

Jefferson County Board of Commissioners Agenda Request

To: Board of Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

From: Monte Reinders, Public Works Director/County Engineer

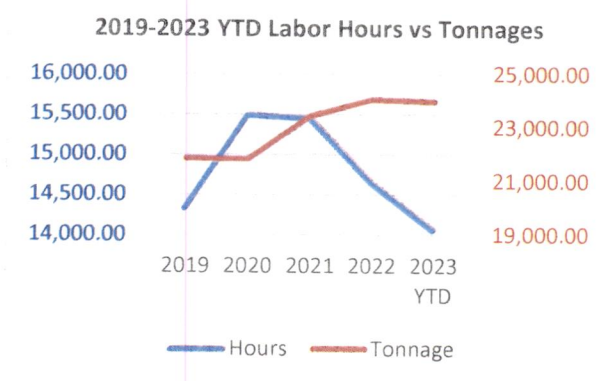
Agenda Date: December 18, 2023

Subject: Temporary Revisions to Transfer Station Operating Hours

Statement of Issue: Beginning January 1, 2024, Public Works Solid Waste Division cannot safely operate the solid waste transfer station six days a week with the currently available trained staff.

Analysis/Strategic Goals/Pro's & Con's: To maintain posted transfer station hours in November and December, Public Works borrowed Operators and Laborers from the Roads Division and from the City of Port Townsend and occasionally closed the Quilcene facility in order to maintain posted transfer station operational hours. Solid Waste will experience further staff loss in January.

Available labor for solid waste and household hazardous waste material management has decreased since 2020 whereas solid waste tonnages have increased as shown in the below table with data through November of 2023:

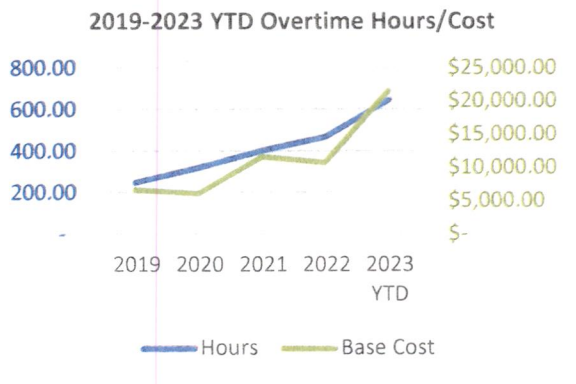


Solid Waste Division workload has increased at the same time that it has experienced this reduction in available staff. Key personnel remain absent on extended medical leave. Staff shortages in key supporting departments including IT and ER&R has placed an additional burden on the Solid Waste Division to help fill gaps in equipment maintenance needs and software/hardware issues. Recruitment and retention have been challenging owing to private

sector and other County agency competition combined with Jefferson County's high cost of housing and low housing unit availability.

After months of advertising with no responsive applications received, Solid Waste has recently been able to recruit two potential equipment operators. We remain hopeful that this could help alleviate some of the issues that have plagued the operation; however, staff turnover remains a risk for this essential function that serves every household in business in Jefferson County and the City of Port Townsend.

Fiscal Impact/Cost Benefit Analysis: Solid Waste Division staff have worked six hundred and forty-six (646) hours of overtime in 2023 through November with an attendant increase in non-budgeted costs as shown in the below table:



Even with this overtime, available staff hours have decreased as shown in the previous table. The rise in overtime hours increases the risk of injury to Solid Waste Division staff, creating a greater exposure to the County for L&I claims. The high level of overtime hours has led to staff fatigue and burnout which will lead to additional staff losses if not corrected.

Recommendation: The hiring process for two new Operators should be completed by the first week of January 2024 with adequate training completed by early February, 2024. In order to reduce overtime hours and provide time for needed new hire training, Public Works recommends the reduction in transfer station operational hours from six days/week to five days/week with temporary closure on Saturdays from January 6, 2024 through February 3, 2024 and with regular hours resuming February 5, 2024.

Department Contact: Al Cairns X213

Reviewed By:


 Mark McCauley, County Administrator

12/13/23
 Date