



MEMORANDUM

**TO: RIVANNA SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

FROM: PHILLIP MCKALIPS, DIRECTOR OF SOLID WASTE

REVIEWED BY: BILL MAWYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: BOOK BIN REPLACEMENT, MCINTIRE RECYCLING CENTER

DATE: AUGUST 25, 2020

This memo and presentation are to consider whether the book exchange program should be continued at the McIntire Recycling Center (MRC).

Background

For many years, a Book Bin has been operated by MRC staff. The Book Bin has been housed in a repurposed metal “Conex” box or shipping container. The Conex box was well used when the RSWA obtained it, and it has had ongoing attempts at repairs consisting mainly of patches to the roof and repainting. The doors of the bin did not fully close, and the floor and roof had decayed to the point where costly repairs had become necessary.

From the viewpoint of social distancing, the bin was limited to a single occupant at any one time. Additionally, it has been acknowledged that second-hand books are reasonably unable to be disinfected (which is why Goodwill and others have quit taking them). For this reason, the bin was closed to the public in late March at the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic. In June, as the Governor of Virginia began to consider easing gathering and decontamination restrictions, RSWA staff looked at the bin and found that the bin and its contents had become riddled with mold. As it did not seem feasible to remediate the mold in the bin, it seemed prudent to remove the bin.

In June 2020, RSWA received an email from the public asking that the Book Bin be replaced with a “...more expansive and intentional unit with dedicated volunteer or third-party staff.” RSWA has received at least two additional inquires requesting consideration of a Book Bin replacement.

Book Bin Replacement Options

Several options have been included for the Board to consider. They are generally separated into two parts, the building, and the staffing. Specifically, they include:

A. The Building

1. No Replacement. Leave book exchanging with the private market. Direct book/reading/educational resources to the local library and school systems.

2. Replacement with a used “Conex” box-style structure.
3. Replacement with a purpose-built, Shed-style structure.
4. Replacement with an architecturally designed, purpose-built, structure.

B. The Staffing

1. No Staffing (level of service provided with former Book Bin)
2. Staffing for Book Bin 40 hours per week. Would allow staffing 5 days a week. May not include staffing over weekends.
3. Staffing for Book Bin 54 hours per week (Winter Hours) and 60 hours per week (Summer Hours). Allows staffing full time at any time the MRC facility is open to the public (only closed on Tuesdays).

The initial request also suggested that the facility be used as a memorial to a past patron. Staff does not recommend that facilities be named in honor of individuals.

Building Analysis

1. The “No Replacement” option has zero financial impact. Allows books/reading/educational outreach to remain within the purview of the private market and the library system.
2. Replacement with a newer “Conex” box (as shown below). The prices of these used shipping containers vary depending on location and condition, but they are likely to be able to be obtained for less than \$5,000.00 (delivered on-site). This solution will continue the same problems that the original Book Bin had including limited access and occupancy, difficulty in securing it from adverse weather, poor lighting and ventilation. It would also likely develop some of the same deterioration issues that the old bin had such as decaying flooring and leaks in the roof. This option is implementable in a relatively quick timeframe, probably within two months.



3. Replace with a Purpose-Built, Shed-style structure. This option is a modification of a prefab shed structure and is anticipated to cost less than \$9,000 with shelving installed. It has two sets of doors to allow greater occupancy and airflow. The entrances are recessed to prevent blowing snow and

rain from entering the building. Many windows (not all shown in this rendering) allow a great deal of natural light. Building is designed for minimal maintenance and a long, outdoor life. Due to high demand, delivery of sheds is slower than normal but should be available within six months.



4. Replacement with an Architect-designed, Purpose-Built, structure. This is greatly dependent on the design and materials. Architectural fees would likely cost between \$2,000 and \$3,000 and then the cost of construction would go on top of that. Staff estimates that this could cost between \$20,000 to \$30,000. Though the designed structure may be inviting to use and provide inventive ways to allow social distancing, this option seems to be a significant investment for the MRC. Given the design, permitting, procurement, and construction phases to build this kind of facility, an operation schedule of at least 12 months seems likely.

Staffing Analysis

Throughout the history of the Book Bin, it has been unstaffed and relied on *ad hoc* volunteer work and the efforts of the on-site Recycling Attendant. As MRC has gotten busier, the Recycling Attendant has had less time available to maintain and organize the Book Bin. For this reason, the Book Bin had gone through phases of being very disorganized as well as being a focal point for unacceptable dumping. With the removal of the Goodwill box from the site, the dumping may become less of a concern. This still leaves the book bin to be generally disorganized (books and boxes of books strewn across the floor). This may be the impetus for the request for dedicated staffing to the facility. As stated before, there seem to be three options regarding staffing: no staffing; limited staffing; full staffing.

1. No dedicated Book Bin Staffing. This option has no additional cost. In order to at least partially address the organization and dumping issues that occurred in the past, staff recommends that a schedule be developed whereby the Book Bin is emptied so that new donations can be shelved and the quantity of debris on the floor is minimized. Initially, this would be a weekly effort which could be scaled back as needs allow.
2. Limited Staffing. This would consist of an additional RSWA employee which would work 40 hours per week. This staff would not be at the Book Bin continuously while the facility is open

and would probably be in attendance all weekend days (so that they could have some weekends off in their work schedule). This would however allow a great deal of cleaning and organizing to be undertaken. This position would cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50,000 per year.

3. Full Staffing. This would consist of two new RSWA hires, one full time and one part time, to cover the 54 hours per week (Winter hours) and 60 hours per week (Summer hours) that the MRC facility is open. This would cost approximately \$70,000 per year to staff.

The book exchange bin has been a major source of maintenance issues and customer conflicts for many years. With the heightened concern for public health, we do not recommend the service be continued during the ongoing pandemic.

If the book exchange service is continued at the McIntire Recycling Center, the purpose-built, shed-style structure (Option 3) is recommended. This facility seems to accomplish the goal of providing a place for the book exchange activity to occur without incurring a significantly high financial burden. If any additional staffing is desired, the limited staffing option is suggested. This level of staffing should be very capable of keeping the facility in a safe and organized condition.

Request from the Board:

1. Consider whether the Book Bin should be replaced.
2. If replaced, what housing for the service would be acceptable?
3. If replaced, what level of staffing would be provided?



McIntire Book Bin Replacement

Presented to the Board of Directors by : Phil McKalips, RSWA Director of Solid Waste

August 25, 2020

Background

- The existing “Book Bin” at MRC consisted of a used metal (“Conex” box) storage container to house a free book swap
- Due to deterioration and an inability to safely operate the Book Bin it was removed from the site and disposed
- We have had several requests from the public to replace the Book Bin, and have promised to present this Board with options to consider
- Staffing was also requested

Old Book Bin

Old metal Book Bin container doors did not fully close, roof leaked, floor was rotted, and had limited air flow and access



Alternatives to Book Bin structure

1. No replacement. No cost. Focus reading and education resources to free library system. Leave book-swaps to private market.
2. Replace with “new” used Conex box.
3. Replace with moderately customized Shed.
4. Replace with fully designed, purpose-built structure.

Alternative 2 – “New” Used Conex Box

- Condition of box depends on available units in market
- Presents same air flow and user access problems as previous unit did
- Estimated cost ~\$5,000. Fairly quick to implement



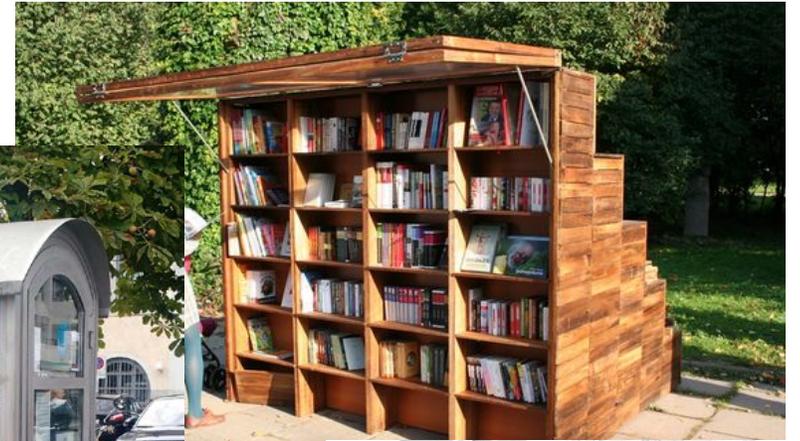
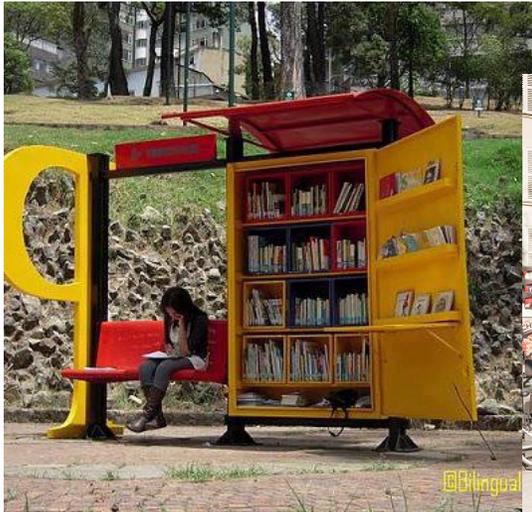
Alternative 3 – Purpose-built Shed

- Garden shed adapted for use. Greater weather protection and durability
- Ample windows (not fully shown) and doors provide air flow and light
- ~\$9,000 with a 6-month lead time to delivery



Alternative 4 – Custom Design and Build

- The most expensive alternative which could incorporate lighting, ventilation, climate control, staffing. Designed to facilitate air flow and social distancing.
- Could cost \$20,000 or greater.



Staffing Alternatives

The Book Bin has not, to our knowledge, ever been staffed in the past

Three Alternatives:

1. No staffing.
2. Limited Staffing (40 hours: 8 hours per day, 5 days per week)
3. Full-Time Staffing (60 hours per week Summer hours, 54 hours per week Winter hours)

1. No Staffing

- No additional on-site labor cost.
- RSWA will establish a clean-out schedule for the bin where it will be emptied and swept out (starting at once per week). This allows room for fresh supply of books and removal of old stock.
- Will utilize existing personnel from Ivy Operations.
- Books will be recycled.

2. Limited Staffing

- 40 hours per week.
- Will operate 5 days a week, leaving one day unattended.
- Should provide ample staffing to keep Book Bin tidy and organized.
- Can help enforce social distancing.
- Will not be responsible for book decontamination.
- Estimated cost, \$50,000 per year.

3. Full-Time Staffing

- 60 hours per week during Summer Hours; 54 hours per week during Winter Hours.
- Will require one full-time and one part-time employee.
- Will be fully capable of maintaining, cleaning, and organizing the Book Bin.
- Can help enforce social distancing.
- Will not be responsible for book decontamination.
- Estimated Cost is \$70,000 per year.

Recommendation

- The book exchange program has been a large source of maintenance problems and the leading source of customer conflicts at any of the RSWA facilities.
- With heightened concerns for public health, it seems to run counter to government guidance to operate this kind of facility during the ongoing pandemic.
- If a replacement structure is authorized, staff recommends Alternative 3 (the Shed replacement).
- If staffing is authorized, staff recommends Alternative 2 (Limited Staffing).

Questions?
