

DRAFT
CHITTENDEN SOLID WASTE DISTRICT
19 Gregory Drive South Burlington
MEETING ROOM
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
March 25, 2026

***Hybrid Meeting via Zoom.**

PRESENT

BOARD MEMBERS:	Bolton	-----
	Burlington	-----
	Charlotte	Ken Spencer
	Colchester	-----
	Essex	-----
	Essex Junction	Mike Sullivan
	Hinesburg	Rick McCraw
	Huntington	Barb Winters
	Jericho	Leslie Nulty
		Tom Joslin, Alt.
	Milton	Betsy Paret
	Richmond	-----
	Shelburne	Margaret Wiener
	So. Burlington	Paul Stabler
		Alison Lazarz, Alt.
	St. George	-----
	Underhill	Paul Ruess
	Westford	Katie Frederick
	Williston	David Howell
	Winooski	Bryn Oakleaf
		Rachel Kennedy, Alt.

STAFF: Josh Estey, Director of Operations; Jennifer Holliday, Director of Public Policy & Communications, Amy Jewell, Director, Administration; Becky Johnston, Data and Policy Analyst; Brian Mital, Associate Director of Operations, Sarah Reeves, Executive Director

PUBLIC: Michael Moser; University of Vermont (UVM) Center for Rural Studies

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order & Agenda
 2. Public Comment Period
 3. Consent Agenda
 4. MRF-Project Update
 5. Drop-Off Center Survey – Preliminary Results
 6. Executive Session
 7. Other Business
- Adjournment

Paul Ruess called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

1. AGENDA

No changes were made to the agenda.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public were present in the meeting room, via phone or Zoom. No comments were made by the public.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.1 Minutes ~~February 25, 2026~~; March 10, 2026

3.2 Program Updates

3.3 Finance- Fund Balances, Reserves, & Warrants

3.4 ~~Executive Director Update~~

The Consent Agenda was approved as amended.

M. Wiener asked that the minutes of February 25th be clarified to state that staff time is saved by using Excel rather than NetSuite; all agreed.

P. Ruess acknowledged the announcement of J. Holliday's retirement in June. S. Reeves spoke of J. Holliday's impact on both CSWD and national policy setting. P. Ruess reminded the board to use their official email for communications. Answering a question from P. Ruess, S. Reeves communicated that a consolidated collection contract was awarded to Casella for the city of Burlington. The recycling will be brought to the materials recovery facility (MRF). This will not have a negative impact on CSWD.

PAUL STABLER made a motion, seconded by LESLIE NULTY, to approve the minutes of February 25, 2026 as amended and the Executive Director Update. Motion passed, with BARB WINTERS abstaining.

4. MRF – PROJECT UPDATES

S. Reeves said that federal investigators are reviewing the recent fraud incident and that additional policies are being put in place so that this does not happen again. These policies will be approved at the May meeting. The FY 27 budget is being completed by staff this week and will be brought before the Finance Committee for review at the April 7th meeting. The goal is to bring the full budget before the full board at the April meeting. S. Reeves said staff will be meeting with the bank to discuss a bridge loan, if necessary.

P. Ruess read previous unapproved executive board meeting minutes from earlier this month asking for a review of the changes to be made to the standard operating procedures because of this security incident. S. Reeves said that the main change is not to initiate any new ACH transfers. Answering a question from K. Spencer, S. Reeves said that any changes in ACH will be verified by the contract manager. The contract manager will then verify every change with two organizational contacts. Answering a question from P. Ruess, S. Reeves said that Simpleroute did a full review of the network and affected accounts which showed that there was no indication of malware or other breach. Simpleroute has also recommended several systems to improve security. The board will be conducting an independent investigation with Steve Ellis of Paul Frank + Collins, acting as attorney for the board to determine if there is a business email compromise or if there is another cause for this breach.

Answering a question from L. Nulty, P. Ruess said that auditing and financial control implementation is part of the oversight responsibilities of the district. Answering a question from B. Paret, P. Ruess, said that it is currently too early to estimate the cost of hiring a consultant and conducting an independent investigation. Answering a question from K. Frederick, S. Reeves said that there is still an active federal investigation. L. Nulty asked that even if there is no intentional fraud within the district, she would like

to see that appropriate technology and adequate staff are implemented going forth considering the scale of the new materials recovery facility (MRF).

J. Estey addressed approval of change order #1 regarding HVAC cost for the building. An allowance that was carried by ReArch on the first estimate after meeting with the fire department and concerns with smoke evacuation were addressed; the HVAC system cost will be significantly larger. Answering a question from B. Oakleaf, about the cost increase J. Estey said that the original design of the HVAC system was only designed with environmental air exchange for the office portion of the building and clarified that they were able to come to an agreement on a system that would be both energy efficient and meet the standards needed.

Answering a question from B. Paret, J. Estey clarified cost figures. S. Reeves added that there is a contingency amount built into the building estimate for when such components arise but this does represent the actual cost versus the original allowance. S. Reeves answered a question from B. Paret that she would verify with J. Estey to get a status update of the overall cost of being within budget. L. Nulty raised concerns about the impact of recent change orders on budget stability, requesting a revised cash flow projection to reflect these adjustments and consider current recycling tonnage that shows a deficit against the forecast.

PAUL STABLER made a motion, seconded by MIKE SULLIVAN, that the CSWD Board of Commissioners hereby approves the District's Executive Director to execute PCO number 008 with REARC Construction Company in the amount of \$485,586.20 for HVAC construction costs. All in favor, motions passed.

J. Estey presented Change Order #2 regarding additional excavation required for the baler pit, involving the removal of clay and the addition of stone. It was noted that extensive site investigation, including over a dozen test pits, was completed prior to building placement. SD Ireland completed the work to maintain the project schedule and carried the cost.

LESLIE NULTY made a motion, seconded by PAUL STABLER that the CSWD Board of Commissioners hereby approves the District's Executive Director to execute PCO number 011 in the amount of \$76,127.70 for purposes of reimbursing REARCH and SD Ireland for additional costs due to unforeseen below-grade conditions. All in favor, motion passed.

5. DROP OFF CENTER SURVEY – PRELIMINARY RESULTS

M. Moser, Center for Rural Studies (CRS) at UVM, presented the findings of the recent drop-off center survey, outlining key motivators and barriers to usage. The discussion focused on leveraging this data to enhance customer support and refine marketing strategies. The survey was primarily developed by CSWD and CRS in February, featuring a mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) to assess resident motivations. The survey engaged 418 residents in Chittenden County with a 4.8% margin of error. Respondent demographics showed 97% homeowners, 80% living with family members, 17% living alone and 4% living with non-family. Data collected indicated a 50/50 gender split regarding household waste management decisions. The survey confirms strong outreach, with 97% of respondents reporting awareness of local drop-off centers. Regional representation was balanced across Chittenden County, with data aligning with and providing insight into localized census demographics. The survey results indicate approximately a third of the respondents utilize the drop-off center. Residential curbside collection is used by approximately 50% of households, while 14% utilize landlord/condo association dumpsters. Less than 3% make other arrangements for collection.

The analysis of the survey responses showed that most users choose drop-off centers primarily for affordability, with many generating insufficient trash to justify contracted pickup fees. Additionally, convenience was cited as a major contributing factor as well as dissatisfaction with putting out bins or with curbside haulers. When asked about household trash disposal, survey findings found that 41% of the participants favored curbside collection over drop-off centers due to convenience. Further barriers included vehicle transportation concerns (20%) and time constraints (15%). Awareness of the drop-off locations was neutral among participants. Answering a question from B. Oakleaf, M. Moser said that the mobility factors that were concerns of participants were related to age range and being able to put bins curbside or in a car.

An incentive survey was conducted to test the monthly savings required to move residents to a drop-off center. While 16% of respondents indicated a \$10/month savings would drive adoption, additional incentive tiers were offered to those who initially declined. In total, 15% agreed at \$20/month, 25% at \$30/month and 14% at \$40/month. The data indicates that for a small, residual group of respondents, convenience outweighs financial incentives, regardless of the savings offered. Further analysis of qualitative data indicates that convenience, specifically time management and physical ease of use, is a primary factor. Concerns regarding physical limitations, particularly among older residents, and winter conditions affecting transport were cited as major barriers to adopting off-site disposal. Answering a question from A. Lazarz about concerns regarding the environmental impact of increased individual vehicle trips to the proposed drop-off center, S. Reeves stated that many residents currently combine waste disposal with other errands, reducing total vehicle miles. B. Oakleaf stated that there was a similar study conducted in 2012 at the state. Answering a question from B. Paret about including gender on surveys in the future, J. Holliday said that this helps with finding the correct focus group with marketing and social media. A. Lazarz noted that 18% of participants cited odor and transport issues as barriers to drop-off center utilization; improved education on disposal methods was proposed as a solution.

J. Holliday presented findings from the CSWD Drop-Off Center customer survey conducted March 4–22. The 18-day study aimed to evaluate customer preferences regarding structured price increases to fund capital expenses. Data was collected via SurveyMonkey using a URL code and QR code, with incentivized participation to win one of three \$100 Visa gift cards. There were 780 participants who answered three questions with one open-ended comment opportunity. Questions included: primary drop-off center used, materials typically dropped off while utilizing drop-off centers, and ranking preferred methods of raising revenue. The four ways to raise revenue were: increase trash fees, charge a \$1 facility user fee per visit, \$1 charge for food scraps and charge \$1 for recycling. The raw data showed that 35% of the respondents favored charging a facility fee and 34% favored increasing trash fees by \$1 per bag. Data analysis indicated no significant variance between the weighted and raw data. 358 comments were received with 64% positive feedback, 23% neutral, and 13% being in direct opposition to fee increases.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

7. OTHER BUSINESS

P. Stabler mentioned that the bi-weekly warrant that is reviewed by the Finance Committee provides good information and that the Board may be interested in seeing them.

Adjournment – Motion by PAUL STABLER, Second by MIKE SULLIVAN, to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion passed at 7:34 PM.

I agree that this is an original copy of minutes, and they have been approved by motion of the Board of Commissioners at the meeting held in _____.

Board Secretary