

Presentation to FRSWC meeting Nov. 10, 2010

On behalf of the Crane Mountain Enhancement Board, we want to thank you putting us on the agenda tonight to bring you some questions and concerns regarding Post Closure of the landfill. Our first question concerns the quality of the documents that form the basis for the Crane Mountain Landfill's Post Closure funding and planning.

The February 2006 GEMTEC document entitled "Crane Mountain Landfill Capacity" comprises only one page, plus an illustration, Figure 1 (Original Footprint and Future Conditions). It is our understanding that determination of the life of a landfill would require an intensive, detailed, and well-documented study. In this document, a statement about garbage density increase is "based on literature data," but no data or reference is provided. The document ends with the advice to "measure and update the garbage density on a regular basis (say every two years)." Has the garbage density been updated since 2006? Is this an adequate study of the life of the landfill?

The February 2010 "Post Closure Cost Review" is a three-page document plus a one-page Table. It includes numerous assumptions and estimates that are not backed up. For example, the annual monitoring costs are estimated to be approximately 20% of current costs "if, by that time, there is no history of contamination." It is also assumed in this Review that leachate will still be trucked to the Lancaster Lagoon in 2048. However, there is a clause in the Waste Commission's 2005 agreement with the city that allows the city to terminate the agreement without penalty if there are problems with the capacity of the lagoon or the impact of the leachate on the lagoon. Has this calculation of post closure costs, and the annual tipping fee increments required to cover those costs, provided a firm enough basis for the Waste Commission's decisions about post-closure?

Our second question also relates to the quality of study that has been performed to determine what factors are involved in post closure care of this particular landfill. ADI's 2009 Review spells out some of these factors in Section 7, pages 33-35: staff, property taxes, retirement benefits, decommissioning, and more. The Review also cites remediation and contingency costs should the water supply become contaminated. Has this independent external assessment of the perpetual care plan for the Crane Mountain landfill been carefully considered by the Commission?

Our third question also concerns site-specific data; this time it relates to what data will be or has been collected to determine whether the 30-year post closure timeline is sufficient for this particular landfill. The Action Plan refers to scrutiny of Cell #1 for this data. However, since cells 1, 2, and 3 were left uncapped for years, would data from these cells be representative of the data from subsequent cells, which were capped after they were filled? Has the Commission looked at current research on guidelines for assessing the adequacy of the 30-year timeline?

Our final question regarding the sufficiency of funds being accumulated for post closure care of the Crane Mountain Landfill is directly related to the validity and adequacy of the documents upon which these funds are based. We are aware that the accounting

procedures for the Perpetual Care Fund were changed as of January 1, 2007. However, it is unclear how much has been accumulated in this fund so far. A 2003 report by CIBC Asset Management states that the amount accumulated to that point was \$800,000. In July, 2009, GEMTEC reported that it is their understanding “that the value of the post closure fund is \$700,000.”

What would be the impact on taxpayers of the city of Saint John and the Fundy Region if funding for contingencies, post closure, and long term monitoring of the site is insufficient?

Given the sensitive nature of the location of this landfill and given the importance of this issue not only for those living downgradient of the landfill, but also for those in other parts of the Fundy region, wouldn't it be prudent to scrutinize the Post Closure/Perpetual Care of the landfill now rather than waiting three years to do so?

Thank you again for putting us on the agenda tonight and for listening to these concerns and questions from the Crane Mountain Enhancement Board.