

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF  
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE**

**June 12, 2007**

**DATE:** June 12, 2007

**TIME:** 1:00 pm

**PLACE:** Hamilton County Environmental Services  
250 William Howard Taft Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

**PRESENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative  
Tiffaney Hardy, Representative of Largest Municipality  
Dave Meyer, Public Member  
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair  
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member  
Glenn Welling, General Interest Member

**Staff**

Michelle Balz, Program Specialist  
Cory Chadwick, Director  
Holly Christmann, Solid Waste Program Manager  
Nan Frient, Public Affairs Specialist  
Susan Schumacher, Administrative Secretary, Clerk  
Catherine Walsh, Education Assistant

**Others in Attendance**

Brad Bonham, Wyoming Resident  
Joseph Charlton, City of Cincinnati  
Chuck DeJonekheere, Hamilton County General Health District  
Dave Gamstetter, Cincinnati Park Board  
Mike Lippert, City of Wyoming  
Steve Mary, Hamilton County Engineer's Office  
Pat Migliozzi, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry  
Casey Munchel, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry  
Dean Walden, Village of Lockland  
WCPO-TV  
WKRC-TV

**ABSENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Bernie Fiedelvey, Township Representative, Vice Chair  
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County General Health District Representative

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm and thanked members of the Board for agreeing to convene at this special, emergency meeting to deal with the impact of the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB).

Mr. Portune stated that Hamilton County knew it was coming but it arrived about six months earlier than was expected. In part, that is the reason for him asking, as Chairperson of this Committee, that they meet in this special session because the EAB is in Hamilton County. This has had an immediate impact on the County, including the order of quarantine of natural waste leaving Hamilton County, in particular, wood waste related to ash trees.

Mr. Portune stated that given the public attention that has been given the arrival of the EAB, he thought it was important for the Committee to meet to talk about what that means to, perhaps, be in a position to bring forward some good information to the general public on what exactly it means and how people should react to this arrival and the handling of yardwaste and woodwaste in particular. Clearly, just because the EAB has arrived, doesn't mean every Ash tree in Hamilton County now has died and we now have this massive amount of wood waste to handle. Mr. Portune stated that the County does need to prepare for the natural occurrence and result of the arrival of the EAB.

Mr. Portune stated that in the past, the Committee has discussed the possibility of acquiring some types of equipment to handle the volume of the wood waste that may be generated as a consequence of the natural effect of the EAB.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee might want to talk about some options the County might have and that citizens may have with respect to the disposal of that waste. Mr. Portune stated that he thought the Committee should also talk in terms of giving some advice to the Engineer's Office, various Public Works authorities, Park Divisions, etc. throughout the County to the extent that there are Ash trees in public parks, median strips, right-of-way's, along County roads, etc. to the extent that those trees become infested and die, they do present certain, possible threats to public safety, especially if limbs drop or trees drop in right-of-ways or in and around County roadways.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee wanted to be able to offer some advice on how to proactively deal with those situations or be in a position where the District could be a partner, whether it is with the County Engineer, various Public Works departments, Park Boards throughout the County to assist in the handling of this large volume of wood waste that Hamilton County will likely encounter in the future as a consequence of this.

Mr. Portune stated that the other issue he thinks would be helpful to understand is whether there are any steps that can be taken that the District can legitimately take or recommend be taken that would have the effect of stemming the flow. Mr. Portune asked if the arrival of the EAB means all Ash trees will die or are there other things that can occur that would prevent that from becoming a probability in Hamilton County. Mr. Portune stated that he is not sure that he knows the final answer; hopefully, the

Committee can get some good expert advice on that matter from Joe Boggs who is here from the Ohio State University Extension Campus.

## **2. POLICY ITEMS – EMERALD ASH BORER PRESENTATION**

Mr. Portune welcomed Mr. Boggs. Mr. Portune stated that those are the parameters of the issues before the Committee today. Mr. Portune stated that before the Committee hears from Mr. Boggs, he wanted to open it up first for other preliminary comments of members of the Policy Board if there are other issues that he has not touched on that members would want to make sure are addressed in this meeting today.

Mr. Portune invited Mr. Boggs to the podium. Mr. Portune stated that the questions are pretty well known to Mr. Boggs and certainly Hamilton County has a very significant interest and what this means, short and long term, and to us as a District with respect to the District's responsibility is helping out in the handling of wood waste that will be generated as a consequence of the arrival of the EAB. Mr. Portune stated that just because some EABs are here already does not mean every tree is now falling over in Hamilton County. There is going to be some time until that happens but he did think the Committee should meet quickly because there was a lot of attention drawn to the arrival of the EAB. In light of that, he felt the District needed to step into the vacuum that came along right behind that news of, what does this mean and what does it mean in terms of public bodies responsibilities, what does it mean to private citizens and what they should look for, what they can expect, and what we will be asking them to do.

Mr. Boggs stated that he was an eternal optimist and he liked what Mr. Portune was saying in terms of there is time to think this through and he thinks Hamilton County has some options that we can discuss. Mr. Boggs stated that the sky is not falling quite yet with Ash trees.

Mr. Boggs stated that he prepared some information using Powerpoint and as he moves through the presentation, it will answer a number of questions.

Mr. Boggs stated that he would give some quick background information because a lot has been very accurately reported in the press and he has been very thrilled with that. Mr. Boggs stated that just so everyone is on the same page in terms of what we are talking about here; we are of course talking about a beetle.

Mr. Boggs stated that it was amazing how something so small can create such a problem. The beetle barely covers half of the width of a penny and there are different colors. People think that they are all green but there is a blue version. When the beetle emerges, it has a flat back and round belly and, as we all have heard they can do nothing but create "D" shaped holes and that is where that diagnosis comes from. Some people automatically say that "D" is for "Dead" and it is kind of true if you have this coming out of a tree, it does not bode well for that tree.

Mr. Boggs stated that the adults do feed on foliage and they do, in fact, cause a little impact on tree health. The reason he brings this up is some approaches for managing the insect is sort of looking at making a foliage toxic but these adults do not have to feed on the same tree that they lay the eggs on. The larvae is the killing stage and they are called "flat headed borers". The larvae gets its name because just behind the head is this first segment that is flat; it is not the actual head but it does look like a flattened head. The real feature are the bell shaped segments. If you see something that has bell shaped segments, it kind of looks like a tapeworm; a miniature tapeworm. If you see a miniature tapeworm under the bark of a living Ash, it can be nothing but an EAB.

Mr. Boggs stated the larvae is not very large and it is the killing stage. When it kills the top of the tree, the tree's root system does not know it is dead and it will try and spring back. For many years, one will have the stump sprouts. Very important relative to the idea of how long these insects can be with us because those stump sprouts provide food down the road. Because the larvae are out there in the late summer and through the winter, they attract heavy woodpecker activity.

Mr. Boggs stated that this was not a bad key if you are driving along and seeing this and you can see that very easily in our infestation area in eastern Hamilton County. If you are going to have a bad pest it is best that that pest only have one generation per year. If it has more than one generation per year, that's double the damage, three generations is triple the damage. The EAB has just one generation per year and right now they are in the adult stage and one can find beetles flying and they are mating as insects; they lay eggs and the larvae that hatches then are feeding on the tree from mid-June through September. Late summer, they go to pre-pupa stage and this is how they spend the winter.

Mr. Boggs stated that Hamilton County is not alone in this. As everyone has probably heard, the EAB originated in Asia. Northern China, the Korea's, Japan, Taiwan; he brings this up because there has been reports that perhaps this insect has a southern range in the United States. In fact, it may not be able to go much further south.

Mr. Boggs stated that no one knows how the EAB got here but it was first identified in June, 2002 in the Detroit area but it is believed it had been there undetected for 10 – 15 years. Now, these are the states with known infestations and he wanted to stress that Ohio was not the only state that was dealing with it and not the only area. (Mr. Boggs showed a slide of the United States with Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland, and Rhode Island being highlighted).

Mr. Boggs stated that what he was about to show the Committee was discoveries. This is not the rate of spread and did not want anyone to think that this is how long it takes to for it to go from one year to the next. In 2002, folks in Detroit found this and realized it was odd. So they decided to go ahead and look further and they found that in fact, there were other infestations. Now, this infestation was a result of infested trees. The nursery in Michigan, once they became aware that there was a problem, contacted the Ohio Department of Agriculture to alert them of this challenge. Those trees were removed that were in the Easton area. In 2004, the lower peninsula of Michigan was found to be a

widely infested. Again, these are discoveries. In 2005, upper UP has an infestation and you can see further infestation discovered in Ohio. In 2006, more infestations discovered and of course, Hamilton County is the southern most infestation in the United States.

Mr. Boggs stated that storm clouds are hanging over Ash trees in Ohio but he wants to be careful about this because he wants the Committee to see that this is known infestation so far. It is still, as you can see, strongly associated with where it was found. These infestations, he wants to stress, with the exception of perhaps in Todedo, were no doubt moved about; the insect did not fly. Moved about, most likely before anyone knew the insect existed in the United States.

Mr. Boggs stated that he thought the next slide was pretty dramatic and asked if anyone could locate the infestation within Hamilton County (which was a red dot in Anderson Township). Mr. Boggs pointed out the infestation and he is stressed that it has not been delineated, meaning the Ohio Department of Agriculture has not yet found the edges of it.

Mr. Boggs stated that the bad news is that it is a little bigger than the Department of Agriculture likes to see and it is a little older than they like to see. Still, that kind of is good news because if, in fact, it has been there since before 2002, how long is it going to take to be a County-wide issue. If it has been there that long and it is not a County-wide issue, that should tell us something about the rate of spread.

Mr. Portune asked if that gives us some hope in terms of curbing spread? If the EAB has been there since 2002 and he understood that it has not been delineated yet but assuming it can be done, and we know the range; does that mean that we can pretty much carve it out just as one might be "taking out a tumor" and then we address the issue for the moment in Hamilton County at least because this appears 1) to be somewhat of an anomaly that the infestation is this far south given where it is showing up elsewhere in Ohio 2) If it has been here since, as early as 2002, and if it is limited to that area of the County and we can get our arms around that and eliminate it; eradicate the infestation there, does that give the County some reason to be optimistic or is that one of many things why perhaps the County could be optimistic about the future as it relates to this problem.

Mr. Boggs stated that Mr. Portune's question was excellent. Mr. Boggs stated that he really hit it at the heart of the challenge where we transitioned a few years ago from an eradication program. Some of the Committee may recall that when it was first discovered up in Ohio the idea was perhaps it could be stopped by eradicating all known infestations and the Ohio Department of Agriculture with money from the US Department of Agriculture attempted to do that.

Mr. Boggs stated that the Committee may remember that was when an infested Ash tree was found, that Ash tree and all Ash trees whether they were infested or not within a half mile were removed with the idea of "taking out a tumor." The down side to this reality is once it was discovered that there were so many other infestations; it was expensive. The one he wanted to point to was Franklin County. Notice how there is a cluster of dots. A

great deal of money was spent on that original eradication of those trees; with the infestation were all those trees that came from Michigan. Now, there is some indication that it was not perfect and so a few years later, we find infested trees that are now being thought to perhaps be associated with that was an imperfect elimination.

Mr. Boggs stated that there were a lot of reasons for this. The insect starts at the top of the tree and works its way down so the first year it is hard to know that the tree is infested. So then you are faced with taking down every Ash and even saying out a half mile obviously in that case, there were trees that were infested beyond that had no indication.

Mr. Boggs stated that he hoped Hamilton County does not have to deal with this but this came as a surprise and Anderson Township is the known infestation in Hamilton County with the clear understanding that the County may have other infestations that no one knows about. As time moves on, perhaps they will be discovered but if we put all of our eggs in this basket to perhaps stop it in Anderson Township and then it is already on a County-wide level; its State-wide and then its "how many trees can we afford to take down."

Mr. Portune stated that Hamilton County is now under an order of quarantine and asked if it was possible if the infestation was truly limited to a very concise area, was it possible for us to be able to take certain steps that would result in the lifting of the order of quarantine or once having been quarantined are we quarantined forever? Mr. Boggs stated that he was unaware of the mechanisms that cause the quarantine to be lifted. So far, there are two levels of quarantine; the State quarantine is the Ohio Department of Agriculture which is why Hamilton County is quarantined but then we have to deal with the Federal quarantine which is USDA APHIS (Animal, Plant, Health Inspection Service). APHIS is the one saying we can not ship into Ohio or we can not ship into Indiana. In Indiana, they can not ship into Ohio even though they are quarantined; also can not ship into Kentucky.

Mr. Boggs stated that part of the reason for that is southern Indiana does not have a known infestation yet but has a northern one. So you can see the value of that. We can move wood all around Hamilton County and we might want to talk about what that means in a few minutes. Mr. Boggs stated that these are quarantines that eventually go to the Federal level and apologized that he did not know what it takes to lift them.

Mr. Boggs stated that else where, Gypsy Moth for example, through the Eastern United States is still quarantined and they still can not ship materials to Missouri for example but within that area, they are not quarantined for Gypsy Moth. Mr. DiPuccio stated that the difference was that something could be done to control the Gypsy Moth versus the EAB. Mr. Boggs stated that this was a great point and this was most frustrating. It does leave some room for optimism. The Gypsy Moth has been with us since 1869 and we have had a lot of time to learn about that insect. A synthetic fairmone is available that ODA uses to try and slow the spread because the males come out and they think they are coming out with billions of females and soon find out that they are being fooled by the synthetic

ferimone and we do not have this for the EAB. As research tracks along, hopefully we can.

Mr. Boggs stated that compared to what successes have happened to other insects, it has all come down to the research but we have only been dealing with this for literally 5 years with one generation per year.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if it was possible to get a smaller area of the County quarantined particularly in this instance where it is clear over to the county line. Mr. Boggs stated that there were some areas up in the north central part of the State where they isolated part of the County. One reason they could get away with that is because there are very isolated wood lots in Lima, for example. The down side is the EAB could be anywhere in Hamilton County and this is not good because we have such a heavily forested area and it would be very hard to isolate with the continued canopy of trees.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if Hamilton County was permitted to ship wood to Warren County since it is quarantined? Mr. Boggs stated yes and vice versa because we have the nice I-71 corridor. Ms. Muncher stated that I-71 was the only route that the wood could be shipped because it can not go to Butler or Clermont counties. Ms. Munchel, Mr. Migliozzi, and Mr. Gamstetter introduced themselves to the Committee.

Mr. Boggs stated that in terms of spread, this was a good model and he likes to use this because we all can relate to it in some fashion. Regarding how forest fires spreads, there is this hot spot where the main fire is occurring and then it creeps forward, winds can drive it, but pointed out the main fire line. What really makes forest fires so dangerous is when the fire brands go out ahead and lights so called "hot spots" that we have probably seen on TV where these flare up and burn and fire fighters can get killed.

Mr. Boggs stated that a non-native insect spreads exactly the same way and pointed out the point of introduction. Of course, as with the fire out ahead, there are hot spots and Hamilton County is one of these hotspots. Research that was done in Michigan State regarding their "hot spots" indicates that they spread at a rate of about ¼ mile per year. Mr. Boggs stated that he wanted to say that this was maybe to the outside because those reasons of behavior of this insect, we can also keep it on the tree for a time.

Mr. Boggs stated that ¼ mile per year, probably the most Hamilton County can expect. Again, they are not bad flyers but they are not "flyers" like some other insects. These outliers came from originally movement of infested logs, moving of firewood, moving of infested nursery stock like he spoke of regarding Franklin County. But these have pretty well been eliminated by the industry; you can not buy Ash basically in Ohio. Nurseries are not producing it and one can not even get it from Oregon that is usually shipped in here and grown in nurseries.

Mr. Boggs stated that this remains an issue; the fact that this is taken out the infestation side and that "D" shaped hole was on those. Here is an issue; there is no law that they couldn't take that and move it to another part of the County. Mr. Boggs stated that he

would think that one opportunity for the District is education – to make sure people understand that this effort to “pack marshmallows not firewood” is aimed at preventing these “hot spots.” Within our County, we might want to consider doing things to make people aware; do not move your firewood around. This could be an educational approach.

Mr. Boggs stated that this was the tree in the front yard with the infestation in Hamilton County with just about a dozen per tree. He always has to say this again because sometimes people hear that Ash is related to for example, to Lilacs and maybe the EAB will go to another plant. Mr. Boggs stated that there is absolutely no indication that this will occur; only Ash trees.

Mr. Boggs stated that in fact, in Detroit, where there basically are no Ash and still a lot of Lilacs and a lot of starving EAB's, they are not attacking Lilacs. Only Ash trees and that is a good thing in some ways. The down side is that they are killers of Ash.

Mr. Boggs stated that the EAB has been compared to Dutch Elm Disease and this is a very poor comparison because Dutch Elm Disease roared through here in the early/middle part of last century and yet we can still find big American Elm's all over Cincinnati. Well, what happened is either they escaped or there was some sort of resistance. Thus far, there has been no indication that an Ash tree, once selected by the EAB, will survive so it is not a good comparison when you hear people say “well, we have been through this before.”

Mr. Boggs stated that the only people that can say that are the people that were alive and he does not know anyone that right now that is alive that experienced the American Chestnut Blythe. That took out that species until it was almost gone. So, that may sound like the sky is falling but he does want to make sure that we are all on the same page in that we are dealing with killers and how it kills trees to understand why there are no preventatives.

Mr. Boggs stated that he wanted the Committee to see some tree trunk basics. On the outside is the bark. There is a little spongy, sticky layer called the phloem and that is what the tree uses to transport sugar it makes to its leaves down to the rest of the tree including the root system. Then there is a little, slimy, layer called the cambium and those cells can grow into the phloem or they can grow into what we call “the wood of the tree” or the xylem. This part of the tree holds the tree up which is a cylinder within a cylinder within a cylinder etc. so structurally to avoid forces push the tree over, one could not ask for a better design. However, many of us were taught that most of these rings carry water and as it turns out, this is not the case. Some trees only carry water through a few rings.

Mr. Boggs stated that here is how the EAB kills the tree. The larvae are going to be living under the bark of living Ash trees. They are going to consume the phloem, the cambium and as you can see, they are going to etch into that xylem.

Mr. Boggs stated that he did not know if he even needed to add the animation because you know what is going to happen; phloem is consumed, cambium is consumed, boom.

That is why the tree does not have a chance to recover. Once this happens the tree is doomed, it is going to die. That takes some time, but it will die.

Mr. Boggs stated that if we look at this within the tree (he showed a picture of a large Blue Ash); the EAB infests from top to bottom. The first and second year, everything that is happening is up here; second year after this is utilized it moves further down and after this is utilized it moves further down in the third and fourth year. What this means is the first and second year if you are on the ground and you are the proud owner of an Ash tree, it's a lovely tree, by looking at the trunk there would be no way that one would know that the EAB was in the tree.

Mr. Boggs stated in an odd way this is kind of good news; the EAB does not like to leave the tree until they have killed it. You can even scare them and those beetles do not like to fly off; they will just move further up the tree. This is kind of good news, in terms of it moving up.

Mr. Boggs stated that Ohio is home to three of the four major species of Ash; a white and green in particular. Ash is a great landscape tree but it could mean the end of Ash in North America based on what we know right now.

Mr. Boggs stated that the Committee have all seen these impacts. These are numbers that have been printed. One out of ten trees being an Ash. Actually, that varies as one would expect. Some areas have 30% Ash with Cincinnati at 7 ½%, Wyoming at about 10% of street trees. So that does vary and he thinks it is good.

Mr. Boggs stated that the Forest Products industry has had a big effect as well as the nursery industry and this is the big question, the impact of what we have been talking about today are the urban forests. The last of the large Ash tree in landscaping, as you can imagine, when this tree does become infested; look at the main road right here. That is going to be a hard tree to take down and it is going to have a lot of wood to it. For that homeowner, that's going to a price tag, perhaps they did not expect. Now they might know its coming but they would not have expected it a year ago.

Mr. Boggs stated that we have a lot of street trees in Ohio, we have a lot of park trees. About 4 million is another factor. Look at those price tags. If you have a tree that gets hit by a car, one can actually get it valued for a claim on insurance. Cost of removal, and he wanted to stress, you have \$2.9 billion based on removal of living trees, not dead trees. When an Ash tree dies, and it starts being removed, the price goes up because the tree becomes very brittle quickly. It becomes a very hazardous tree very quickly.

Mr. Boggs stated that based on a living tree, and of course, we hope people do replace. Point being, we are talking a lot of money and he does not really need to remind us. We have been reading about this for some time. Mr. Boggs stated that he thought it helped us to focus on answers that might help mitigate some of that cost or maybe some of the things that maybe they will do. At least being aware of the impact this big; its going to be a big impact on our local municipalities. Ann Arbor, Michigan actually tried to pass a

levy to support removal of their Ash trees and it failed, so consequently, their \$2.1 million to remove 10,500 municipal trees had to come from ??????St. Paul.

Westlin, Michigan, another suburb of Detroit, fewer trees, 3,217, cost to remove, \$2 million and that is a deal if it is about \$600 per tree and they actually got that by mass contracting. Here is something he wanted to focus on; one of the worst hit areas, 79 trees in one subdivision and that area had a 38% increase in water usage. How did that happen? When you remove those trees, suddenly one has to water lawns, other plants that the Ash was shading. This is another side impact.

Mr. Boggs stated that Toledo, 8,000 trees, they have a crew everyday working still to take those trees down. They finally, more or less, got ahead. Mr. Boggs showed before and after slides of a road filled with Ash trees and then the replacement trees once the Ash trees died. Mr. Boggs stated that he drove past this street to meet some folks and he didn't realize the trees had been taken down and he missed the street because it looked totally different.

Mr. Boggs stated that so many options we talked about, it does depend on location. Whether it is a forest or woodlot, home, commercial landscape or community trees, we are not going to be talking about forest or woodlots here too much because we are such an urbanized County. We could and there is great help with woodlot and forest management. But let's be honest, the average person living in an urban area, an Ash tree falls in the forest and no one hears it; a dead tree in the woods is different than a dead tree in a commercial or community landscape. They make a lot of noise when they die.

Mr. Boggs stated that this was Warren County and there is also the generation of the wood. Last year, Todedo actually closed the park for Ash tree removal. They marked the tree and logged the park. They simply had to because of the growing liability issue. They originally started the job back when we were having trees removed within a half mile. Originally, they could not do anything that they had not already done. Originally, there was no other option; we do now have options and Mr. Boggs showed a picture of a tub grinder and stated that the picture was their tub grinder.

Mr. Boggs showed a picture of a marshaling yard and of course the tub grinder converts it to that material (showed a picture of mulch). We were there at 2:00 pm in the afternoon and this pile of chips were not there in the morning and this thing is running basically everyday so you can see what can accumulate rather quickly. So this is one option and what about this option. We have been talking about can we utilize the wood in a different way.

Mr. Boggs stated that there are portable saw mills available and it needs to be moved around. The down side is, of course, if you have a large number of Ash trees, how much moving around can be done to really make an impact? Mr. Boggs then showed a picture of a static saw mill. We may look at a static saw mill in Miami Whitewater Park or one of the parks for example for a demonstration plus a place people could divert wood to lumber, an option.

Mr. Boggs stated that a problem with Ash is that it has always been a low price tree. Before EAB was known to exist, looked where it ranked among other trees (showing a chart of different kinds of tree wood and their prices). After, he expected the price to be lower. This is not finished product; this is based on very raw. Dollars per 1,000 board feet paid by saw mills for delivered saw logs.

Mr. Boggs stated he thinks we can get a lot of insight and help from up north and we can welcome that help. They have been dealing with the problem far longer than we have and they have great partnerships and some of the partnerships we have obviously already developed regarding the EAB. But one to have would be right here and he plans on working very closely with Ms. Christmann and giving any help he can.

Mr. Boggs stated that the OSU Extension and ODNR Division of Forestry have conducted Ash Utilization workshops in the Toledo area so there is even some experience developing with some aid of the Michigan folks. This is their project. Mr. Boggs stated that he did not like to typically put all of this little; he stated that he usually does not put so much type on a powerpoint slide. He did ask the Committee to write down a website [www.semircd.org/ash](http://www.semircd.org/ash) and he copied/pasted from the website because he wanted to get the flavor of what the Ash utilization options project of southeast Michigan was about.

Mr. Boggs stated that it is, he thinks, a rather innovative thing. It did get money from the US Forest Service with Educational Resource Center. Mr. Boggs stated that he did not know if those grants will still be available but obviously this is something worth looking into.

Mr. Boggs stated that their goal through demonstration projects, training sessions, inventory programs, education outreach, which we have actually already all started here before today, is to develop value added products from trees removed from EAB. The reasons for the eradication, when there was the eradication program and you can see a lot of what they are wanting to do; it matches up very well with what he thinks we are talking about today. New opportunities for recycling of Ash to other types of wood waste to reduce the burden on local landfills, reduce disposal costs to local communities. Mr. Boggs stated that he would like to see some great new markets for high quality, sustainable wood products.

Mr. Boggs stated that some have attended the workshops from our area and learned though that the one thing they have not been able to overcome is the price of Ash. It is a wood that could be used to make this table and make a fine table but for some reason, he does not know why.

Mr. Boggs stated that “The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty” was his favorite saying and thought it states what we are trying to do.

Mr. Boggs stated that he thought it was discussion time.

Mr. Portune thanked Mr. Boggs for his very informative presentation and stated that he learned a lot and he guessed as a lot of the people in the room did. Mr. Portune stated that he appreciated it very much to our friends from the Division of Forestry and thanked them for being here and welcomed their participation.

Mr. Portune stated that he wanted to say first before we open it up for discussion, would Mr. Migliozzi, Ms. Muncher, or Mr. Gamstetter care to say anything or add anything to Mr. Boggs presentation before the Committee began.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that he did have a couple of things. Mr. Gamstetter introduced himself. Mr. Gamstetter stated that they have been working on this with Ms. Christmann's and other people's help since about 2003. We saw it coming and we took some steps initially such as we stopped planting Ash trees for example, a very simple thing. We had looked at our municipal laws that deal with hazard trees on private property and how were we going to deal with that. With a property owner in a community that does not have a lot of money that suddenly has five dead trees in their front yard that fell in the road. Those are some serious issues; not just for enforcement of the existing codes that say the property owner has to make it safe but also how is the City going to make those trees safe and recover the cost?

Mr. Gamstetter stated that they looked at things like the way the City manages its sidewalk program, we looked at a sidewalk safety assessment for trees spreading out the cost to the property owner over a longer period of time. We also looked at the value of the trees. The City has a great deal of pride and protects our trees; our street trees, our park trees and therefore when somebody wants to remove a City tree, there is a cost associated with the value of the tree based upon how big it is, what kind of tree it is, those kinds of issues.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that we have decided that we are going to waive the value of all Ash trees in the City. Somebody that is doing to right thing and taking it down and replacing it now so they have shade in front of there house over a long period of time.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that another suggestion is; these are more policy suggestions dealing with Ash. One of the things our policy board was very strong about was that we are not going to start cutting down all of our Ash trees. What they wanted to do was to take a slow measure approach to it. We have developed a formula that weights which Ash trees that we do want to remove and our target is about 100 trees per year. Mr. Gamstetter stated that the City has about 5,000 street trees and you can see that it is a long period of time. Their formula is weighted toward trees that are old, that are nearing the end of their life span that we have increased amount of liability with because as Ash trees get old they tend to become brittle and prone to storm damage.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that we do have a policy and we are going to remove 100 trees per year while there is not a huge glut of wood out there and we are going to replace them right away. If the park manager says well, I want you to cut it down but I do not want you

to replace it, we are going to go on to the next tree where we can get more replaced so that when we lose all of them, we are not going to lose all the shade along one street.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Gamstetter if he was speaking of City trees and not private property trees. Mr. Gamstetter stated that this was correct.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that he brought a copy of the Park Board's plan that you can look through. A couple of other things to that he wanted to touch on; consumer issues – There are tree services out there that are going to take advantage of people. We have received calls from people that have said that the tree service said for me to cut down my Ash tree now and wants to charge \$8,000. We go out and look at it and it is an Elm. There are people who are like that out there and he thinks the consumer end of it is how to hire a tree service company, how to identify Ash trees and these are all very available resources we have. We have a handout brochure that is also available on the Division of Forestry and the EAB website.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that one other thing was how to deal with zoning issues. Somebody has four dead Ash trees in their yard and we talk about safety but what happens if it is in their side yard or back yard and the tree is dead and they cut it down and leave piles of wood in their yard and the neighbors complain about it. Those are the kinds of thing you need to start thinking about and make sure that the communities understand that these are going to be very real things. Because right now, if somebody loses one of their trees on their property every couple of years, you can save up for it and afford to have a tree service company come do it but if you have a lot of them and they are large, that could be a serious financial hardship for someone.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that another thing he wanted to talk about was the wood waste end of it. He stated that he was here before the Committee about 5-6 years ago thanking the Committee for a \$10,000 grant to saw urban timber into wood and sell it. We sawed it and sold it and we had a ready available market here in Cincinnati. There was a company in Dent that made handles for utensils for grilling and accessories. They have since moved out of town and our market dried up and the only place we could find that we could sell it was in southeastern Ohio which is now not an option for us. It stopped being an option for us because of the tremendous cost and handling it and driving it out there.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that they were still sitting on money for sawmilling until we can come up with some market solutions. One thing that we have is; we are trying to develop a market for municipal wood waste and we have worked with one of the large retailers in the region on service projects and other things. We have talked to them about the possibility of using our wood and selling it in their stores.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that he is a home woodworker and he did a project last winter with wood from a tree from a City park and it came out great but he ended up going to the store and buying almost \$300 worth of sandpaper, finish and glass and other things to finish the project (painting the knobs, etc.). Mr. Gamstetter stated that he talked to them and did a brief powerpoint for them and he would appreciate you not letting the company

name out but if you read how we are trying to work with their zero carbon emissions policy, their environmentally preferential purchasing policies to try and get them to market our wood for us. We have had some brief discussions with them but he thinks that there is a market here for us. Both retail as well as he thinks this is an opportunity for us to look at LEED buildings because you get points for using local materials. He also thinks there is a possibility of including language in development contracts and other things where a portion of it; if somebody is coming to you for money or other improvement money, maybe we can say yes, but you have to use 2-3% of the wood from municipal wood waste. He thinks there are some tremendous opportunities for that in the future.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that the other point he wanted to make was that they talked to their committee about all the public agencies and Ms. Christmann did a great questionnaire about and sent it out to people that were interested in a tub grinder or sawmill and he thinks there is more opportunities in the private sector. One of them is Duke Energy; they are a new player in town. Mr. Gamstetter stated that he had a brief discussion with them. They generate a tremendous amount of wood chips through their utility line clearance operation.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that they are interested in having a discussion about setting up some regional wood recycling sites either on their property, possibly on Park property where we, as municipalities, would take wood waste where it would be processed and turned into either mulch or some type of other product. Maybe that would be through a sawmill operation, maybe that would be through tub grinding it into mulch or wood chips.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that they were also talking to them about exploring the possibility of converting our larger facilities such as Krohn Conservatory where we spend over \$100,000 per year for natural gas into a facility that could burn wood waste.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that as Mr. Boggs said there are a lot of solutions to this problem and he thinks if we can put together a working committee and workgroup of people, we can start pulling in some of these other groups and agencies and start looking for what the solutions are and he thinks we will find it.

Mr. Gamstetter thanked the Policy Committee for their time.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that one of the areas he saw was that if you look at the cost of mulch, most of that is transported into the area from outside, and asked Mr. Gamstetter if he has talked to any of the retailers about locally produced mulch that could be bagged and sold at probably a much cheaper cost. Mr. DiPuccio stated that Mr. Gamstetter mentioned the carbon footprint, there is a real savings there in terms of the cost to transport it and the emissions that go along with transporting that long of distance to this market area.

Mr. Gamstetter stated some of it is environmentally hazardous on the other end. Cypress mulch for example is extremely destructive to the cypress forest. You have to look at it

from that approach. In his proposal, he suggested if they would also be interested in what he transferred to them. The retailer is busy right now with other things but he thinks that they can definitely be part of it. Mr. Gamstetter stated there are private people in town that do that; provide that service and he can see that that is going to be a potential conflict and we need to at least just think about competing with the private sector. That's why, initially our proposal was for wood and the way it would work is we would saw it through a contracted sawmill, it would go to the retailer, they would handle it from there, dry it, sticker it, however they are going to do it and market it and it would be indicated; there would be kind of signage in effect that says that this is recycled urban timber, its carbon negative. We are taking carbon out of storing it and making things out of it and the portion of the proceeds would come back to the Parks or to whomever to plant trees back to further reduce carbon emissions.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that this was his marketing strategy that he brought to this company. He thinks there are definitely solutions for the whole thing. Even if homeowners come and take it for free, at least we are getting rid of it and we are not disposing of it in an improper manner.

Mr. Riddle asked if 25% of the tree is usable in board lumber what was the plan with what to do with the rest of the limbs and branches that is not suitable for board lumber. Mr. Gamstetter stated that when they took down a tree, anything that is rotten or under 8-10" is ground up in their chipper. Above that, we leave it for firewood for people to take and if they do not take it, we take it back to our wood yard and we tub grind it about annually. We spend about \$40,000 a year on tub grinding and we use that for mulch in the parks.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that they could probably saw about 10% and he believed their target in their management plan is 10% of their wood waste into lumber. With that being predominately from Oak because Oak has the ability to compartmentalize better and withstands rot much better than most street trees and it does have a much higher market price but he thinks we could develop a market for Ash for usable parts and if we are proactively removing 100 trees per year or we are removing some of the large ones up front, he thinks out of the typical Ash tree we could get quite a bit of quality board feet, that is pretty clear, from our larger trees.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that you can transport the lumber out because you are taking off the outer layer. Mr. Gamstetter stated that this was correct.

Mr. Gamstetter stated that in their proposal it would be kiln dried here if we could work with this retailer, it would be kiln dried here in the county and sold. Once it is kiln dried, there is a zero percent chance. He thinks the regulations are debark down to 1/2" of sap wood.

Mr. Portune thanked Mr. Gamstetter.

Ms. Bonham stated wanted to clarify that the advantage of going to useable lumber or logs that have been deregulated in the way that they just specified, then allows you to get past the federal quarantine which means you can move that wood into Kentucky; with mulch, you can not. The Ohio quarantine specifies that if wood chips have been appropriately mulched, you can move them out a quarantined county into a non-quarantined county. The Feds are not buying that so once turned into mulch they do not care how it is processed, across state lines.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that Mr. Boggs mentioned Michigan and asked if he knew how much material was going into landfills now. Mr. Boggs stated that he tried to find an answer to that question and he could not find a clear answer.

Ms. Christmann stated that she spoke with her counterpart in another Solid Waste District to see, what, if anything they did and he said they were finding outlets for the chips and that led her to assume that it really was not going to landfill.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that his perception is that is a relatively expensive way to take care of the situation particularly if you can use it for a mulch and replacing the mulch which otherwise might be used for something else.

Mr. Boggs stated that he was trying to get a number and he thinks it's probably going to be impressive, just from what he has heard from other people. He does not think the Michigan folks, he thinks early on they were trying to prevent that; recognizing; you saw that pile being created and that was in Toledo but they had even more. Mr. Boggs stated that we would all recognize this when we start putting it into the landfill and it is just not workable thing.

Ms. Bonham stated that Sam Sherrill who is here in Hamilton County and on faculty at the Department of Design Art and Architectural Planning at UC does work with the folks in southeast Michigan on diverting to energy production.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Mary if the County's Engineer's Office, through Engineer Brayshaw, looking or already doing any program for removing Ash trees from rights-of-way on County roads? Mr. Mary stated that they were removing dead trees and they have not been finding dead Ash trees at this point.

Mr. Portune asked if the City was already removing Ash proactively? Mr. Gamstetter stated that it will begin this winter.

Mr. Portune asked if the council has adopted some of these other provisions or are you recommending them to be adopted by council. Mr. Gamstetter stated that they were recommending that they be adopted by council.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that one thing he was thinking about with the way the Ash borer damages or kills the trees, do you tend to see more of these "trees" are identified because of the storm event or because they have been weakened and when you have a storm

coming through, the trees tend to come down at that point. Mr. Boggs stated that this was an excellent question. Mr. Boggs stated that he has often wondered how Ash could be so brittle and why that in fact did not happen.

Mr. Boggs stated that the breakage was not as big of issue as he would have thought even though where he has seen Ash elsewhere, he thinks the reason is that the trees can die so rapidly that it is simply; the first thing you see is you see a dead canopy, you see a tree you can see through. Mr. Boggs stated that the most impressive thing he has seen for a person identifying it, is the homeowner from Anderson Township has very sharp eyes and he told him that he should have been an entomologist. The homeowner did a really good job of seeing the beetle but really got his attention was his trees were starting to die and they thought it was because of last year's drought and this year's drying and this is what got his attention.

Mr. Portune stated that this has been a tremendous discussion bringing us up to date on things. We have been quarantined as a county officially declared as such, we have the infestation. There are all sorts of potential options that are out there for us to consider. Many of you that are here may not know this but we have been debating in this Committee going back about a year or so of just, how should we start entering into the wood waste disposal "business" in a way that is better than just landfilling the waste and looking at things like portable saw mills. Then the discussion we had in November, the idea of acquiring a grinder was discussed as well given the potential volume of Ash wood waste that we might have with the onslaught of the EAB.

Mr. Portune stated that the original threshold discussion was about looking for ways that we could dispose of municipal wood waste that offers greater recycling potential for the use of the wood and maybe even generate some revenue potential for the District or for jurisdictions within the District so we were considering buying a portable saw mill or two and putting together a business plan around that and other things.

Mr. Portune stated that the next meeting is coming up July 19. It almost seems to him that it would be helpful if we could try to; Ms. Christmann, if Staff and maybe representation from this Committee, and he would be happy to participate in that as well, but if we could come up with sort of a menu of options to consider by the Committee, to then begin debating, at that next meeting.

Mr. Portune stated that in terms of the timing of all of this and the volume we are going to have to deal with, the approach, to what extent do you deal with things proactively, to what extent do we wait for the problem to come to us instead of us going to meet the problem. How do we offer options that are there for the District; options that might benefit local jurisdictions, options that benefit individual resident homeowners or business owners in the county that are going to have to deal with this one way or another.

Mr. Portune stated that we have got a variety of different tiers of approaches to this issue that we as a District could try to develop a menu of options that we could then go out and recommend. Part of this to gets to the issue and Mr. Boggs emphasized this just from the

education aspect of things and he also thinks that it would be beneficial if we could try and develop some sort of an information/education public service announcement campaign around the EAB beetle and individuals that have Ash trees and what to look for and to sort of; don't get panicky about it but you need to know these things and that kind of approach but that would meet our responsibility as well and he thinks it would be an appropriate use of District funds for a public service announcement type of a campaign as long as that goes.

Mr. Portune stated that what he is really saying is he thinks that in light of the conversation, we would be well served to try to develop a list of options for us then as a Committee to begin debating at the next meeting. We could gather a small group of people, Ms. Christmann, under your lead, working with Mr. Boggs office, the Division of Forestry, Ohio Department of Agriculture, and others that are involved in this. But in coming together with that menu that would make the most sense for Hamilton County given what we are seeing, the number of trees that we have here our place on the map in dealing with this issue. So he thinks there is a lot there.

Mr. Portune stated that the one thing that Mr. Gamstetter said that struck him as well, from a public service announcement or an education campaign or even from the standpoint of legislation if need be; just this whole idea of consumer protection for individuals who could find themselves being taken advantage of by unscrupulous individuals in the business of removing wood waste and that is certainly not everybody, nor the vast majority of people but there are those that are out there that he thinks whether it's a legislative answer or some other approach just to indicate that we are not going to tolerate that kind of behavior out of people and to take the steps of officially and legislatively as far as that goes. He thinks that would help also.

Mr. Portune stated that this was kind of his thought. We could all come up and say I think we ought to do "x" or we ought to do "y" today but he thinks we might be better served by reflecting on this and Ms. Christmann, have you take the lead in putting together a small group of people to work on developing some options and we all can contribute to that process as a Committee but to develop that list of things to them to begin discussing, deliberating, and taking action on beginning as early as our next meeting. Mr. Portune asked if that made sense to everybody.

Mr. DiPuccio stated his only concern; he thinks the education with the focus on encouraging the wood waste to be diverted away from the landfill and be either recycled or reused, he would certainly agree with that but; what he is hearing though is at least in other areas this has happened it is not really being sent off to a landfill and it sounds like the local governmental unit and/or the private sector has stepped in other geographic areas and that their approach of this fits with our basic philosophy which is the landfilling of the material is the last resort rather than a first resort. To the extent we could encourage that and educate people on that and local governmental units, he is fully supportive of that.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that this was maybe a little different than what Mr. Portune was talking about but that is kind of where he is coming on it. We have, at least in the past, had a general philosophy of he thinks education, definitely, but letting the private sector and the local governmental units take the lead where they so choose to and if they would choose not to then we, as a District, were, what he would call, the organization of last resort, but there was much we could do to encourage them to take that lead as they have done in the past on many items and maybe part of it is some type of an expansion on our yardwaste drop-off program as well.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thought that there were some opportunities for us to participate on this but he is trying to make sure that we sort of stay focused in what our goal is here at the District and our state mandates as well. So we might not be far off of from one another on what Mr. Portune was talking about.

Mr. Portune stated that he did not know that they were. We can occasionally disagree and that is OK but that is the process. But, we have been debating for a while ways in which we can improve and enhance or expand recycling opportunities for organic waste and that led to discussions with a focus on municipal wood waste and the idea of perhaps acquiring a portable saw mill or some other approach that might in fact even generate revenues for the District so it becomes sort of a self sustaining type of an approach. All of this got put on hold with the discussion of the onslaught on the EAB beetle last year. So we are sort of back at that spot again here though he still thinks that a number of those opportunities do exist and he clearly, our mission, in terms of encouraging local government and private industries to step up will be an element of what this is about.

Mr. Portune stated that historically the District has also stepped in and done things on its own that become catalysts for that or serve as examples for that. We have a situation here of course where it will be a county-wide issue, a county-wide problem involving not just local jurisdictions but also involving the operations of Hamilton County and to that extent, given the magnitude of the problem, he will not say “desperate times call for desperate measures” because this is not necessarily desperate in that respect but it is wide-ranging and to that effect, he believes that to effectively respond to the issue is going to require, as we are seeing elsewhere, a collaboration of any and all responsible agencies or partners each in their own way to develop a comprehensive solution and he does think there is a role for our District to play there as well.

Mr. Portune stated that, again, given the magnitude of the issue we are dealing with. He does not know that he and Mr. DiPuccio are saying something different or not and no one is acting on anything today but he just thinks we ought to try to develop a menu of options that are available that we could either get involved in or could recommend to others and that, Mr. DiPuccio, he thinks it is directly to his education issue that we agree as a primary responsibility of the District.

Mr. Portune asked that we work on doing that; putting together as much of a menu of things as we can and begin the deliberations on that at the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Riddle wondered if the Hamilton County Park District has weighed in or we can weigh in with them to see if they had a plan and maybe there are some synergies that we can combine in with and that they seem like they are a pretty good-sized dog in the fight. Mr. DiPuccio asked if they were already involved. Ms. Christmann asked Mr. Gamstetter if they were working closely on this project? Mr. Boggs stated that yes and that Mr. Gamstetter interacted with them of the Parks folks as well. Mr. Gamstetter stated that they have been to two of our meetings and stated that they tub grind and handle it like we do. They store the waste in a yard at one of their parks and they tub grind.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thought the question that he has been struggling with on this is that it seems like there are a lot of different organizations out there addressing this but it is; he is not sensing there is a formalized approach to it. Mr. Portune stated no and he thinks this is our role and he thinks we can step in and be that catalyst that compels the collaboration that needs to take place.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he was not sure and wanted to think about that one but if there is a vacuum there to be filled, and it sounds like there may be, the question is “is the District the best agency to step in and do that?” and maybe the answer to that is yes if none of the other agencies have the ability to do that or do not have the authority given the direction by their Boards to do that and he is not sure. That is kind of an issue he is struggling with to be honest with you. Mr. Portune stated OK and told Mr. DiPuccio that this helped understand if there is a difference, and he is not sure that there is, but at least he now knows better where Mr. DiPuccio is coming from. Mr. DiPuccio stated that Mr. Gamstetter mentioned Hamilton County Park District, you mentioned they are doing tub grinding and he did not know if they had their own tub grinder or they come in and contract it out. So there is probably a good example where we got – you are contracting it out, they are contracting out and maybe there is ability there to get together and maybe it is two major contracts for the entire county and stated that he just used that as an example where you can do tub grinding for the private sector provided there are probably some economies of scale knowing that one has to schedule it and one has to move it around, one can get better utilization out of my equipment to do that.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. DiPuccio if tub grinding was the best – Mr. Portune stated that he sees the District, has a real role and responsibility to play here and at a minimum, at least alerting people as to the menu of options that are available because tub grinding to him seems like, and he is just picking on that because Mr. DiPuccio raised it, not that that is the only answer and to him that is fairly limited in its impact or benefit. It certainly can be a response that would deal with the magnitude of the problem, but he thinks we are missing out on an awful lot of other opportunities if that is the only response that there is and to the extent that the County Park District has focused on that and that alone, if we could step in and provide other options and help to make that happen and help to coordinate that with the City Park Board or with other jurisdictions that are weighing in on this issue; whether its Cincinnati or Wyoming or Anderson Township or who knows and then there is the private sector. There is just – a lot of people are kind of doing there own thing at different levels of knowledge or understanding of what the issue is all about.

Mr. Portune stated that he did sense a vacuum and he thinks that is really more than anything else that is leading him to have called this meeting in the first place and to encourage us as a District to weigh in and to help to provide that kind of leadership on this issue; to bring in everyone together and making sure everyone knows all the opportunities might be.

Mr. Riddle stated that he was gauging what was the status of the current, whether it is the City or the Park Board, what they are doing today really is not relative to what is going to happen when you lose one out of seven trees. If they have a tub grinder for each department, its probably will not be enough if tub grinding is the answer. Mr. Riddle stated that end-use of ground material is limited and we know that when we try to sell mulch, its not stuff that was just freshly ground; it has to set in a windrow for months before it has any value. Fuel wasted may be an option but he thinks there is the issue that we need to be prepared for in a couple of years when we start seeing huge quantities of wood waste, not exactly what the current day situation is.

Mr. Portune stated that unless there is other conversation around this issue, he thinks we have gone as far as we can for the day and he thanked everyone for being here and for their contributions to our conversation. We covered a lot of ground today. Mr. Portune thanked Ms. Christmann for her willingness to take the lead on this and help.

**3. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

Mr. Portune stated that the next Policy Committee meeting was July 19 and again, we will develop at least the beginning framework of some options that we can then deliberate on whether we want to act on and approve or advance or work some more on or whatever the case may be.

Mr. Portune thanked everyone for their willingness to get together today.

**4. ADJOURNMENT (Target Time – 2:30 pm)**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 2:28 pm.