

**FEBRUARY 6, 2006
RACELAND, LOUISIANA**

**STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF LAFOURCHE**

THE LAFOURCHE PARISH SOLID WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE, PARISH OF LAFOURCHE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, WAS SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2006, AT 5:30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM AT THE LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL BARRIOS CENTER, 1612 HWY. 182, SUITE 100, RACELAND, LOUISIANA.

Mr. Phillip Gouaux, Chairman of the Solid Waste Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Proceedings of the meeting were called to order with the following:

PRESENT: Mr. Michael Delatte, Co-Chair
Mr. Phillip Gouaux, Chairman

ABSENT: Mr. Brent Callais

DISCUSSIONS

The first item (1) on the agenda was a discussion concerning reducing the costs of curbside pickup. Chairman Gouaux stated that many members of the Council felt that the Committee should have found ways or possible ways of reducing costs. He stated that one of the suggestions was to possibly go to one (1) pick up a week. Mr. Roddie Matherne, General Manager of SWDI, LLC informed the Committee that after Hurricane Katrina a lot of garbage companies had gone to once a week pick up but that they were still at the same rate as when they were doing it twice a week because of the costs of labor and fuel. He said that once a week pick up could be considered, but pointed out that if there would be some savings, that he did not think it would be much. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to whether there would be any penalties and/or savings under the contract with SWDI, LLC if the contract was amended to do once a week pick up? Mr. Matherne said that at present, they were trying to get prices for a pick-up station in order to try to cut costs. He pointed out that SWDI, LLC. had not put in a major increase in costs like other garbage companies had done. Mr. Matherne then spoke of increases in fuel, labor, and health insurance. He said that hopefully money could be saved with the pick-up station, but said that he could not give an estimate of the amount of savings. Mr. Delatte commented on if there would not be much savings between once a week and twice a week pick-up and only a few dollars would be saved, adding that possibly Mr. Matherne could get some numbers to them. Mr. Matherne then explained that when going to once a week collection it had to be made sure that all of the garbage and trash was collected on the first collection day, because there was no second collection. He explained that at the present 90% of garbage was being put out on the first collection day and 60% was being put out on the second collection day. Mr. Matherne pointed out that with a once a week collection that all of that garbage would be collected on the first collection day, plus whatever trash debris was present, saying that just as many trucks would be needed as used now. He said that this would not be a cut in costs. Detailed discussions on this matter ensued, including fuel costs, the Parish's current contract with SWDI, LLC. and the pick up of bulky waste. Chairman Gouaux then began speaking about a house count and the increase of numbers of houses that SWDI, LLC. served. Mr. Matherne explained that various areas throughout the Parish had grown, and were continuing to grow since so many people had moved out of New Orleans, adding that was causing disposal to go up. He said that disposal and labor fees took up the contract. Chairman Gouaux stated that they were looking at a possible increase of approximately \$25,000 per month. He said that they were looking for reductions, but that he did not think there were any viable solutions available at the present time to give the results that were wanted.

The next item on the agenda (2) was a discussion concerning the garbage pickup of RV/trailer parks and apartment complexes. Chairman Gouaux stated that recently the Council had decided to eliminate commercial disposal under the umbrella of the Parish. He said that he was unaware that a lot of RV and trailer parks did not fall under that criteria, adding that this may be a way of offsetting the house count. Chairman Gouaux stated it was his understanding that some trailer parks and apartment complexes were being picked up as residential, to which Mr. Matherne agreed, adding that some were picked up as commercial. Mr. Matherne then explained the difference between residential and commercial and elaborated on same. Mr. Delatte inquired as to whether the Planning Commission would have documentation that would show what was a trailer park and what was not. He then went on to explain that not all trailers were in trailer parks but were on individual lots and mobile home subdivisions. Mr. Delatte said that if the area was developed with the Planning Commission as a trailer park then it should be a trailer park. Discussion then turned to RV Parks and Apartment Complexes. Mr. Delatte inquired as to whether the garbage picked up at apartment complexes were picked up in binds or as individual units, to which Mr. Matherne said that it depended on how the apartment was built. He said that some time there were staging areas. Mr. Delatte stated that information was needed regarding who, what, where and when with regards to apartment complexes, RV parks and trailer parks. Mr. Matherne explained that it was hard to get a number on that because it was hard to tell what was a trailer park and what was individual lots. Mr. Delatte then gave an example of a trailer park and individual lots. Discussions on the matter ensued. Mr. Danos informed Mr. Delatte that a quick survey had been done in the previous two (2) weeks with the help of SWDI and then informed the Committee that the Solid Waste Department was servicing approximately 60 units of apartments and trailer parks. He said that the total house count was estimated to be in the neighborhood of 700 individual units. Mr. Danos explained that this estimate was a rough estimate of the number of units that were being serviced as residential. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to what was the house count, to which Mr. Danos said that the increase in house count that was being proposed was 1,400. He said that calculations would have to be done to determine whether there would be a total wash-out because the 700 units would be part of the house count. Mr. Michael Delatte made a **motion** to have the Administration come back with the amount of the housing increase and the number of apartment complexes, RV Parks and trailer parks in the Parish, seconded by Mr. Phillip Gouaux and **carried** by a vote of two (2) yeas and zero (0) nays.

Chairman Gouaux inquired as to how long that type of information would take to put together, on which a brief discussion ensued. Mr. Danos said that an indisputable definition of what a trailer park was and what an apartment complex was would be needed, to which he was advised the Planning Commission should have that. Discussions on the matter continued. Mr. Danos said that if a list could be obtained from the Planning Commission, a unit count should not take long to complete. Chairman Gouaux advised Mr. Danos that the Council would possibly be adopting the Subdivision Regulations, Mobile Home Park Regulations and RV Park Regulations at their February 14, 2006 meeting, saying that Mr. Danos may want to look for the definitions in those documents. Mr. Delatte then spoke of the .07 of a cent sales tax and rhetorically asked what would be the difference between people living in mobile home parks who were paying the taxes and not having their garbage being picked up and people living in subdivisions who were paying the taxes and who were having their garbage picked up. He stated that there could be some conflict there and commented that some may feel that they were being discriminated against because they lived in a mobile home park. He continued to elaborate on the matter, including apartment complexes. Mr. Matherne stated that since it was a sales tax that the issue could be a gray area. Chairman Gouaux recalled that approximately a year ago that commercial disposal had been eliminated and said that they paid their sales tax also. He then asked what was the definition of a

commercial venture, asking if an apartment complex was a commercial venture and whether a trailer park was a commercial venture? Mr. Danos informed the Committee that they were currently servicing 950 small commercial units and that if apartment complexes and trailer parks would be looked at, then the small commercial units should be looked at as well. A detailed discussions on the matter continued. Chairman Gouaux stated that he thought that the District Attorney was needed to determine what was legal under the current contract and what was not and whether it was legal to charge some and not others. Mr. Phillip Gouaux made a **motion** to request a District Attorney opinion to determine what was commercial under the contract and what could possibly be done with pick up with regards to apartments, trailer parks and RV Parks, seconded by Mr. Michael Delatte and **carried** by a vote of two (2) yeas, and zero (0) nays. Mr. Danos said that the District Attorney had given an opinion regarding the elimination of commercial disposal but said that since a residential factor existed with trailer parks and apartments, that it may be a good idea to get his opinion.

The next item (3) on the agenda was a discussion concerning the development of a transfer station. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to whether it was a transfer or pick-up station, to which Mr. Matherne advised that it was pick-up station. Mr. Larry Picciola, who stated that he had a Masters Degree in Sanitary Engineering and a minor in Solid Waste, addressed the Committee and explained the difference between a transfer station and a pick up station, as requested by Mr. Delatte. Mr. Picciola explained that a transfer station was where the refuse was dumped on the ground, stored and then moved to another location. He then said that with a pick up station that refuse would be moved from one truck to another. Councilman Gouaux stated that even though it had been voted down by the Council, that with the increase in house count, the potential savings, the current balance of the account and the projected balance of the account in the future, he felt that this was a way of decreasing costs. He went on to say that SWDI, LLC. had began to develop a pick up site in Larose. Chairman Gouaux said that this would be the same type of operation and further that he would also like to look into incorporating Terrebonne Parish and possibly utilizing an area on Highway 90. He said that the reason for bringing in Mr. Picciola was that he was an expert in the matter and that he was needed to work on such proposals. Mr. Picciola went to say that a study had been done in 1983 or 1984 and further that he had spoken to Mr. Matherne earlier. He then explained that a pick up station would be installed in Larose and that Terrebonne already had one. He then explained that the primary goal when putting a transfer station was to keep the picking trucks off of the road, making a larger haul at one time. Mr. Picciola said that the way that was paid for was with the costs that was saved with trucking, labor and fuel. He said that all of those factors had to pay for the station, plus show a savings, saying that if a savings could not be realized that it should not be changed. Mr. Picciola said that the stations had to be centered around the generating points and as far from the land fill as possible. He said that Larose or Cut Off would be a good site. Mr. Picciola said that Raceland was not a major population center and was also very close to the landfill. He said that Thibodaux would probably be more of an area that a station would want to be put in if the milage worked because it was a larger center and was a longer distance to the landfill. Mr. Picciola said that Terrebonne Parish may use part of the Lafourche site for a portion of their Parish but not for their whole parish. He went on to elaborate on the matter, recalling the original study done in 1972 or 1973 and the possibility of putting two (2) or three (3) landfills in the Parish, and expanded on the same. Chairman Gouaux stated that River Birch may not be the right way to go with the problem because River Birch may not be around in the next five (5) to ten (10) years. He said that from what Terrebonne Parish had told him, their location for the pick up site was very inefficient because of the location. He explained that they wanted to try to get it away from populated areas and that it was not as much as a cost savings as they thought it would be. He said that if both parishes could save money

while both being accommodated it would be a good scenario. Mr. Picciola explained that the location would have to be looked at. Chairman Gouaux explained why Mr. Picciola, or someone with his knowledge, would be needed and said that it was to come up with a preliminary proposal and preliminary costs estimates to see if what was being suggested was plausible. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to whether Mr. Delatte thought this to be a worth while venture, to which Mr. Delatte stated that it was something that could be looked at. Mr. Picciola asked if the Committee wanted him to get together with Mr. Matherne and Mr. Danos in order to discuss the matter and come back with a proposal? Mr. Delatte then voiced his feelings that the matter s and possible locations should be looked at. Discussions on having Mr. Picciola meet with Mr. Matherne and Mr. Danos and come back before the Committee with a proposal continued. Discussions then began on the next meeting of the Committee and the changing of the Committee to a sub-committee, along with the replacement of one (1) of the members.

The next item (4) on the agenda was an update of the current status and forecast on the solid waste fund. Mr. Danos stated that a presentation had just been done in December of 2005. He said that it had been noted that the November, December and January tax revenues were up slightly, which he said was expected, adding that it was too early to tell if that was a long term trend or not. He said that by the same token, that the expenses were also on the rise and that it was hard to believe that the expenses would do anything but continue to rise. He then spoke of the debris at the road sides and that the Parish had no in house labor or equipment to pick it up so that private contractors were being relied on. Mr. Danos said that they may have to spend more money to get the debris picked up, commenting on the possible plus or minus balance of the fund, depending on the tax revenues and expenses. He said that it was too early in the year to determine what would happen by the end of the year. Mr. Danos stated that he was under the impression that the meeting was to start at 6:00 p.m. and therefore was not present when the first item on the agenda was discussed. Chairman Gouaux recapped the information that had been discussed. He then questioned how the increase in house count of \$25,000 would impact the bottom line and further if a proposal was obtained for a pick up station on how would it be funded? Mr. Danos said that he would hope that since the sales taxes was on the rise , that the proposed \$25,000 increase would be taken care of, but added that expenses were also on the rise and the net result could be a wash. He said that the impacts from the storms could be felt for sometime, up to a year ,and further that demolition and construction were basically booming with that material being put to the road and also tree cutters were dominant in the area along with roofing contractors from all over. He said that something would need to be done with the debris and that more money would have to be spent. Chairman Gouaux said that 2006 would be a tight budget. He then emphasized that if projects wanted to be looked at or another hurricane season like the pasts ones were had, the estimated balance would not be sufficient. Chairman Gouaux stated that if the fund was to progress, he thought that the .03 of a cent had to be brought back. He said that he had spoken to a lot of people and that he did not think it would be difficult to do. Mr. Delatte mentioned that it had failed at the Council level and added that the fund was only a hurricane away. He said that he thought it to be too late and that it probably should have been put back on in January of 2006. Mr. Delatte then voiced that something needed to be done one way or the other. He said that now would be time to go back to the full one (1%) percent if it was wanted, because the taxes were on the rise which meant more money was being collected which might help offset it more. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to whether Mr. Delatte wanted the matter to go before the Council, to which Mr. Delatte stated that they could maybe wait until they received the numbers that were previously asked for so that it would be better known if money could or could not be saved somewhere else. He said that once the answers were had and they were not what was being looked for,

that they would not have a choice. Chairman Gouaux said that he agreed with Mr. Delatte in that he felt that the .03 of a cent tax should have gone back on earlier. He then stated that the Council had also emphasized that they did not want, nor did they like, outside contractors coming into the Parish and then pointed out that if in fact another storm was had, local contractors would not be able to be used because there was not enough money to pay them. He stated that this matter could be brought back up at the next meeting of the Committee and a recommendation could be made at that time.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next item on the agenda was any other business. The Committee, after a brief discussion, decided to have their next meeting on whatever date the Council meeting to be held on February 28, 2006 was moved to. Chairman Gouaux inquired as to whether an item regarding that matter could be put on the February 28, 2006 agenda if the Committee meeting was held on the same date but before the Council meeting in time? Chairman Gouaux confirmed that the next meeting was tentatively set for 5:00 p.m. prior to the Council meeting currently scheduled for February 28, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

On **motion** by Mr. Michael Delatte, seconded by Mr. Phillip Gouaux, and with no further business, the Lafourche Parish Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting of February 6, 2006, **adjourned** at 6:38 p.m.

**PHILLIP GOUAUX, CHAIRMAN
LAFOURCHE PARISH SOLID WASTE
SUBCOMMITTEE**

**SHEILA B. BOUDREAUX, COUNCIL CLERK
LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL**