



Josephine County  
**Solid Waste Agency**

**JOSEPHINE COUNTY / CITY OF GRANTS PASS  
SOLID WASTE AGENCY  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 20, 2021**

Meeting convened at 3:03 p.m.

**Agency Board Members Present:**

Rob Brandes - Chair  
Rick Riker – Vice Chair  
Wade Elliott, alternate for Kyrriha Sevco  
Justin Fimbres  
Eric Larson

**Agency Board Members Absent:**

Connie Roach  
Brad Clark  
Steven Bethke

**Others:**

Nick Fahey, Southern Oregon Sanitation  
Chris Wilson, Republic Services, via Zoom  
Julie Jackson, Republic Services  
Garry Penning – Rogue Waste Systems

**Staff:** Jason Canady, Operations Officer  
Donna Anderson, Minute Recorder

**1. Introductions (00:00 – 00:50)**

a. Chair Brandes opened the meeting at 3:03 and took roll.

**2. Public Comment (00:51 – 01:00)**

a. None.

**3. Approval of Solid Waste Agency Meeting minutes from June 15, 2021 meeting.  
(01:01 – 01:49)**

Vice Chair Riker made a motion to approve the Solid Waste Agency meeting minutes from June 15, 2021.

Member Fimbres seconded the motion. There were no objections. Motion approved 5 -0.

**4. Action Items (02:30– 29:04)**

- a. Funding Request – Josephine County Environmental Health – Thomas Peterson gave a presentation about legal aspects of solid waste cases this last fiscal year, July 2020 through July 2021. They had 97 new solid waste violations and closed 159 solid waste violations that were abated by property owners under the guidance of the solid waste program. He mentioned some of the addresses for those abatements as well as a few of the drug house closures. His new job title is Solid Waste Specialist and Legal Law Enforcement Liaison. He handles all the legal cases for County Legal and works closely with Sheriff's office. All search warrants that are served opens a solid waste case and a drug abatement case at the same time. They assume possession of the property, destroy greenhouses, and other elements that contribute to illegal activity which then makes a solid waste mess to clean up. The solid waste program works with Josephine County Community Development Director, Mark Stephenson, for the destruction of greenhouses, which are considered solid waste, and have been part of the destruction of over 500,000 illegal marijuana plants in 2021. As a comparison, in 2020 the Sheriff's office destroyed about 150,000 for the year. His presentation included photos showing sleeping quarters on cartel grows and worker facilities being used that have no sanitary services. They are working with other agencies to put together new text amendments because they cannot cite people with the ordinance as written. He is also doing all the illegal marijuana inspections for the county. They are able to cite in the field and follow what Jackson County is currently doing and using that as an example for residents here in Josephine County. They are in process of bringing four properties into the foreclosure process which this county has never done prior.

Member Fimbres asked about citation authority and if they had to be deputized. Thomas indicated that citations go through the Circuit Court and not a hearings officer so they don't have to be deputized but, will give them the authority to cite for things like unpermitted buildings, public health issues, and the illegal diversion of water.

Thomas also talked about HB3000 that just got signed by the Governor which authorizes OLCC to oversee the hemp program. OSHA will also be working with them on this, and the fines will be amping up.

Chair Brandes asked of the 159 properties that were abated what was the average cost of clean-up. Thomas answered that it could range from \$10,000 and up and showed an example on his presentation an abatement that was about \$60-70,000 which also had illegal marijuana as well. At 195 Hogue

Road (Selma) it was \$92,000 and 1675 Williams Hwy (Williams) which was in violation since 2003 was \$96,000 but they removed cars, mobile homes, trailers, and over 40, 30-yard dumpsters. There is another one like it in Wolf Creek. They will start foreclosing on these properties so they can start making their money back.

Chair Brandes asked if full judgement is rendered, what the total value of those pending suits were. Thomas stated that they sold for real market value they would get their money back but, many of them are drug houses.

Vice Chair Riker asked if they are done under the RICO Act or is there another mechanism. Thomas was not sure. He stated another highlight is they are getting ready to file a lawsuit against Creekside RV Park in Wolf Creek and closing it as a drug house. They had many violations including toilets and showers that didn't work, extra trailers, and 150 illegal marijuana plants inside the RV park. The owner of the park sold it to his daughter, and she has been working with them to gain compliance to avoid litigation. They will do the final inspection next Monday, July 26, 2021 and the only cost to her would be time. She has added Wi-Fi to the park, created a safe space for kids, and it is now a nice RV park.

Chair Brandes complimented Thomas on a job well done and said that this is everything people hoped this program would be and with \$2 million of abatements they have coerced others into doing themselves and hundreds of thousands of dollars waiting on the books to potentially be recouped.

Jason Canady asked if the money recouped from these abatements will go back into the program or allocated to general fund. Thomas indicated it will be split between the County Code, Solid Waste, and the Sherriff's office.

Vice Chair Riker asked to confirm that the amount is \$98,000. Chair Brandes stated it was a fair question since, the program will be seeing a return on its investment.

Wade Elliott noted that he has been off this committee about a year now and the last thing he did was approve this for last year and hopefully in another year it can be self-sufficient and itis great to see this come back around.

**Member Elliott made a motion to approve the funding request of \$98,000 to Josephine County Environmental Health for the waste remediation project.**

**Vice Chair Riker** seconded the motion. There were no objections. Motion approved 5 -0.

- b. Illinois Valley Wellness Resources – Laura Mancuso, Program Coordinator, spoke about their mission of supporting seniors and disabled residents in their home. She has created a resource list for residents if they need a handyman or other type of service. They contact her because she does vet of the service providers including interviews, background, and reference checks. They will not send anyone to a senior's home unless they have been thoroughly checked by her. One of the issues they face is when a handyman takes trash to the transfer station but is not allowed to dump the household trash because they are not a contractor. She contacted Ben at Southern Oregon Sanitation (SOS) and they will work with this situation so he can help these people dispose of their trash. Many of these individuals that need assistance cannot haul their trash to the curb of their own properties because of their situation. Ben suggested that she apply for funding so that SOS could take a drop box container to the home, if the resident qualifies as low income or disabled, at no cost so they could fill it and it would be removed when full. She estimates they would need about 10 drop boxes per year and that would be about \$7,000. To get her estimate, she used the cost of the largest container for about a week at the home. Some residents will need a larger container so there are some variables with this formula.

Chair Brandes asked what her vetting process is for those that need help? Laura explained she is helping only senior and disabled residents. The process is they need to fill out an application so, she can verify if they are low income, and she does go out to their homes. They do have to prove they are low income.

Vice Chair Riker asked if part of the vetting is for the protection of her workers as well. Laura said for this process, as well as her "Adopt a Senior" program, she does visit the home along with the volunteer to be sure it is a safe home. She explained that usually, since they are asking for her help, they are nice to her.

Chair Brandes asked about the contact at SOS with respect to third party hauling and asked Nick to respond.

Nick mentioned they are trying to get rid of the third-party hauling. They are dealing with those that do bring the garbage to the transfer station and those

that will dump out it in the back roads again. We realized this is a group we would like to support, and our suggestion was a funding request for ten drop boxes.

Jason Canady asked Laura if this is to be a reimbursement grant like they traditionally are, and you can submit the receipts for reimbursement or if she needed the money up front. Laura wants to be able to make a phone call to SOS and they handle it. She does not want to have anything to do with the funds. Nick said he will double check with the office, but it shouldn't be an issue.

**Vice Chair Riker** made a motion to approve the funding request for Illinois Valley Wellness Resources for the Drop Box Container Proposal for \$7,400 dated June 24, 2021.

**Chair Brandes** seconded the motion. There were no objections. Motion approved 5 -0.

## 5. Matters from Agency Board and Staff

### a. Agency Board Items (29:30 – 31:45)

- Transfer Station Franchise Fee – Jason said the County is currently working on this and it could get rolled into the current franchise agreement. That would include the CPI language, franchise, and wrapping up the whole agreement. The Franchise fee is still 5% which goes to the County. The one for the City of Grants Pass is trickier because it says to pay 2.5% to the City and 2.5% to the County and we don't have any jurisdiction of the City's franchise agreement. That is a point we need to discuss. Jason asked if there was anything in the County's agreements that talked about 2.5%. Nick said he hasn't seen any. Chair Brandes didn't remember one either. Nick believes it may have been a gentlemen's agreement from when Republic took over the now Merlin transfer station on the property that the City owns but the jurisdiction is with the County, so they split it and we adopted the same practices for the Redwood transfer station.

Garry Penning added that at that time the transfer station was open to the public and SOS just had a reload facility and they were not open public. He didn't know how that language was written at the time. Vice Chair Riker asked Nick if that 5% is cents or dollars. Nick didn't have that number. He said they still pay the 5% of the gross for the franchise fee so it's a zero game for SOS but wanted to clear up something that isn't written down. Jason said he would look through old resolutions to see if there is any mention of the 2.5%. Nick added that if the City wants to give up that 2.5% that is fine with them, they just want to be sure it is added to the document.

b. Software conversion has been delayed until the end of September.

### c. Managing Agency Items

- Not discussed.
- 6. Agenda building for August 17, 2021 (29:16 – 31:46)**
    - a. Standard operating procedures for waste haulers
    - b. Transfer station franchise fee
    - c. Yard waste charge increase
  - 7. Items for Open Discussion**
    - a. None
  - 8. Adjournment (38:10 – 38:11)**

Meeting adjourned 3:41 p.m.

Full meeting recording available at:

<https://www.grantspassoregon.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22261/Solid-Waste-Agency-Meeting-Audio-for-042021->

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