



KENT COUNTY BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

March 4, 2021

8:30 AM

**Earl G. Woodworth Building
Meeting Room Chambers
1500 Scribner Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Brieve, Janes, Skaggs, Yonker, Bulkowski, Greene, Antor

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Darwin Baas, Director; Kimberly Williams, Finance Division Director; Alisha Barber, Office Manager; Paul Smith, WTE Operations Manager; Becky Dyer, Division Financial Supervisor; Molly Sherwood, Environmental Compliance Manager; Nic VanderVinne, Resource Recovery and Recycling Manager; Dan Rose, Solid Waste Operations Manager; Kristen Wieland, Marketing & Communications Manager; Constance Westgate, Environmental Engineer Technician; Katelynn Kirkstra, Resource Recovery Specialist; Lauren Westerman, Resource Recovery Specialist; Isaac Thaler, Resource Recovery Specialist; MaryBeth Vantill, Director of Operational and Inclusion; Calvin Brinks, Purchasing/Fleet Services Manager; Craig Paull, Indigent Defense Administrator/Attorney Administrator/Controller; John Van Tholen, Van Tholen & Associates; Bill Stough, Sustainable Research Group; Russ Boersma, Arrowaste; Charles Hauser, Granger Waste Services; Mark Rambo, City of Kentwood; Jennifer Porter, Gershman, Brickner & Bratton; Steve Simmons, Gershman, Brickner & Bratton; Diane Druckenmiller, Arrowaste; Bob Swain, City of Grand Rapids

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Emily Brieve.

II. Consent Agenda

- A. Review and Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Monetary Outlays

Motion

It was moved by Commissioner Janes and seconded by Commissioner Skaggs to approve the Consent Agenda.

The Consent Agenda was approved by the following vote:

YEAS: Commissioners Brieve, Janes, Skaggs, Yonker, Bulkowski, Greene, Antor

ABSENT: None

NAYS: None

III. Administration

A. DPW Mission, Vision and Values Discussion

Director Baas discussed the Kent County Strategic Plan 2019-2023. He reviewed the Vision, Mission and Priorities from the Strategic Plan.

Vision

Kent County is where individuals and families choose to live, work, and play because we are forward-looking, intentional, and inclusive community that serves as the economic engine of West Michigan.

Mission

Through responsible budgeting and thoughtful planning, Kent County government is committed to providing resources and services that promotes a high quality of life for the entire community.

Priorities

- Economic Prosperity
- High Quality of Life
- Excellence in Service Delivery
- Inclusive Participation
- Effective Communications

Director Baas discussed the goal post and benchmark used from the 70's which was taking from the Solid Waste Management Plan for Kent, Ottawa Region. These statements set DPW on a trajectory to look at overall operations of landfilling, reasons to have a Waste-to Energy Facility, and a Materials Recovery Facility. Here are the three statements from the slides:

“This plan recognizes that landfill operations are a necessary part of any solid waste management system. At the same time it is recognized that landfill should be converted to a supporting role, in favor of a process which treats solid waste as a resource of energy and recoverable salable materials.”

“It is assumed that cost data will not be the main determinant for scheduling this transition. In fact, to the extent that the public will support the costs involved, every effort should be made to expedite the transition. This will place a huge burden on the elected officials involved in such decisions, because eventually the public they represent will have to bear the costs involved.”

“The public sentiment and media pressure, together with the fragmented nature of the responsibilities involved, all combined with the intrinsic technical and economic complexities, all serve to create a problem situation which can only be resolved through coordinated and cooperative actions on the part of all principal parties, public and private.”

Director Baas shared a quote from Vern Ehlers from the Grand Rapids Business Journal in 1988. This quote is often used as an inspiration:

“...I would rather have my children undertake a state debt of reasonable proportions, than to expose them to the threat of contaminated drinking water, polluted Great Lakes, toxic health hazards and garbage without end. That is not the legacy I wish to leave future generations of Michiganians.”

Director Baas shared the DPW Mission, Vision and Values that was approved by the Board of Public Works back in August of 2015. It aligns closely with the Kent County Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Vision

Implement sustainable materials management strategies to reduce dependency on landfill disposal.

Mission

Foster collaboration and innovation solutions that deliver value to our stakeholders by managing discarded materials to conserve natural resources and promote a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable community.

Values

- Employees are our most valuable resource and essential in delivering our mission.
- Visitors, customers, and employees will receive prompt, courteous service that exceeds expectations.
- We will be innovative in our thinking, thoughtful in our planning and efficient in our execution.
- Community leadership, transparency and public-private partnerships drive our business decisions.
- We are committed to fostering a culture that embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity. We believe that our unique differences enrich and empower the lives of all, and we will work collaboratively to achieve common goals.
- We will not compromise on safety or environmental compliance.
- We consider today's actions for tomorrow's benefit.

Director Baas discussed the “20x’20/90x’30 Vision” that was launched in May 2016. Kent County adopted the strategy to rally Kent County residents and businesses to reduce the 602,083 tons of waste going to area landfills in 2015 by 20% by 2020 (to 184,670 tons)

and by 90% by 2030 (to 60,210 tons). Over the past few weeks, we developed and are recommending this mission, vision, and these values:

Vision

To implement sustainable materials management strategies to reduce dependency on landfill disposal by 90 percent by 2030.

Mission

Deliver economic, environmental, and social value to our stakeholders by managing discarded materials that conserves natural resources and promotes a healthy, vibrant and sustainable community.

Values

- Act with Integrity
- Serve as responsible stewards of County resources
- Provide high-quality service to internal and external customers
- Work collaboratively
- Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion

After reviewing the changes, both Commissioner Brieve and Director Baas stated that a decision is not needed today. Then, Commissioner Brieve asked for feedback and thoughts. All the Commissioners were in consensus with the changes and will discuss it further in a future meeting.

IV. Accounting & Finance

A. Overview of DPW Budget Process and Timeline

Kim Williams, Director of Finance discussed the Public Works Budget Process Timeline PowerPoint slides. Here is the timeline:

April

- Board of Public Works – Capital improvement plan (CIP) Review & Approval
- Waste to Energy Advisory Committee – Financial Summary Review

May

- Board of Public Works – Financial Summary Review
- Waste to Energy Advisory Committee – Operating Budget Review

June

- Board of Public Works – Operating Budget Review & Approval

July

- Budget Submittal

V. Director's Report

Director Baas provided an update on the Sustainable Business Park and the proposal process. We narrowed it down to two companies, Urbaser and Continuous Materials. We are going to dive even

deeper with these two companies in next couple of months and share the information with the Board starting in April.

VI. Public Comment/Miscellaneous

None.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.