

Meeting with Government Ministers

Monday, March 21, 2005 at 10:00 A.M.

Municipal and Provincial Affairs Board Room – St. John’s

In attendance:

Government

Minister Byrne
Minister Osbourne
Paul Dean
Bob Osmond
Baxter Rose
Tom Murphy
Bas Cleary
Wayne Churchill

C.N.W.M.C.

Allan Scott
Jeff Saunders

Allan gave an overview of what the Central Committee has done to date and referenced the request by government to withdraw the environmental registration for our proposed site. The C.N.W.M.C. took an approach to minimize impact on the environment such as leachate control and treatment. We are not concerned with fiber products at this point because they have the least impact.

Allan informed officials that discussions were ongoing with Canadian Waste for a design/build/operate proposal. We have our costs from our consultant and this P.P.P. proposal may be more cost effective. When we have their proposal, we will compare costs.

Allan reiterated our position that all municipalities must participate in this strategy for it to be successful. If one town is given permission to continue as it is, then all towns will do the same.

C.N.W.M.C. has outlived its mandate and at this point we cannot move forward. Government has not endorsed the present strategy and until they do, our Committee’s work is complete.

Minister Byrne said there is “no need to fold up your tent and go home”. The government is committed to waste management. There was no budget allocation from the previous government to move the strategy forward.

Both the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs and the Department of Environment are preparing a paper for cabinet on how this process can move forward and allocate necessary funds.

There is a lot of discussion on lined landfills. This is costly and perhaps natural containment may be a solution in specific cases. They may increase the number of sites but this is not yet determined.

While the cabinet paper is being prepared, government is moving ahead on waste reduction programs across the province (mainly fiber products). They want municipalities to understand the importance of managing our solid waste properly and voluntarily participate.

C.N.W.M.C. needs to know what regulations/guidelines will be in place so we can proceed with the environmental registration. The site selected is at Norris Arm North and it meets all existing criteria as per government guidelines. If another site is to be selected, then government will have to change the criteria. Minister Rideout has expressed concern with this site but has never contacted the committee to discuss.

A committee from Norris Arm North visited the Green Bay Waste site and was impressed. Minister Osbourne said he would be prepared to take several members of C.N.W.M.C., representatives from Norris Arm North and government officials to visit several sites on the mainland. Allan stated that C.N.W.M.C. was also looking at visiting sites that have been developed at a P.P.P. The P.P.P. is an option for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Minister Osbourne said that government is still concerned with leachate treatment. It would be difficult to have private companies become involved without these controls due to future liabilities.

Minister Osbourne also stated that other municipalities are encouraging government to move forward on the strategy. The paper that is being drafted will address the number of regional sites and that may be increased from three. They are not sure what the realistic number is. The major change in the strategy will be whether they should consider natural containment in certain cases.

Government is committed to waste management and the report should be complete within the next three months.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 A.M.