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## **Landfill expansion to begin this spring**

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by KATIE DUNN • Staff Writer

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WISE — The life expectancy for an upcoming expansion at Wise County's Blackwood landfill has been extended.

Construction of a new phase, IV-B, is slated to begin sometime this May. The almost 10-acre cell must be operational by January 2014 when the current 6.5-acre cell's lifespan expires.

Initially, the new cell was expected to last 11 years. But Thompson & Litton Vice President Bill King said last Thursday that its life expectancy has grown by three and a half years, meaning it will now be good for 15 years, five months.

King's firm is handling several projects related to next year's expansion. He explained that operational efficiencies related to the landfill's compaction rate and covering operations helped achieve this new lease on life.

The extension will yield two other positive impacts: a term extension for the upcoming \$3.96 million bond issuance that will fund the project, as well as a delay for when the next phase must be built.

King noted that a funding application has been submitted to the Virginia Resources Authority. A public hearing regarding the bond issuance will be held at 6 p.m. during supervisors' March 14 meeting.

Construction bids are expected to be advertised later this month, with a bid opening in March. King said results will most likely be presented at supervisors' April meeting.

Supervisors agreed last Thursday to pay Thompson & Litton \$7,500 for bid document development and \$12,000 for bid phase services.

Following a closed session, they also agreed to issue a request for bids for the purchase of a new excavator for the landfill. It was also agreed that the county's current excavator should be sold and a notice for bids be issued.

In an email last Friday, County Attorney Karen Mullins said costs for purchasing a new excavator are not yet known, though similar equipment can be close to the \$200,000 range. She added that the

landfill expansion and needed repairs prompted the excavator purchase and sale.

Earlier, Supervisor Fred Luntsford had thanked Public Works Director Jackie Darter, who was present at the meeting, for his work in extending the new cell's lifespan.

King also mentioned that Darter had located, excavated and hauled material to the landfill that will be used for clay liner and control fill in the new cell. He said this will reduce the risk for contractors and lessen the overall project cost.

## **OTHER INITIATIVES**

King also offered updates about several other ongoing projects. He said the county needs to conduct the state Department of Environmental Quality's annual groundwater monitoring report for 2012. The overall project will cost \$5,520.

Work also continues on a petition to have DEQ terminate post-closure care activities at the Appalachia landfill. He said all required information is expected to be rolled into a report this spring, which can then be submitted to DEQ for consideration. King said he is hopeful this would be approved by year's end.

Finally, an experimental practices application has been submitted to the state Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy to construct a regional septic and biosolids handling facility on a former surface mine site adjacent to the landfill.

Approval of this application, said King, would allow the Coeburn-Norton-Wise Regional Wastewater Treatment Authority to construct the facility. He said this facility would yield several positive environmental impacts for the county and significantly reduce reclamation efforts on that side of the landfill. DEQ has offered a low-interest \$4.65 million loan to fund the project.