

August 28, 2009

Dear Mr. Clifton:

As Commissioner Foushee suggested last Tuesday, here's a summary of ideas to cut costs and keep the Bradshaw Quarry Convenience Center open.

We are working with the county's estimate that Bradshaw Quarry costs roughly \$35,000 to operate 6 days a week. The county estimates costs of \$3,600 to buy out the lease and \$10,000 to restore the property. The net savings would be \$21,400 in FY2009 - 2010.

The community supports the county's cost reduction initiative and is willing to accept compromises to keep Bradshaw Quarry open – even if it's only a couple of days a week. Here's a starting list of ideas.

- Reduce operations at Bradshaw Quarry to 2 or 3 days a week – including either Saturday or Sunday, or better yet alternating Saturdays and Sundays.
- Eliminate all Bradshaw Quarry services except household trash and basic recycling, including batteries. Residents are willing to drive longer distances to haul electronics, metal, wood, mattresses and other waste that's less frequent.
- Don't worry about yard waste disposal. Our yard waste consists of fallen trees, leaves, and garden debris which are used for firewood, compost and habitats.
- Stagger the hours across centers so you can share employees and vehicles. For example, keep Bradshaw Quarry open on Tuesday, Thursday and an alternating Saturday & Sunday; and High Rock (the other lesser used facility) open on Monday, Wednesday and an alternating Saturday & Sunday (opposite BQ).
- Possibly keep centrally located Eubanks open 6 – 7 days and reduce the days at all other centers to 2 or 3 days a week.

We do not wish to impact other communities. However, if the above ideas don't provide sufficient savings, consider further reducing hours at the other centers and/or reducing curbside recycling, especially in the western end of Bingham.

Given the county's concern that the Bradshaw Quarry site is too small and trucks are competing with resident activity -- isn't it possible to bring your trucks in when the center is closed to the public? With reduced hours, that should be easy, and if services are reduced, additional space will be freed up.

As you know, the cost problems for the county's solid waste department are just beginning. When the cash-generating landfill shifts to a WTS cost center, the county will lose the subsidies for recycling and other programs. We fully support proactive steps to reduce overall costs for solid waste management. Cutting the hours at all convenience centers is an effective first step.

Implementing our suggestions will allow the county to cut costs without eliminating our service completely. We believe that cutting hours at all five centers and operating alternating schedules offers clear advantages over maintaining four centers on a uniform four day schedule. We are open to other suggestions and compromises, and encourage you to collaborate with us to solve this problem.

Closing Bradshaw Quarry places a disproportionate financial and logistical burden on a single community that has no local alternative to handle its trash. Please remember that citizens are struggling with tight budgets, too.

Chief Tommy Holmes of the Orange Grove Fire Department (chief@mebtel.net) and Kathleen Hoffman of Orange County Voice (hoff6506@mebtel.net) have agreed to coordinate community interests and will work with you and the Commissioners. Hopefully they can help you resolve this issue quickly and easily.

There is a win-win here. Please work with us to find it.

Sincerely,

Residents of Bingham and Cheeks Township including:

Apple Mill Neighbors

Bradford Ridge Subdivision

Buckhorn/ELG Neighbors

Cane Creek Baptist Church

Carolina Concerned Citizens (Oak Grove Church, Nick's, BQ and others)

Cascade Forest Homeowners Association

Collins Creek Neighbors

Covered Bridge Neighbors

Dimmocks Mill Neighbors

Frog Level Community (Arthur Minnis/Dodson's)

Harry's Market at White Cross

Heritage Families & Farms

Sykes Family Farms

Holmes Family & Farms

Kirby Family

Kirk Family Farm

Stanford Farm

Hunters Woods Neighbors

Lloydtown/Morrow Mill Loop

***Maple View Farm and Agricultural Education Center
Mebane Oaks Road Neighbors
Mt Mitchell Road Homeowners
Neighbors in the Trails
Orange County Voice
Orange Grove Fire Department
Silas Lane Homeowners
South Orange Grove Road Neighbors
Sugar Ridge Neighbors
Orange Grove Neighbors
Rigmor House
Teer Road Neighbors
Thunder Mountain Neighbors
Western Park Lane Neighbors
White Cross Volunteer Fire Department
.. and many others***