

Selah City Council
Study Session
City Council Chambers
April 8, 2008

Basin Disposal, Inc.

Mayor Jones introduced Steve Wheatley of Basin Disposal Incorporated. The Mayor noted that the refuse service provided by BDI is head and shoulders above any refuse company the City has ever worked with.

Mr. Wheatley stated his company feels as though they are part of the City. He handed out information sheets, saying he would cover two different topics today.

He stated Yakima County at their last meeting the Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC) voted to remove glass from their curbside recycling, and his company had made that change at the first of 2008.

He said the SWAC is in the process of reviewing the solid waste management plan. The Terrace Heights Landfill is projected to close in 2015, so the Solid Waste Advisory Council is looking at options provided by Yakima County. He referred to his handout and reviewed those options and his company's response to them.

Option #1 is basically to do nothing and to reroute all of the commercial garbage down to Cheyne Landfill. He suggested if BDI had to reroute all of their trucks to Cheyne, it would have disastrous impact on roads and rates, making that the worst option.

Option #2 would allow commercial haulers to continue to use the Terrace Heights Landfill, but would not expand the transfer station. He stated that is not a viable option because the traffic is bad enough out there now.

Option #3 would allow everything to continue to go to Terrace Heights but would expand the transfer station to handle the increased volume. He noted that one could work; however, the traffic out there is already bad enough, and if this is to be a 20-year plan, it may not be enough.

Option #4 is to build another transfer station out in West Valley somewhere to handle both commercial and self-haulers. He stated, of the four, this is probably the best one, but he suggested a fifth option.

Option #5 since self-hauling and commercial trucks just don't mix, Mr. Wheatley proposes making the West Valley transfer station to accommodate self-haulers only. He said consideration must be given as to how commercial haulers would get trucks and trailers that are up to five thousand and fifty-three feet long to that site. He suggested that would create traffic problems on both ends of town.

He stated if you made West Valley only for self-haulers, you wouldn't need such a large facility. He stated they could ban self-haul from Terrace Heights during the week, and it could be open for self-haul on weekends only, so that would not be a problem.

He noted all the routes today are based around Terrace Heights, and to allow everyone to continue to use that only creates more wear and tear on the infrastructure. He said these decisions are not really Selah's problem, but everyone ends up paying the dump fees.

Councilman Paul Overby, who represents the City of Selah on the SWAC, stated at the last couple of meetings there has been discussion about eventually increasing the tipping fees. He noted currently the minimum tipping fee second lowest in state of Washington, and while that is a nice service, it increases the tendency to haul too frequently. He stated self-hauling is a significant source of revenue, so the County needs to keep generating that.

Mr. Wheatley stated if they would develop the West Valley Transfer Station as a self-haul, it would decrease the impact on Terrace Heights. He stated traffic is a big issue because they were projecting 72 self-hauls per day and they are getting 120.

Councilman Overby stated a lot of the concern comes down to infrastructure. He noted even if they close Terrace Heights, there needs to be follow-up; Cheyenne Landfill is going to need to be expanded at the same time. He stated the West Valley Transfer Station is just one more capital improvement project that must be done.

Steve Wheatley said Yakima Waste wanted them to raise tipping fees, but they wanted fees to remain low. He noted commercial has more incentive to recycle, and that's where you get your tonnage.

Mayor Jones said he was on the Council when Selah did away with its dump.

Mr. Wheatley addressed recycling in Selah, noting it changed at the first of the year when they introduced the rolling carts and comingling recyclables. He said the number of people recycling has increased 67%. In the past they averaged 140 people participating and have 250 participants now, so many that they have run out of carts a couple of times. The tonnage from curbside last year was a little less than 14 ½ tons, but this year it should be 50 tons. He noted he probably will be coming to Council soon to add plastic to Selah's recycling.

Mayor Jones said he's cut his garbage by ' since he has been recycling.

Mr. Wheatley said BDI has worked with a company called S&P Recycling in Oregon. He said S&PR is now talking with Michelson. He noted Michelson is now baling recycling all together, and SPR sorts it at their facility in Longview.

Councilman Paul Overby noted that glass is now being pulled out because of the baling. He noted automation makes recycling easy, efficient and economical, but glass was the one thing that made comingling recycling dangerous.

Steve Wheatley said there are mountains of glass in Vancouver; it just keeps piling up. He stated one company may make wine bottles in the Longview-Kelso. Currently residents have to take glass to the County or Central WA Recycling.

Councilwoman Nichols asked how BDI distributed recycling carts.

Mr. Wheatley stated they originally gave carts to those who had put out recycling bins. He asked Councilwoman Nichols to give him her address if she'd like to have a recycling cart.

Councilman John Tierney asked if this program is city-wide or if it is split just like the garbage system is in the City.

Councilman Overby stated it is split currently, although Yakima Waste is also moving toward recycling.

Councilman John Tierney asked if it will continue to be split

Steve Wheatley stated Yakima Waste's program is certified through the state, and it has just received approval to proceed with recycling.

Councilwoman Nichols asked how the City is promoting this program with our residents.

Steve Wheatley passed out recycling flyers, noting the program did get some free (although wrong) advertising on local TV.

Mayor Jones said that would be a good article for the "Selah Signals."

Mr. Wheatley noted they pick up once a month.

Councilwoman Nichols said she would like to see us make people aware of what's available.

Frank Sweet said that would be relatively easy to do - we could put it on the bills, put it in the "Selah Signals" or send out a flyer, or all of those.

Councilman Overby noted the contract has a provision for reports, and he would like to see a report quarterly.

Steve Wheatley said he could provide that.

Mr. Overby noted that five years ago the state set a goal of 35% recycling and we haven't even come close to that.

Mr. Wheatley said they've changed the definitions of what qualifies as recycling, making it more difficult to meet goals.

Mayor Jones asked Mr. Wheatley to pass along to the people at BDI what a great job they do and how much they are appreciated.

Councilwoman Nichols gave Mr. Wheatley her address so that he could provide a recycling cart.

Selah Skateboard Association

Mayor Jones opened the Study Session for the Selah Skate Board Association.

Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Hagler introduced Ginger Tyler to speak for the Association and there are other parents and volunteers here as well.

Ginger Tyler addressed the Council on behalf of the Selah Skate Board Association, stating everybody knows what has happened in the past. She noted she started getting calls about the Skate Park again, and Jose Rocha, who is now youth president, came to her office, and then the phone started ringing more. She noted there were more parents and more kids than in the past.

She stated there were problems with the Teen Center, and they made changes, and now the Youth Center is wonderful.

She enumerated changes they would like to see with the new skateboard park, noting one major change is that they want to provide classes for 7-10 year olds. She said that the fence around the proposed park would be locked until 2:30 when school is out and would remain open until the park closes at dusk. She stated the park would be locked at night and closely patrolled by police. She said she's not hearing any complaints from the kids about the controlled access. Another change is that parents would like to have a place to sit and watch their kids skate, so they'd be looking for some nice benches.

She said the *Yakima-Herald* story triggered donations and volunteers, and that this group is interested in having a true skate park association, where they'd pay monthly dues. She called Council Members' attention to the last page showing funds they have raised so far. Ms. Tyler said she didn't want to waste her energy unless people were serious about creating a real skate park.

She reviewed adult and youth committee members, introducing those present in the audience. She noted there were problems at the old Teen Center site even before the skate park was there. She further noted that the skate parks that don't have problems are the ones that are visible. She stated she had tried shouting from Banner Bank toward the proposed site, and her husband couldn't hear her, so noise should not be a problem. She said she has received 200-300 phone calls with only one negative. She said after she had addressed that caller's concerns, he volunteered to help.

Mayor Jones told Ms. Tyler that the Teen Center location was a second location for the skate park. He noted it was more visible at the first location, but the problems were still there. He stated the City is looking forward to working with the Association, but he has high expectations. Ms. Tyler said she wants to have enough money in the budget to do things right.

Tom Durrett, noted he attended a Council Meeting two weeks ago. He stated he has done research on skate parks and if children are involved in the skate park they gain ownership. He suggested tasteful graffiti would enhance the park and prevent tagging. He said it is dangerous for kids to skate on streets or sidewalks. He stated he spoke with leaders involved in new park at Kiwanis Park which will consist of grass-high bowls. He passed around a picture showing the model for that. He concluded by saying in 2007 there were over 13 million skateboarders in US. He said skate boarding is a good physical activity, and is good for kids.

Mayor Jones said he spent a day in Santa Barbara and saw their Skate Park near the beach and thought it was beautiful. He said he also went to a park in Logan, Utah as well as one in Penticton, and each of those parks succeeds because of parental involvement. He said he is sure that the City and Council will support participation as the Association moves forward.

Councilwoman Nichols asked where we are in finances.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet responded that the City's original budget was for \$15,000, but that was removed in order to balance the budget. He suggested they should be able to make some adjustments.

Councilman Overby said the challenge was issued by the City, and the Selah Skate Park Association has responded well.

Ginger Tyler said there are grants available that will further enhance their funds, and she believes money will continue to trickle in.

Frank Sweet said he thinks we can get donations, for example sturdy garbage cans. It seems as though the group has matured enough to follow through with the skateboard park, and that the City can pony up some money to help.

Councilwoman Nichols said if they can put one in for \$16,000 that's a steal, because funding for Kiwanis Park is running upwards of \$275,000. She noted that is a different kind of park, solid concrete.

Ginger Tyler noted they already had some ramps.

Glen Faulkner, 384 Lancaster Road, addressed the Council, noting companies gave "donation" prices for items listed including concrete, gravel, 2 x 6's, stakes, pumphtruck, sealer, place & finish and sawcuts.

Mayor Jones said the City has backhoes and operators, so we can work it into our schedule. He said he wants to see where this is going and when.

Bonnie Sluder, 108 Hillcrest, introduced herself to the Council. She said she has two boys who skate and are good citizens.

John Roca, 3153 Selah Loop Road, father of the student president, stated he has volunteered a couple of days of labor to the cause.

Mayor Jones suggested the group should get a Project Manager, and suggested Allen Schmid, who was project Manager for Carlon.

John Roca noted people in Spokane have offered to help.

Mayor Jones asked the group to keep the City informed on their progress.

Rae Hawley, 207 N. 4th Street, addressed the Council, noting she has two sons who skate. She said we need to show them that they are accepted in the community. She said she wants her kids to feel comfortable here.

Mayor Jones said he is willing to work 24 hours a day to keep Selah free of the criminal element.

Wayne Pederson, 631 West Selah-Naches Rd., commended the City for painting the crosswalks. He asked if he can get a record of violations of crosswalks. It became clear that Mr. Pederson's comments were not in relation to the Study Session, so he was asked to wait for the Council Meeting.

Mayor Jones ended the Study Session.