

LOCAL/STATE

Solid waste plan ratification process under way

BY STEVE ROBB
MESSENGER STAFF JOURNALIST

Ratification of Athens-Hocking Solid Waste District's updated solid waste management plan is under way.

The new document is a required update of the plan approved in 2012 and reflects changes that have been made in the district's operations since then. It also includes a couple proposed new programs.

In order to go into effect, the plan must be approved by governments — including cities, villages and townships — representing 60 percent of the district's population. However, the county commissioners of the two counties and the City Councils of Logan and Athens have veto power over the updated plan.

Ratification of the 2012 plan ran into problems when Logan City Council rejected it three times before finally ratifying

it. The issue for those council members was a new \$3-per-ton solid waste generation fee to be paid by haulers. The fee remains in effect.

The ratification process for the updated plan started May 1 and will continue to July 29. Roger Bail, district coordinator, said that as of Monday the Hocking County Commissioners and the Rome Township trustees in Athens County had ratified the updated plan.

If the plan is not ratified, the director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency is required by state law to prepare a plan and to order the district to implement the state plan.

If the district's updated plan is ratified, then the district will seek approval from the Ohio EPA to implement it. Although the updated plan does not include increases in landfill and generation fees, nor does it include new rules, it does call for a few new programs. One is an environmen-

tal education program which, if the update is approved, will likely result in contracting with someone part-time to conduct the program, according to Bail.

Also new would be a financial assistance program that would provide grants to political subdivisions wanting to start recycling programs, Bail said. If the update is adopted, then guidelines for the financial assistance program would need to be developed, he said.

Other changes reflected in the updated plan have already taken place since 2012, including implementation of single-stream recycling and the holding of household hazardous waste disposal events in each county on a rotating basis (2018 in Hocking County, 2019 in Athens County).

The update also reflects changes that have taken place as a result of the complete separation of the Athens-Hocking Solid Waste District and the nonprofit Athens-Hocking Recycling Centers Inc. in years following adoption of the 2012 plan. The changes included the district no longer being involved in garbage collection and the shifting to the non-profit of solid waste district employees and equipment the district used.

As a result, Bail said income from the generation fee is being shifted to support recycling drop-off locations. The number of drop-off sites has increased, and instead of having recycling available a few hours a week the sites are now available full-time.

The 2012 plan also called for the district to create and operate a materials recovery facility to sort recyclables (thus allowing single-stream recycling). That task was instead undertaken by the nonprofit and the facility opened at Theisen Industrial Park in 2016.

Man accused of conspiracy enters diversion program

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A guilty plea was accepted earlier this month in Athens County Common Pleas Court from a man who was charged with conspiracy in the aggra-

vated trafficking of LSD.

However, the guilty plea of Randall C. Zimmer, 21, of Liberty Township, is being held in abeyance while he participates in the Athens County Empowerment

(ACE) diversion program. If Zimmer successfully completes the program, the case will be dismissed.

The offense occurred in April 2017, according to the charge.

A news release issued at the time by the Major Crimes Unit said that Zimmer was arrested after drugs were found in a backpack during a traffic stop on Bobcat Lane.

Teen who died in van could not communicate properly with 911

Westerville man sentenced for threatening Rep. Stivers

FROM STAFF REPORTS

COLUMBUS — A Westerville man has been sentenced to 40 months in prison after sending a threatening voicemail message last year to U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers.

E. Stanley Hoff, 69, was sentenced in U.S. District Court for reportedly threatening to assault and murder the congressman.



Steve Stivers

Benjamin C. Glassman, a U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, recently announced the sentence as imposed by U.S. District Judge Michael H. Watson.

The Messenger previously reported that Hoff was indicted by a federal grand jury in July 2017. Hoff had

reportedly sent a series of voicemails threatening Stivers' life as well as the life of a Stivers family member. The messages were sent from February to June 2017 to Stivers' office in Hilliard. The case was investigated by U.S. Capitol Police.

Hoff threatened the Congressman and his family because the Congressman was not legislating according to Hoff's political views," Glassman said in a news release. "That is unacceptable in our society. Peaceful political argument or banter is one thing, but Hoff's conduct was a far cry from that."

Stivers (R-Upper Arlington) represents Ohio's 15th District, which includes most of Athens County.

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Top stories read from May 6-12 on www.athensmessengers.com:

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4. Everything on the primary ballot
5. Burrow opts to transfer
6. Athens building that houses 'The Union is sold'
7. Athens pool to open in June
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