumpster diving or anything else.

Mr. Poe stated that the Litter Coordinator is the only employee that will be writing littering citations.

Mr. Kolb stated that any employee could go before the Magistrate and take out a warrant.

Mr. Poe stated that he is not going to ask County employees to put their life on the line over a bag of trash.

Mr. Kolb stated that the County could not ask the Litter Coordinator and not the other employees.

Ms. Carter stated that the County needs options for recycling and asked if the County has checked into coupling contracts with local companies.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that all local stores are already under contracts.

Mr. Leonard stated that nobody on the Board is against recycling, but at this time, it has not been the best use of taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Mosley stated that if the price goes up the County will be willing to look at restarting the program.

Mr. Poe stated that he received a phone call and one email in the office regarding this meeting. Jerry Cox, Sticklelyville, called and requested the Hunter's Gap center remain open and to only close half a day on Sunday. He also received an email from Chris Sexton asking that the recycling program remain in place.

There was no further public comment.

The Chairman closed the floor for public comment.

Mr. Leonard stated that he appreciated everyone that attended that meeting.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Poe stated that he has received a request for a joint meeting with the School Board on February 27 at the School Board office.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. Poe reported that we would need two members for the School Board Budget Committee.

Mr. Kolb and Mr. Leonard volunteered to be on the Budget Committee.

SLIDE PRESENTATION

Mr. Collingsworth presented a slide show on the illegal dumping at the Convenience Centers. He stated there is a lot of expense on the County by not being able to monitor the site all day, every day.

Mr. Leonard stated that Keokee residents are not going to bring their trash to Jonesville and he would rather see it at the centers than dumped on the side of the roads.

Mr. Poe stated that another item discussed by the Committee was adding another position to Litter control to double the efforts if the Recycling Program is dropped.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that the Litter Coordinator previously stayed in the office to wait for someone to come in from court to sign up for Community Service and now he only does sign ups on Wednesday and is out working the other four days.

Mr. Leonard stated that recently the Litter Coordinator spent a lot of time with the Recycling program and ending that program would free up some of his time.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that this coordinator has been sending more certified letters than either of the past two coordinators.

Mr. Leonard stated that would like to see a copy of those citations.

Mr. Poe stated that these are letters of violations, and all members of the Board will be provided a copy.

Mr. Kolb asked how many citations have been written for those not complying and if the citations are county or state statutes.

Mr. Collingsworth stated that he believes that both codes were used.

Mr. Kolb asked for a list of citations for 2019.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD

Mr. Kolb thanked everyone that came to the meeting. He stated that the only option citizens have is to dump at a Convenience Center so the centers need to be convenient for the public. He stated that anyone is able to go before the Magistrate and get a warrant on someone, and he would like a survey done by every Convenience Center operator on what citations were written in 2019. He added that where a County spends money says a lot, and right now, the County is paying to guard trash while there is no money for School Resource Officers.

Mr. Mosley stated that the only way to stop the illegal activity is to have the centers manned full time.

Mr. Collingsworth stated for 28 hours a week at 18 sites at \$7.25 per hour, it would cost \$959,148.00 per year.

Mr. Mosley stated the reason the workers do not say anything is because of their ages. He added if someone were there 8 hours a day it would be feasible. People do not go the bank at 5:00 p.m. because they know it is closed.

Mr. Leonard asked what the average monthly cost to keep Hunters Gap, Hurricane Bridge and Olinger sites opened.

Mr. Poe stated the trash is loaded from multiple sites until the truck is full, so there is no way of knowing what the weight is at each site. There is an employee cost at each location, gravel, time and labor to maintain the site.

Wayne Marcum, Marcum Oil, stated that the non-fenced sites are a problem and if there is not a center to put the trash, it will be dumped somewhere else.

Mr. Mosley stated that the sites are open 13 hours a day now, those hours could be reduced.

Mr. Kolb asked Mr. Marcum if closing on Saturday would affect his business.

Mr. Marcum stated that he has to haul it whenever his trucks are full; but so far, it has not created a problem.

Mr. Leonard stated there is still a lot of work to do before the Board can answer these recommendations.

Mr. Poe questioned if the work at the 606 site needs to be postponed at this time.

Mr. Leonard stated to move forward with that property.

It was moved by Mr. Mosley, seconded by Mr. Smith, to recess to February 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Upon the question being put the vote was as follows.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Kolb, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Mosley, Mr. Smith

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

CLERK OF THE BOARD