

# LGU execs lock horns on over P200-M budget for sanitary landfill in Naga City

Published January 30, 2017, 3:54 PM | Manila Bulletin

*By Philippine News Agency*

Mayor John Bongat said the city council is still locked in a debate on whether to approve the budget for the planned sanitary landfill, that will cost the city government more than P200 million, even as an Ombudsman case may loom over the continuous operation of an open dumpsite here.



*Landfill. Photo courtesy of Pixabay / Manila Bulletin*

Bongat, in an interview, said he made an appeal to the council after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) served several written warnings to the city government for the continuous operation of the open dumpsite in the city in violation of Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Waste Management Act of 2000.

He said the DENR noted that the open dumpsite should have been closed in 2006.

“I was even reminded by the Ombudsman about this (continuous operation of open dumpsite),” Bongat said.

He said he told the council that if a case will be filed against the local government unit (LGU), it will be the mayor, the vice mayor and the council who will be sued.

At present, six Bicol LGUs, including the towns of Camalig, Guinobatan, Tiwi, Daraga, Polangui and Tabaco City — all in Albay — have pending cases for violation of RA 9003 at the Ombudsman which was filed by the Solid Waste Management Commission on Feb. 10, 2016.

Wilfredo Prilles, head of Naga City planning and development department, said there are two options: a three-hectare sanitary landfill which will cost the LGU some P203 million or a five-hectare sanitary landfill to be constructed at a cost of P237 million.

He said the three-hectare landfill will last for three years while the five-hectare landfill will have a life span of five to seven years “if coupled with segregation of solid wastes and with cooperation from the LGUs in the 27 villages of Naga City.”

According to Joel Martin, head of the Naga City Solid Waste Management Office, Naga City produces 96 tons of garbage daily.

Bongat said the city council could not make up its mind on the two options with the councilors still seeking a detailed breakdown on the engineering work for the planned landfill.

The mayor noted that during the last regular session of the city council, councilor Julian Lavadia Jr. questioned the more than PHP200-million cost of the landfill, “which will last for only 62 months,” while Councilor Mila Arroyo sought for a comparative study of the engineering costs.

Arroyo noted that funds for the landfill should come from the coffers of the city instead of funding its construction through a loan from the banks.

She said the original plan of the city during the time of the late mayor Jesse Robredo was to buy a 10-hectare land in Barangay (village) San Isidro for a waste-to-energy facility where the landfill would be put up.

“The original plan for the said project has not been shelved because the planned landfill includes a facility for waste-to-energy through a methane plant that will be put up after three years,” Bongat said.

He said he is not in a rush for the council to approve the budget but noted that the continuous operation of the old dumpsite has been in violation of the law while a suit against the LGU looms.

Bongat said there is no other option but to charge the budget for the proposed landfill from the city’s PHP1.1 billion budget in 2017.

He compared this to the Quezon City government’s allotment of PHP2 billion for garbage collection from its annual budget of some PHP17 billion.

Martin said closure of the old dumpsite, which had been given a 10-year extension, will be done in February.

“The winning bidder, GB Garay Philwide Builders, which is owned by Ceferino Bactad Garay Jr. from Quezon City, will implement the closure,” he said.

Martin said closure of the old dumpsite, that has an area of four hectares, would cost the LGU some P20 million but its implementation must be done while a sanitary landfill is being constructed.

(Article retrieved from: <http://news.mb.com.ph/2017/01/30/lgu-execs-lock-horns-on-over-p200-m-budget-for-sanitary-landfill-in-naga-city/>)