

TRANSFER STATION RECEIVES MORE FUNDING

Written by Tessa Schweigert, Powell Tribune

State provides \$100,000 for trailer, scale

The state of Wyoming will help pay for equipment at the city of Powell's planned transfer station, but it won't give as much as the city requested.

Last week, the State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB) voted to award the city \$100,000 — roughly half the cost of one compaction trailer and a scale at the city's transfer station.

The proposed facility will serve as a drop-off point for city trash when the Powell landfill closes to household waste in September. The compaction trailer will be used to haul waste to the regional landfill in Cody, about 30 miles one way. The city originally asked for \$182,500 to help purchase the scale and two trailers — one primarily as a back-up.

However, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality office recommended funding for just one compaction trailer. In a letter to SLIB members — Wyoming's five statewide elected officials — Craig McOmie of the state DEQ's solid waste division said he made the recommendation after reviewing the garbage amounts, road data and several interviews. He also described the transfer station as a cost-effective way for the city of Powell to get its trash to Cody.

"The construction of a transfer station and use of rolling stock to transfer waste was the most efficient way over time to manage escalating costs for the city of Powell," McOmie wrote.

SLIB members followed the DEQ's recommendation. The board is made up of Gov. Matt Mead, Secretary of State Max Maxfield, Treasurer Joe Meyer, Auditor Cynthia Cloud and Superintendent of Public Instruction Cindy Hill.

The \$100,000 approved last week is in addition to \$652,502 the state awarded last summer for half the estimated \$1.23 million cost of constructing a transfer station. The money is provided through Federal Mineral Royalty Grant Funds.

Until last summer, the state didn't provide funds toward "rolling stock." However, in June SLIB officials changed regulations to make trash disposal-related rolling stock eligible for grant funding, clearing the way for Powell's application. The city will cover its portion of the trailer and scale cost through the city's sanitation enterprise reserves.

The state's decision to reduce the funding amount shouldn't affect the city's transfer station plans, said City Engineer Sean Christensen.

"One trailer is sufficient for the current volumes we are handling," Christensen said in an email to the Tribune. "We may need an additional trailer in the future if we increase collection."

The compaction trailer will hold roughly 50 cubic yards of material, and the city expects the trailer will be hauled to Cody once per day on average.

Christensen said the city sought a second compaction trailer as a back-up in case something happens — such as mechanical issues, road delays or bad weather.

Without a second trailer, the city would have to haul trash directly to Cody with its sanitation trucks in those situations. City leaders have been looking to build a transfer station to avoid direct hauling when the Powell landfill closes to household trash. The Park County Commission found upgrading the Cody landfill and closing those in Powell, Meeteetse and Clark was the most cost-effective way to meet more stringent state DEQ regulations protecting groundwater.

City administrators are planning to build an 8,000-square-foot indoor transfer station on 26.5 acres of land it owns near the intersection of Lane 9 and Road 7.

Last month, with several neighbors opposed to the project, the Park County Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to recommend county commissioners deny the city's request to rezone its property from transitional to industrial zoning. The Park County Commission will make the final decision on the rezoning as well as a special use permit the city needs in order to build and operate the proposed station. The commission is slated to consider the city's request on Tuesday, Feb. 7.