

***APPROVED* MEETING MINUTES**
Disposal Site Advisory Committee (DSAC)
September 19, 2024

Benton County DSAC Chair Ken Eklund called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. The meeting was open to the public virtually via a published Zoom link.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ken Eklund, *Chair*
Rachel Purcell
Chuck Gilbert
Jeffrey Morrell
Brent Pawlowski
Ian MacNab, *Republic Services Representative*
David Hackleman (online)

STAFF

Petra Schuetz, *Interim Community
Development Director*
Bailey Payne, *Solid Waste Program
Coordinator*

GUESTS

Jean Weisinsee, *Community member*
Marge Popp, *Community member*
Kitty Bartee, *Community member*
Jim Fairchild, *Community member*
John Skillmon, *Community member*
Julie Jackson, *Republic Services*
Kate Harris, *Community member*
Kevin Kenaga, *Community member*
Ginger Rough, *Republic Services*
Nancy Whitcombe, *Community member*
Debbie Palmer, *Community member*
Tom Hewes, *Community member*
Joel Geier, *Community member*
Mark Henkels, *Community member*

ABSENT: Matthew Ruetters (excused), Jennifer Field (excused)

Agenda Changes

- **Item 7** (Discussion on Elections) was moved to Item 8.
- **Item 8** (Staff Presentation on Public Outreach) moved up to Item 7.

Announcements

- Committee Protocols: Limiting discussion to committee members when in session to streamline the process.

- Meeting Schedule: The committee will hold regular meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM, continuing through the end of the year.
- Public Access Issues: There have been ongoing issues with timely public access to agendas and meeting materials. The committee is actively working with staff to resolve these problems. Public comments on this issue were encouraged to emphasize the need for resolution.
- Landfill Expansion: The Disposal Site Advisory Committee (DSAC) is not involved in decision-making related to Republic Services' landfill expansion application. Any testimony regarding the expansion must be submitted to the decision-making body, the Benton County [Planning Commission](#). The committee will hear concerns but cannot influence the official decision process.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment

Marge Popp:

- Commented on difficulties finding DSAC-related information online, which used to be easily accessible. Requested more detailed and accessible information on the committee's webpage.

Jim Fairchild:

- Raised concerns about hazardous waste being deposited at the landfill, specifically incinerator ash from Marion County, and its potential environmental impacts.
- Also questioned whether ENRAC accepts public comment, as there is confusion about the public's ability to provide input at their meetings.

Republic Services Response:

- Ian MacNab (Committee Member): Explained that the incinerator ash has been tested and deemed non-hazardous. DEQ approved its use as cover material after a lengthy trial process over 10 years ago.
- Chair: Clarified that ENRAC is responsible for reviewing the landfill expansion. However, it's unclear if ENRAC will take public comment when the application becomes active. Staff will look into this further.

Online Public Comment:

Ken Eklund (chair)

- The DSAC hears concerns as per its function to report them to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, however, any testimony regarding the expansion must be submitted to the decision making bodies.

Nancy Whitcombe

- Attempted to speak but experienced technical issues. She raised a concern via chat about clarifying ENRAC's role in public input, which was noted by the chair for follow-up.

Kate Harris (Soap Creek Resident):

- Expressed concerns regarding worker safety at Coffin Butte Landfill, referencing the August 6th Benton County Commissioner meeting and a recent OSHA inspection.
- Raised the following questions:
 - Why was an industrial hygienist hired only after a 2024 OSHA inspection and worker strike, and has the assessment been completed?

- What are the safety measures in place for workers exposed to dust and contamination at the landfill?
- Concerns about vehicles being washed without proper containment, leading to contamination of local waterways.
- Questioned the lack of visual screening along Highway 99, required in the existing conditional use permit.
- Raised concerns about delayed implementation of stormwater management projects.
- She agreed to leave further comments for review of the annual report.

Tom Hewes (Soap Creek Resident):

- Raised the question of the costs to Benton County for hosting the landfill, including:
 - Road degradation, pollution, and landfill fires.
 - Decrease in land values near the landfill.
 - Post-closure costs.
- Requested any available reports addressing these costs.

Republic Services Response:

- Clarified that post-closure management is required for a minimum of 30 years after the landfill closes.
- Mentioned no existing comprehensive report on externalities related to the landfill but suggested further inquiry with the County.

Kevin Kenaga (Soap Creek Resident):

- Commented on the updated report, specifically regarding new testing for the flare at the landfill.
- Kevin Kenaga inquired about the testing procedure:
 - What is being tested?
 - When will the testing be available to the public?
- Response from Republic Services:
 - Testing is scheduled for October 22.
 - It is a standard procedure for flare or industrial devices to have initial source testing.
- Kevin Kenaga raised concerns about the daily cover at the landfill:
 - The report mentions daily cover (typically 6 inches of soil), but in reality, mesh netting is used, which doesn't prevent odors or wildlife from accessing the garbage.
 - Kevin criticized the accuracy of the report and emphasized the environmental impact of not using adequate daily cover, including increased methane emissions.
- Republic Services Response:
 - The daily cover used is a heavy-duty 200x200 foot tarp, not mesh netting, and is an approved alternative daily cover. Using tarps saves clean soil and airspace.

Discussion and Action Items:

- The committee emphasized the need for a structured process to follow up on public comments and questions, particularly those directed at Republic Services.
- A suggestion was made to compile a concrete list of questions for Republic Services to address in future meetings. Staff will organize the questions and submit to Ian MacNab.

3. Agenda Item #3: Fire Safety at Coffin Butte Landfill

- The committee discussed recent fires at the landfill:
 - Two fires were reported this summer, one near the gas flare stacks and another on the working face of the landfill. Both were extinguished after being reported by highway drivers.

- The committee found the fire incidents significant enough to warrant a report to the Board of Commissioners.
- The 2023 Annual Report included some relevant information, but additional details about fire safety and responses were needed.

Proposal for Fire Safety Report

- David Hackleman volunteered to draft a report summarizing fire safety concerns, incorporating feedback from the previous meeting.
- Committee Agreement:
 - Members agreed to provide comments directly to David.
 - David will reach out to Republic Services for additional information as necessary.
 - The draft report will be reviewed at the next meeting before submission to the Board of Commissioners.

4. Agenda Item: 2021 Community Concerns Annual Report

- Discussion:
 - The report, presented in its proposed final form on page 11 of the packet, was reviewed.
 - The committee moved to approve the report to send to the Oregon DEQ to comply with state law and committee bylaws.
- Motion: To accept the report and allow for additional comments made by Rachel Purcell
- Seconded by: Jeff Morrell.
- Discussion Points:
 - A focus on concerns about Coffin Butte Road, particularly regarding traffic analysis and evacuation routes.
 - Clarifications were made about the nature of responses included in the report.
 - It was suggested that future reports provide more analysis of comments and responses to avoid misrepresentation of concerns.
- Amendment: Rachel Purcell will add a sentence to the introduction of the report clarifying that responses may not fully address all concerns raised.
- **Vote:** Unanimously approved with amendments.

5. Agenda Item: Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The committee reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting.
- Amendments:
 - Page 2: Change "2023" to "2024" in reference to the grasslands fire.
 - Page 2: Update the name from "Rick" to "Bob Kipper" for the letter supplier.
 - Page 2: Revise the sentence regarding the response to the fire to "The Adair Rural Fire Department and Republic responded, and fire damage was contained."
- Rachel Purcell made motion to approve minutes as amended by Ken Eklund, seconded by Jeff Morrell
- Vote: Unanimously approved.
- It was suggested to approve minutes earlier in the agenda for efficiency.

6. Agenda Item: Break

- The committee took a 5-minute break.

7. Agenda Item 7: Coffin Butte Landfill 2023 Report

- The landfill report was presented at the July meeting but was not accepted by the Commissioners and returned to Republic for revisions. The revised report is now set for discussion in the upcoming October 1st Commissioners' meeting.

- The group discussed the need to provide guidance to the Commissioners regarding this updated annual report.
- A volunteer is needed to collate remarks and draft guidance for the Commissioners, as relying solely on meeting minutes may not capture the necessary nuances.
- Rachel Purcell volunteered to write a letter summarizing the DSAC concerns about the 2023 report.
- Members noted that there are specific questions regarding arsenic levels and compliance standards that should be included in the guidance.
- It was suggested to compile a list of relevant questions and comments, particularly concerning worker safety and contamination concerns.

Recommendations for the Report

- **Arsenic Monitoring:** Continue monitoring levels and compliance; the committee should flag ongoing concerns.
- **Carbon Mapper Data:** Request inclusion of carbon mapping flyover data in the report, emphasizing its relevance to landfill monitoring.
- Discuss the appropriateness of mixing 2023 and 2024 information within the annual report. Suggestion was made to maintain focus on the specific reporting year.
- **EPA Inspection Clarity:** Request clarification from the Commissioners on the number of exceedances reported in EPA inspections and the context of these findings.
- A discussion on the need for better context surrounding data findings, such as the number of measurements taken compared to the number of exceedances, was initiated.
- It was suggested that the guidance document include specific recommendations for Republic to enhance their reporting and transparency practices.

Discussion Points: Landfill Compliance and Methane Management:

- Republic Services mentioned weekly monitoring for exceedances, dependent on the time of year.
- Discussion on methane presence and management; acknowledgment that methane cannot be completely eliminated.
- David Hackleman acknowledged the extensive work put into the report and emphasized the need for clarity regarding the enclosed flare installation timeline.
- Raised concerns over a pre-enforcement letter received from Oregon DEQ indicating non-compliance, suggesting a full report should be requested from the Commissioners.

Fires Associated with Flares:

- Highlighted a fire incident near the flare and the need to understand the history of such events.
- Republic Services confirmed that there had been prior fire incidents at the landfill.
- Discussion on the relevance of the Carbon Mapper report and whether it should be included in the annual report. Decision made to withdraw comments regarding the Carbon Mapper from the current agenda.
- **A motion was made (Jeff Morrell) and seconded (Rachel Purcell) to recommend the acceptance of the report by the Commissioners, along with prepared comments for their consideration. The motion passed unanimously.**
- The report needs to be submitted to the Commissioners before their meeting on October 1, 2024.

8. Agenda Item #9: Public Engagement Overview

- Presentation on how Benton County is engaging with the public through the website, social media, and community involvement efforts.
- Mention of updated website features, including a timeline of developments at Coffin Butte.
- Emphasis on the Benton County trash process and email notifications for community members interested in solid waste issues.

- Communication Initiatives: Recent email blasts were sent out to the county’s contact list announcing the current meeting.
- An ad regarding the meeting appeared in the Gazette Times, although some attendees expressed they had not seen it.
- Discussion on public awareness of meetings, specifically noting that the public may not know that meetings occur on the second Wednesday of each month.
- The difficulty of finding the Disposal Site Advisory Council (DSAC) page on the Benton County website was highlighted. Concerns were raised about outdated information and unclear navigation.
- Suggested utilizing social media and other channels to enhance outreach beyond official announcements.
- Acknowledgment of Ken's recent opinion piece that generated public interest.
- The committee agreed to empower members to disseminate information through their own networks.
- Although the staff presentation listed avenues that Benton County engages with the public, none of the avenues that staff listed had actually been successfully used by the committee to get its message out. “I'd like to have a note added the staff presentation did not address the question of how much outreach had been done, or will be done to make the public aware of DSAC's restart and of its mission to promote dialogue about and gather public concerns about Coffin Butte landfill.” (Chair Eklund)

9. Agenda Item #8: Election Discussion

- Elections for the chair and vice chair of DSAC are due before the first meeting of the new year, traditionally held in December.
- A proposal was made to elect a vice chair in the next meeting to relieve the current chair of meeting duties.
- Concerns regarding confidence in voting for new members were discussed, suggesting that elections should be held after members have gained sufficient experience.

Discussion on Vice Chair Appointment

- There was a discussion on the need to appoint a vice chair to balance the leadership and assist with training new members.
- It was suggested that Rachel could be a candidate for the vice chair position.
- A nomination committee was proposed to gather interest from potential candidates.
- Decision deferred until the next meeting, with an acknowledgment of an upcoming election in November or December.

Upcoming Meetings

- Clarification on the number of required meetings: The committee needs to hold at least four meetings per year. An October 9th meeting is scheduled, and the decision on November and December meetings will be held on the 2nd Wednesday from 6pm – 8pm.

Proposal for Voting on Vice Chair

- David Hackleman recommended voting for a vice chair at the next meeting.
- General consensus that electing a vice chair is a good idea and will be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

10. Agenda Item #10 - Request for Agenda Items

- Matthew Ruettgers emailed the DSAC chair (Ken Eklund) about the committee’s role and addressing concerns of scope creep.
- Matthew will be invited to provide input on the email, as he could not attend the current meeting.

Site Security Discussion

- David Hackleman raised the issue of site security at the landfill, specifically regarding the management of idle equipment during non-operational hours.
- This will be added as a potential agenda item for the next meeting.

11. Agenda Item #11 - Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Rachel Purcell and seconded by Brent Pawlowski.
- The motion was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2024

Meeting Adjourned at: 8:09 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by: Bailey Payne, staff

Date of Preparation: 9/20/24

Next Steps

Issue	Assigned to:
Clarify ENRAC's public input policies and update the committee at future meetings.	Staff
The committee asked staff to consolidate public comments and questions for Republic Services.	Staff
Draft and circulate the fire safety report for committee review. Committee members to send comments or additional information to David. David Hackleman to submit the report to the chair and Mr. Payne for review.	David Hackleman
Republic Services to provide additional details on fire safety as requested.	Ian MacNab
Draft additional feedback to the board of commissioners for the Republic Services 2023 Annual Report (updated) report's introduction.	Rachel Purcell

These meeting minutes were approved (with corrections). At the DSAC meeting on 10/9/24, David Livesay made the motion to approve. Chuck Gilbert 2nd.