

**Virginia Litter Control & Recycling Fund Advisory Board  
and the Department of Environmental Quality**

**Electronic Communication Meeting via GoToWebinar**

**November 23, 2020**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members Present:**

Bo Wilson, Dr Pepper of Staunton  
Clara Mills, Spotsylvania County  
Larry "Buddy" Buckner, SDI  
Mike O'Connor, VPCGA  
Nick Surace, AECOM

**DEQ Staff:**

Jeff Steers, Director of Central Operations  
Leslie Beckwith, Director, Office of Financial Responsibility & Waste Programs  
Chris Moore, Director, Office of Financial Management  
Sanjay Thirunagari, Manager, Office of Financial Responsibility & Waste Programs  
Prina Chudasama, Litter and Recycling Program Coordinator

**Visitors:**

Chuck Duval, VOICE (Lindl Corporation)  
Emily Douglass, James City County  
Morgan Guthridge, Virginia Beverage Association  
Ken Hutcheson, Old Dominion Public Affairs  
Jessica Steelman, Accomack-Northampton PDC  
Pat Calvert, Virginia Conservation Network

**Proceedings:**

- Sanjay stated that an electronic meeting was being held instead of a physical meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Chairman Wilson announced that there was a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.
- Chairman Wilson welcomed all parties to the meeting. All attendees were identified along with their affiliations.
- The November 23, 2020 meeting agenda was approved by majority vote.
- The November 6, 2019 meeting minutes were approved by majority vote.

## **New Business:**

### **1. DEQ FY2020 Fiscal Update:**

Mr. Chris Moore, DEQ, presented the DEQ Fiscal Report and stated that the Fund is in good financial condition. The Board and all attendees were presented with revenues and grant calculations.

FY2020 total revenue available for use in GY2021 grant calculations was \$1,911,773, which was about \$200,000 more than what was available in FY2019 for the GY2020 grant cycle. The Fund is now back to the normal level, which is usually between \$1.8 and \$2 million of revenue. After the General Assembly deductions for \$9,472 for litter tax and \$1,596 for soft drink tax, the net resources to be allocated would be \$1,900,705. 90% of the \$1.9 million would be allocated for non-competitive grants, 5% for competitive grants and 5% for admin costs.

Mr. Thirunagari stated that the new application was used for processing grants this year. He also mentioned that there are a few more things that need to be added to the online application and therefore, some of the admin funds will be used for making updates and maintaining the system. Ms. Mills stated that she was under the assumption that the unspent admin funds were being sent back to localities. Mr. Moore reiterated that the admin funds were held back in order to build a new software. Ms. Mills asked how long it had been since the unspent admin funds were being held back. Mr. Moore will check and get back to her.

The General Assembly passed a litter tax increase and hence the litter tax money would start increasing this year. Next year, the litter fund amount will be higher due to this change. Also, some localities didn't have the resources to complete their accounting and performance reports and therefore, DEQ received the last batch of reports on the November 13<sup>th</sup>. DEQ was then able to complete the allocations and disburse the grant payments for non-competitive grants.

**The FY2020 Fiscal update was accepted by majority vote.**

### **2. DEQ FY2020 and FY2021 Litter Grant Update:**

Ms. Chudasama presented the Board with the GY2021 numbers for non-competitive grants. This year, 187 non-competitive grant applications were received for GY2021 funding. For the non-competitive grants awarded in GY2020, 188 accounting and performance reports were received. There were 2 localities that did not submit accounting and performance reports for GY2020 or new applications for GY2021 – Town of Cedar Bluff and Sussex County. No response was received from both localities despite multiple calls and emails for over five months. 15 competitive grant applications were received for GY2021. For the competitive grant awarded in GY2020, all 14 localities that received grants submitted their respective reports.

There was approximately \$60,000 in non-competitive unspent grant funds for GY2020 from 22 localities. A few of them were due to the COVID-19 pandemic but most of them were the localities that usually have a roll-over. For the competitive grants, there was approximately \$6,000 in unspent funds from 2 localities. The Town of Vienna was unable

to conduct their project due to the pandemic and therefore, unable to use the full grant award. Greenville County had about \$170 in unspent funds. Both localities returned the money to DEQ via checks.

**3. DEQ FY2021 Competitive Grants:**

The Board decided that they would like extra time to review the competitive grant applications. Mr. Thirunagari stated that the completed applications were received very late this year. Mr. Wilson asked to set up a meeting in January 2021 to discuss the competitive grant awards.

**4. Competitive Grant – VRA Information Request:**

Ms. Beckwith brought up the November 15, 2019 email received from the Virginia Recycling Association (VRA) to DEQ with specific questions on how the Board awards competitive grants. Ms. Beckwith reiterated that the Board members are not allowed to discuss Board business outside of the Board meeting. The Board responded to DEQ stating that they would prefer to discuss the questions in the next Board meeting. The questions asked by VRA were: what is the basis the Board uses for awarding competitive grants? Do committee members use a rubric or other tool for evaluation and discussion of grant applications? What is the methodology used to determine the amount of the award when it differs from the amount requested?

Mr. Wilson stated that the Board looks at the total amount requested and how much each locality requested. They also look at how much they received in their non-competitive grant. Each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis depending on the amount of money in the competitive grant fund and how much money is being asked for. It also depends on what the requests are. The goal is to spread out fund as much as they can and to as many localities as they can. Ms. Beckwith stated that DEQ will compile the response from the Board and respond to VRA's request.

**5. SR42 – Waste Diversion and Recycling Task Force:**

Mr. Thirunagari asked the Board if they had any questions regarding the task force. Ms. Beckwith stated that the list of people that would like to be on the task force has been compiled by DEQ. The intent was to have a meeting before the end of the year.

Mr. Steers stated that there was a delay in finalizing the list of potential members that is ultimately approved by Director Paylor. DEQ is hoping to have the list finalized in the next week or two after which, everyone who is on the task force would be notified. The first meeting would end up being scheduled in early January as DEQ has to allow a 30 days public notice period for all public meetings. This topic has also become popular with the environmental justice community. DEQ is seeking a broad range of membership across the industry, localities, businesses, community and non-governmental organizations.

**6. COVID – Impact on LG Activities:**

Mr. Thirunagari stated that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and staff/resource issues, localities were unable to submit their grant documents on time. Usually the documents

are received by August/September but this year it took a lot longer. There were also a few localities that were unable to spend their grant funds due to COVID. These localities asked what the options were for unspent funds going forward for FY2021 and what the thoughts were from the Board on whether they would be rolled over or if there were any other considerations. Mr. Thirunagari asked the Board how they would like to proceed. Mr. Wilson stated that the Board would like to keep it simple and keep the process the same as before.

**7. Election of Officers:**

**MOTION by Mr. O'Connor extend existing officers for another term; seconded by Mr. Buckner and passed.**

**Old Business:**

None.

**LG Online Application/LG Guidelines and Forms:**

Mr. Thirunagari presented the Board with the updated DEQ Guidelines and forms. He stated that the previous version had specific years. The Guidelines were updated to standardize the dates and DEQ contact information. On the non-competitive grant application, the program manager field was added so that DEQ could interact with the person who was most familiar with the litter prevention and recycling program at the locality. For all the other forms, the content was kept the same but the fields were made more consistent with the online application.

**MOTION by Mr. Wilson to accept the changes; seconded by Ms. Mills and passed.**

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Next Board Meeting:**

The number of meetings of the Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board are determined by the needs of the Board. The next Board meeting will take place in January 2021 to discuss the GY2021 competitive grant applications. The date and time are to be determined later.

**Adjournment:**

Chairman Wilson adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.