

**RECYCLING & WASTE REDUCTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES
August 14, 2018**

Members Present: Portage City Council Member Sue Lynch, Commissioner Laura Blaney, Kouts Town Council President Tim Jones, County Council Member Karen Conover, Commissioner Jeff Good

Staff: Therese Haller, Dawn Garmon, Jeannie McCall, Steve Dolak, Donna Stuckert

CAC Members: Duane Davison, Reggie Korthals, Walt Breitingner, Neil Samahon

Others: District Attorney Clay Patton, Jim Metros, Randy Reeder, Doug Ross, James Beversdorf & wife, Heidi Koselke & boss, Edward Engelsen, Sharon Angelina & child, Adele Szymanski, Deborah Smith.

Absent: Mayor James Snyder, Commissioner Jim Biggs

Council Member Lynch brought the meeting to order at 1:08

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL - Board

RECOGNITION OF MASTER RECYCLERS

James Beversdorf, Heidi Koselke, Edward Engelsen, Sharon Angelina, Adele Szymanski and Deborah Smith were awarded their certifications for fulfilling all of the requirements to complete the Master Recycler Certification class.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & FINANCIALS

Minutes-January 16, 2018

County Council Member Conover made a motion to approve the January 16, 2018 minutes.

Commissioner Good seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Financials-July 31, 2018

County Council Member Conover made a motion to approve the July 31, 2018 financials.

Commissioner Blaney seconded, motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Earth Day 2019

Ms. Haller explained that the **District** would like to cancel its Earth Day Event for 2019 due to the remodeling at the Expo Center since there was nowhere else that really had a large enough foot print to accommodate the event. **Commissioner Good** stated that the event could be moved to the fall if the **District** would like. **Ms. Haller** stated that Earth Day was actually on April 22 and that was why the **District** tried to hold the event around that time each year.

County Council Member Conover made a motion to cancel the Earth Day Event for 2019 and resume in 2020. **Kouts Town Council President Jones** seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Contracts Expiring December 2018

Electronics

Ms. Haller stated that the **District** was working with a vendor out of Indianapolis. The service was good and the **District** was happy with the relationship and the costs were comparable to that of two years ago. The **District** would like to renew the contract unless the **Board** felt it needed to go out for some type of bid. **Commissioner Good** asked if based on that contract, electronics were something that was being taken in daily.

Ms. Haller explained that there are three drop off locations for electronics: Boone Grove Compost Site, Valparaiso Compost Site, and the City of Portage Public Works Department. The sites take at least a semi a week. She continued that it wasn't just the public that dropped off electronics. The **District** had a relationship with county services, IT at the county government building and the sheriff's department, schools and businesses. The company takes basically anything with a cord or a battery, disassembles them and pulls out any of the precious metals. The cost had been staying relatively steady. The glass problem from the monitors had sort of subsided somewhat.

County Council Member Conover made a motion to approve the electronics contract. **Kouts Town Council President Jones** seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Good asked what the actual cost was for the program.

Ms. Haller responded that she believed last year was about \$135,000 and so far this year it had been about \$40,000.

Drop Off Recycling-presentation by Republic Services' Jim Metros

Mr. Metros showed a short video about how recycling material is processed and the impact of non-recyclables in the recycling stream. He then gave a Power Point presentation regarding the changes in recycling, the future of recycling, the recycling markets and the China Sword. (See Attachment A)

Mr. Breiting commented that the public needs to change their perspective on recycling and buy less stuff with less packaging. He continued that the three R's should be Rethink, Reduce and Reuse.

County Council Member Conover commented on the use of plastic and paper bags at the grocery store and how to maybe change that scenario.

Mr. Metros stated that what usually works is when you hit people in their pocketbooks.

Ms. Haller stated that the **District** needed to give some serious thought to how its program moves forward. She had provided the **Board** with an analysis of the **District** drop-off sites. She stated that contamination at unmanned sites had increased over the last couple of years of up to 50%. As the **District** contract was coming to its termination, contamination issues and cost would be a factor in a new contract. She felt that the **District** needed some type of surveillance at each location, some penalization policies in place and some enforcement at the local judicial level to penalize people. The **District** currently spends two to three days a week cleaning up the contamination at the sites and had a library of photos of bad behavior at the sites. A video system could run up to \$10,000. The system would need to be contained and warehoused out of the weather. So there would be some cost associated with that idea. Without some control mechanisms in place the **District** would not be able to curtail the contamination issues. Education goes along with that and the **District** had a good education program but now needed to be stepped up to inform the public about what was changing. Homewood, where our recyclables, go was considering reducing the types of plastics they accept. The **District** would have to respond to that at the **District** drop-offs as well as the municipalities. The board was presented with scenarios that if it stayed with the current programs as is, what would have to be done and costs would be incurred. If nothing was done as far as surveillance, collection cost would increase and potentially double due to the contamination crackdown. Another thought would be to have staffed location. The pros of that would be control of what was being taken in. The cons would be that the number of locations would have to be limited, restricted access, fly dumping potentially, the cost of the operation for a manned site. The third option would be to do nothing. She was starting the conversation with the **Board** because the **District** would need to put out an RFP for the program as it currently stands. **Ms. Haller** talked about a manned facility and having a bailer to bail the **District** material to create a cleaner stream, but then there would be transportation costs associated with that. She believed the **District** needed to explore all of those possibilities.

Commissioner Good asked that **Ms. Haller** provide the **Board** with the cost of the drop-off recycling throughout the county for the last several years.

Ms. Haller stated that on average it was \$135,000. However, that included the Portage location.

Commissioner Good remarked that it was the same amount as electronics and that between drop-off recycling and electronics the cost was around \$270,000-\$290,000, so that's around 30% of the **District** budget.

Ms. Haller stated that would be about 25% of the budget.

Commissioner Good stated that anything the **District** would do to be more hands on with sorting or other things then the **District** would almost be getting into the waste business to a certain extent. That would take investment and equipment.

Ms. Haller stated that even if the **District** had a site where people would have to behave correctly, continue to utilize the **District** dumpster and still have an intermediary transfer the material then the **District** could at a minimum cut down on the contamination.

Commissioner Good stated that he felt that the **District** could have a more centralized location where there were policing and lockup capabilities. He asked about trends on how often people are dropping things off at the drop-off sites.

Ms. Haller stated daily and the same people probably drop-off weekly. Not everyone in the county has recycling at the curb. Some waste haulers have stopped offering that option and some people don't want to pay the extra for curb side recycling pick up. She further stated that there was a county ordinance on the books that the commissioners said all waste hauler companies operating in Porter County must provide recycling to unincorporated customers. The **District** did get feedback from Waste Management that they had terminated that service because of what was happening. Technically they were in violation of the ordinance.

Commissioner Good stated that so far from what he had heard, it was going to take education and a tremendous shift in mind set and that takes a long time. He threw out the idea of having a centralized drop-off location where material was only accepted weekly, several days a week, one or two weeks a month. That would be the quickest way to change a consumers mind set than any of the other methods talked about.

Ms. Haller stated that the **CAC** had felt that was the direction the **District** should be going. That would also provide another location for electronics drop-off also have a hazardous waste facility in the same location, battery drop-off, bulbs and smoke detectors. A one-stop shop so to speak.

Ms. Korthals stated that one of the things the **CAC** also looked at was that when you change or are trying to change behavior, it not only takes a long time but you need to demonstrate to the public what is in it for them and what is going to make it better for them. What the **CAC** had been looking at going forward was a comprehensive one site location. She felt that could be demonstrated to people that was a better opportunity for them. The **District** would also need to let them know that if that were not done what would happen. It would take a good education program mixed with that type of location.

Commissioner Good suggested buying colored bins for the recycling material to stay separated.

Ms. Haller was directed to report at the next meeting the costs of providing the service, installing surveillance cameras, manned sites, or possibly a site behind locked gates.

Ms. Haller stated that the **District** needed to put out a bid for service and asked that the **Board** request that the **CAC**, **Ms. Haller** and the **District** Attorney work to craft an RFP for various service models.

County Council Member Conover made a motion for the crafting of an RFP for current services and various service models. **Kouts Town Council President Jones** seconded, motion carried unanimously.

MOUs Expiring December 2018 User Fee Collection Agreement

The user fee collection agreement between the **District**, Commissioners, Auditor, and Treasurer was coming up for renewal at the end of the year. One piece of language was added and the County Attorney looked at it and agreed with it. That would be to have delinquent user fees collected in the same manner as are the taxes. If the **Board** approves the agreement then the **District** would take it before the commissioners for approval.

Kouts Town Council President Jones made a motion to approve the agreement. **County Council Member Conover** seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Compost Sites: Chesterton, Pines, Portage, Valparaiso

Ms. Haller stated that the **District** currently assisted Chesterton with their grinding cost up to \$20,000, Valparaiso and Portage up to \$40,000. Those agreements would be expiring at the end of the year. She had heard from Steve Nelson, the Public Works Director, that the Portage site would be open for public access.

Commissioner Good wanted to know when. He wanted a specific date. He stated he had been hearing that for three years. The **Board** was talking about collection places and couldn't even run into a place in the north county where most of the population was. Once again the **District** was handcuffed, trying to come up with a resolution to the problem and the **District** was handcuffed in the north part of the county. He wanted a date. He wanted the date given at a public meeting and he also wanted it in the agreement. If no date can be put in the agreement he didn't know that he could vote for the agreement.

Portage City Council Member Lynch stated that the deed was finally clear and the city did own the property. She stated what they were looking at now was trying to get a facility at the site and a person at the site. Most of Portage's material was taken to the street department and transported to the site. She stated that people in the county could take their material to the Portage Street Department.

Commissioner Good asked how that message was being conveyed.

Ms. Haller answered that it was on the **District** website and on the Portage website. She further stated that in following up on that was there inequity in just giving those three municipalities some assistance for grinding.

Commissioner Good stated that, in his opinion, the **Board** should table the compost site discussion until they had all of the rest of the data numbers on what it was going to cost to do the recycling thing. He asked that at the next meeting **Ms. Haller** provide the **Board** with a breakdown of what the budget was and how much was being spent on each of the items. That was what was going to drive the decision to a certain extent.

Ms. Haller stated that was fine. The agreements don't terminate until the end of the year.

2019 Budget

Ms. Haller stated that the only thing that had changed substantially was personnel. The operation of the Portage site would be similar to that of the Valparaiso site. The **District** would put a man there and the **District** would put the shed in place, also opening up the Boone Grove compost site six days a week, also putting as much money under contractual services going forward to meet those obligations.

Commissioner Good told Ms. Haller that when she went into the budget meetings that he could not emphasize enough for her to really let the council know that the **District** was sort of in a state of flux and was being rattled really hard and he believed they needed to understand that by putting the budget in July when the **District** would not see any kind of resolution until November or December the **District** was sort of in a weird spot at the time. They needed to understand that the **District** and the **Board** may be changing some things next year. Giving them a heads up in what the **District** was dealing with would be very helpful.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next **Board** meeting was scheduled for October 9, 2018. However, the **Board** decided to have the next meeting on September 18, 2018 at 1:30. It was also decided to have future meetings start at 1:30 pm instead of 1:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, **Commissioner Good** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **County Council Member Conover** seconded, motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:33.