

**JEFFERSON BELMONT REGIONAL SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 9, 2024**

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Bob Baird, Mike Bianconi, John Davies, Chuck Dawson, Scott Fabian, Andrew Henry, George Irvin Jr, Robert Krajnyak, Joe Luckino, Dan Lima, James Mavromatis, Rob Sproul

ABSENT: Jerry Echemann, Tony Kolanski, Mitch Morelli

OTHERS: Anita Petrella, Scott Renforth, Natalie Lysle, Louise Holliday, Frank Shaffer, Shawn Albaugh, Vince Gianangeli, Bobbi McMillen, James Still, Mark Bigler, Paul Romano, Robert Kuchinsky, Tony Morelli

A quorum being present after the Joint Personnel and Finance Committee meeting ended, Chair Scott Fabian called to order the regular meeting of the Jefferson Belmont Regional Solid Waste Authority Board at the JB Green Team building, 67895 Pickering Road, St. Clairsville, Ohio at 5:43PM on, Monday, December 9, 2024.

MINUTES: A motion to approve the November 4, 2024 regular monthly meeting minutes was made by Mr. Krajnyak, and seconded by Mr. Henry. **Vote: 10 said Aye, with Mr. Davies and Mr. Sproul abstaining. Motion passed.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Bobbi McMillen

Mrs. McMillen addressed the Board. She stated she speaks to the Board as a citizen being that she did resign last month. She wanted to bring some concerns, but because the Board has tied her hands over the last several meetings, she has not been able to address them. The first thing is that it has come to her attention that they have had 4 Belmont County employees resign in approximately the last 18 months, three of those being office employees who formally put in writing that it was due to a hostile work environment due to actions of your Executive Director. She asked the Board to consider this when they move forward with their business. Secondly it has come to her attention, which she is concerned about, of misappropriation of funds regarding environmental enforcement officers. Number one in Belmont County, photos of that deputy being asked to wash the Colorado vehicle that he does not use or drive. She is not sure why that is happening, she doesn't believe that fits his job description, but he was asked to do so by the Executive Director, and there is a recording somewhere of that. It has come to her attention that the Jefferson County Environmental Enforcement officer has come to Belmont County out of jurisdiction to conduct business in Belmont County. She is again, not sure why, but brings this to the Board's attention. Lastly, it's come to her attention that ERB Electric has been contacted to provide cameras and voice monitoring for the building, she is not sure why, and is interested to hear why that's being proposed or if that is proposed, finds it interesting that the board will consider doing that, but when asked about GPS for vehicles, knowing we have a driver who has been caught speeding in a JBGT truck in a construction zone with no seatbelt, and before her arrival had never been documented in his file. She asked the Board to consider this as they move forward tonight with their business.

Ms. Petrella requested permission to ask a question. Mr. Fabian answered yes. Ms. Petrella asked Mrs. McMillen if she provided us the Credit Card, Belmont Educators recorder, your facebook login, and your Drivers Inspection Login because we have been asking for them. Mrs. McMillen stated she has not been asked for anything other than to make an appointment with you, and due to your hostile work environment and what you've created, she has been advised by her attorney not to meet with you. Ms. Petrella asked Mrs. McMillen if she could turn those in to Mr. Bianconi like she has her keys? Ms. McMillen stated that if she had been allowed to finish out her term the way she expected to, to make a streamless transition, you would have had those things. Those things were left here, where they are at

now she has no idea. She stated she wasn't allowed to come in and do a closing exit, even to get her personal items, who knows where you put my things, when your hauling things out of here with the Jefferson County Sheriff Deputy, I don't know what you've done with my things. Ms. Petrella stated she had asked Mrs. McMillen if she wanted to make an appointment to pickup her personal items. Mrs. McMillen stated not with you. Ms. Petrella stated that we have a credit card and recorder and some things missing. She asked Mrs. McMillen if she didn't know the facebook login in her head or the inspection login? Mrs. McMillen stated her facebook is her facebook. Ms. Petrella explained no the JB Green one? Mrs. McMillen answered no, she didn't know that login, that Mrs. Lysle set me up, I've never logged into that. Mrs. Lysle stated no, that is a lie, I helped direct you to set that up on your computer. Mrs. McMillen stated that she has no JB Green equipment, passwords, she was not allowed to come to share anything, I gave a Belmont County Board member my information as far as what I had access to that information. Nobody has contacted her, the credit card was left in the office, she can take you to that if it were here tonight, if those filing cabinets were here there is a key to access where that credit card has been kept for the last, I don't know how many years, Tammy kept it in the same location for years. Nobody, including the Board has reached out to her and said this is missing.

STAFF REPORTS:

Fiscal Report:

Mr. Renforth reported revenues for November of \$313,684.18, with expenditures of \$233,804.09 and net income of \$79,880.09. Both Payroll and Non-Payroll expenditures are attached to his report for the Board inspection. Mr. Dawson asked about the duration the Legal Fees shown were for. Mr. Renforth and Ms. Petrella answered it was for the month. Mr. Davies asked if that was a typical month, and what the difference was from previous months. Mr. Renforth stated there were employee-related things that needed to be investigated which the attorney was involved in. Ms. Petrella added that Attorney Bauer had also attended two Board meetings. Mr. Bianconi asked for an email copy of the itemized bill.

A motion to accept the fiscal officer's report and approve Expenditures for November 2024 was made by Mr. Luckino and seconded by Mr. Dawson. **VOTE: Unanimous, Yea, by roll call. Motion passed.**

Mr. Renforth reviewed the Apex Tonnage Report for October 2024. In-District tonnage was 5,334.51 tons. Out-of-district tonnage 29,619.42 tons, Out-of-State tonnage was 127,286.10 tons, yielding \$255,502.50 in fees.

Mr. Renforth stated that annually, due to the 2015 rates & charges settlement agreement requiring the Authority to have a separate Rates & Charges Fund, a cash transfer from General Fund, Contract Fee Fund or a combination of both is required when the Rates & Charges Fund cash is not sufficient to cover the Recycling Program Expenditures to eliminate the end of year deficit. As of the end of November the Rates & Charges Fund is negative \$1,404,662.05 which does not include December 2024. Each December adjustments are needed to cover these funds, and he asked the Board to approve a cash transfer not to exceed \$1,300,000.00 from a combination of both the General and Contract Fee Funds.

Mr. Bianconi made a motion to transfer the \$1,046,662.05 from the combination of the General and Contract Fee Funds into the Rates & Charges Fund as requested. Mr. Luckino seconded. **Roll Call Vote: All said Yes. Motion approved.**

Mr. Renforth requested that the following be approved to cover Appropriations of the listed funds/ledge codes. Budget adjustments needed for end of year 2024, which is in addition to what was asked that month. He asked that Fund 01 6210 Contract Services increase \$10,000.00; Fund 03 6210 Contract Services increase \$20,000.00; Fund 01 6230 Contract Repairs increase \$3,000.00; Fund 03 6230 Contract Repairs increase \$10,000.00; and Fund 01 6460 Building and Grounds increase \$3,500.00; for a total increase requested of \$46,500.00. This is to make sure we get through the end of the year on these funds.

Mr. Krajnyak made a motion to approve the Appropriations as requested. Mr. Irvin seconded. **Roll Call Vote: Motion approved.**

Director's Report:

Ms. Petrella stated that as had been discussed in the last few months, the Ohio EPA Bin Grant for 50 bins, 25 for each County was recently due (to her November 22, 2024). Mrs. McMillen had resigned (November 18, 2024) and no grant application was submitted. She asked the Board for approval to purchase 23 bins, which would be divided between the two Counties for \$30,000.00, the amount left in Capital Improvement of this years Budget. Then she would request approval to purchase 23-25 more next year.

Mr. Luckino made the motion to approve purchasing 23 bins for \$30,000.00 as requested. Mr. Mavromatis seconded. **Roll Call Vote: All said Yes. Motion approved.**

Ms. Petrella reminded the Board that approximately 8 years ago the Authority gave over \$100,000.00 to Harrison County to assist in paving of the access road to Apex Landfill, Harrison County Rd 51. She stated that David Cieply recently invited her to a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the newly paved road. They had grinded it up, widened it, and used Portland Cement and is now a perfect access road for Apex. She did attend the Ribbon cutting and wanted to inform the Board know it was paved.

Ms. Petrella stated that she wanted to address the Board because seeds have been planted in members minds about her conduct or capabilities after 12 years at JB Green Team. When she came here 12 years ago the Executive Director Cliff Meyer had no working relationship with Apex, some may remember Apex had closed the Authority funding and moved disposal to Kentucky because of the zero relationship they had with him. She explained that the Authority now has an excellent relationship with them, she and Dave Cieply meet often to talk about Apex, and the Authority. That Craig Petrella had been coming to our Board meetings and had worked together perfectly. The Authority also had Belmont Auditor Andy Sutak's Office suing the Authority, those relationships have now improved, and we no longer have issues there. During the time the City of Steubenville's Council and the Jefferson County Commissioners had disputes about water, Mr. Meyer had stuck his nose in the issue and lost the relationships with both the Steubenville City Council and the Commissioner's Office. She stated she now has excellent relationships with both offices which can be verified here tonight. As many may remember, the Township Trustees in Jefferson County did not want to renew the Authority Plan when Mr. Meyer was the Director, she is unsure of how the Belmont Township Trustees voted at that time, but we now have excellent relationships with the Trustees. She stated that since she has been Executive Director we have worked hard to unite Jefferson and Belmont Counties, not just the offices, but the Board Members as well. She believes members have kind of become friends and there was no animosity in our Board. We have united and engaged in making JB Green Team a respected entity in both Counties, we purchased buildings and are no longer

gypsies, when she began we were called gypsies, and now we have homes in both Counties. We have sophisticated trucks, educators that go into the schools as well as adult education. We have employees that give back to the Community and are proud to work for JB Green Team, and wear clothing with JB Green Team on it, which they wouldn't do before. Now in three months, one person has caused divisiveness and animosity not only within the Board but within the staff, the drivers, and the management of this organization. The deliberate acts to involve the Belmont Board members and ignore Jefferson Board members shows the true characters of an individual. She stated she is responsible for the morale, safety, and the fiscal accountability of this Authority, and she treats it and its employees as if it were her own business. She stated she will continue to do everything in her power to restore and reunite the unity and friendship to this Board. With that said, many rumors and questions have been spread, but no one has asked her for a reason or why things happen. Maybe it was past practice, maybe it was history, maybe it was experience, why things are done, or decisions are made the way they are. She stated in this packet are facts to dispel some of the rumors she's heard, but never received officially. The seed has been planted in your minds that maybe Belmont County is not treated equal to Jefferson County, not true to her and she hopes the packet will help the Board understand, or as always please call or ask her. She hopes by now the Board knows her well enough to know how she acts in her role. She will provide the packets for members to take home after the meeting to read, which explains some of the things that have been brought to her. Ms. Petrella stated the packets are not opinion, they are facts which include emails, fiscal records, and receipts so as to dispel the rumors. She encouraged the Board members to call her with any questions after reading them, as always she is available to them days, nights, and weekends.

Commissioner Tony Morelli

Commissioner Morelli wished to address the Board about Ms. Petrella's conduct and capabilities as Executive Director. He stated that much of what he had planned to say is what Ms. Petrella just did. That she has been accused of a lot of things recently, and asked the Board if anyone has asked her about them. He stated knows her very well and has for a long time, none of the things he has heard is the Anita Petrella he knew, which is why he has contacted some of the Board. He stated as for the accusation of hostile work environment, he would have to see what that one was because he has been around her for her own businesses and knows her well. What he hopes happens is to get both sides together in one room with someone between, to find out if the accusations are true or not. He stated that Ms. Petrella has been here quite a while, and what he has seen in Jefferson County is a well-run business, and it is not an easy job. He has talked to the employees, and he's helped drivers wheel recyclables out to the trucks at the Court House. He can't find anyone else with issues after talking to people over the last six weeks, that have previously worked for JB Green Team or that currently work here. He stated he would like to see a resolution, and that we haven't had any problems within JB Green as long as he's been in office and when he used to come to many of the meetings. This was run like a well-oiled machine with a nice bank account, while a lot of other departments are worrying about finding a dollar to spend. He stated he doesn't know what the plan is, but this can't go on any longer. He's been in business all his life, and if Ms. Petrella resigns or is let go, good luck to the Board finding someone with the business instincts that she has, because it's not going to be easy. She doesn't need the money from this job, nor the headaches, she's been very upset since he'd first heard about these accusations back in September. We need closure, her family wants closure, so if the Board wants to let her go, let her go, or resolve it. He knows there are meetings going on in Belmont County, and Jefferson has not been included, and that's not how this Authority works. He stated that if he had an employee like Ms. McMillen in Jefferson that came to him in such a way, he would say time out, you have to include Belmont, the Board is both Jefferson and Belmont members. He is hoping to get some resolution.