

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE
March 10, 2005**

DATE: March 10, 2005

TIME: 2:00 pm

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

PRESENT: **Policy Committee Members**

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative
Dr. Carl Evert, General Interest Member
Bernie Fiedeldej, Township Representative
Deborah Holston, Representative of Largest Municipality
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County General Health District Representative
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member
Glenn Welling, Public Member

DOES Staff

Cory Chadwick, Director
Holly Christmann, Assistant Program Manager
Ken Edgell, Environmental Administrative Coordinator
Errin Howard, Education Assistant
Ali Khodadad, Operations Coordinator
Sue Magness, Education Specialist
Susan Schumacher, Administrative Secretary, Clerk

Others In Attendance

Karen Ball, Commissioner Portune's Aide
Nee Fong Chin, Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County General Health District
Brian DePeel, Environmental Enterprises, Inc.
Tiffany Hardy, City of Cincinnati
Alice Kennedy, Resident
Karen Luken, RW Beck
Dave Nutini, Hamilton County General Health District
Bob Orr, CSI Waste
David Robinson, Schottenstein Zox & Dunn
Jeff Rumpke, Rumpke
Scott Runtz, City of Cincinnati
Tom Turchiano, Rumpke

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.

II. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes - January 13, 2005

Mr. Welling moved to approve the January 13, 2005 minutes. Ms. Holston seconded; Mr. Fiedeldej abstained. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

B. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

-Under Policy Items - City of Cincinnati Special Grant Request

III. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATE

Ms. Christmann stated that the Policy Committee was provided a copy of the 2003/2004 revenue comparison and the first month's revenue from 2005. Comparing the two years, revenue was up approximately \$19,000. Comparing 2005 to 2004 (January), revenue has increased by \$7,000. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the financial report. Mr. Fiedeldej moved; Dr. Evert seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

IV. POLICY ITEMS

A. City of Cincinnati Special Grant Request

Ms. Christmann stated that in the City's contract with Rumpke Recycling, there is a curbside bin allotment of 3,000. Under the current contract, Rumpke does not have any more bins to distribute. The City has contacted the District to assist them in providing additional bins. Ms. Christmann stated that in the City's proposal, it was requested that \$50,000 be used to pay for 5,000 bins. Ms. Christmann stated that she spoke with Rumpke representatives and that the cost per bin could be reduced to \$8/bin so the total cost would be \$40,000.

Ms. Christmann stated that in addition to the curbside bin request, the City's proposal also states that they would like to do a pilot program using carts to collect recycling once the City changes to twice/month curbside collection. Studies have proven that the recycling tonnages increase when carts are used. Rumpke is willing to try this and the City is suggesting that 1,500 households be targeted. The proposal requests \$60,000 to be used for the purchase of the carts.

Ms. Christmann stated that this was a general overview and the total cost the City is requesting is \$100,000.

Mr. Portune asked if the City's request would still include twice/month pick-up for recycling as opposed to weekly service. Ms. Christmann stated that the contract with Rumpke goes until the end of the year and asked for clarification regarding 2006. Ms. Holston stated that the City is planning to keep twice/month curbside collection in 2006. Ms. Holston stated that the proposal also included educating the 1,500 residents that were on the chosen route for the carts.

Mr. Portune asked if the City was going to also advertise that if residents that were not on the pilot route, they too could purchase a cart for recycling. Ms. Christmann stated that the problem with that is Rumpke uses different trucks to pick up the carts and elaborated on Rumpke's different trucks.

Ms. Hardy briefly described the program and discussed the positives that will come out of the program. A brief question and answer session ensued.

Mr. Welling stated that since 1,500 households will be using carts, can it be assumed that 1,500 used bins will become available? Ms. Christmann stated yes and that she would check with Rumpke to see if they would be willing to use these bins versus buying new ones.

Dr. Evert stated that he used the paper yardwaste bags and wondered if they could be incorporated into using them for recycling. Ms. Christmann stated that she would speak with Rumpke and see if the material recovery facility could handle those type of bags. Mr. Rumpke stated that they could speak with the buyer of the material.

Mr. Fiedeldej stated that since the City will be receiving RRI dollars from the District on top of the \$100,000, have the City repay the District. Ms. Christmann stated that the District did help the City of Loveland for the purchase of bins in the amount of \$1,000.

Mr. Portune stated that he was in favor of supporting this item under the terms as originally presented and entertained a motion. After discussion, Ms. Holston motioned to accept the City's request for a grant with the exception of reducing the amount of the cost of the bins from \$50,000 to \$40,000 for a total of \$100,000 as submitted. Dr. Evert asked Ms. Holston if she wanted to amend the motion to include any profits the City may receive. Ms. Holston stated yes. In the event that fees are generated in an excess of a stated benchmark of \$350,000, these fees will be reserved and used for procuring additional bins to further enhance the program. Dr. Evert seconded; Mr. DiPuccio abstained. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

Mr. Portune restated the motion as follows: That the Solid Waste Management District approve the proposal and request for assistance from the City of Cincinnati in the amounts stated with the exception being that the grant allocation for the purchase of 5,000 bins be reduced to \$40,000 from \$50,000 and further that the proposal include a provision that in the event that fees are generated in excess of a stated benchmark of \$350,000, then all such fees in excess of that amount is generated through the City's curbside recycling program would be reserved for and used for the purpose of procuring additional recycling bins to further enhance the City's curbside recycling program.

Mr. Welling reiterated his idea of reusing the bins.

B. State Tipping Fee Increase

Ms. Christmann stated that recently Governor Taft recently released the budget for 2006-2007 which eliminates the corporate franchise tax which funds ODNR - Division of Recycling & Litter Prevention and requested to remove the OEPA's environmental programs from the general revenue. To replace those funds, Governor Taft has proposed an increased State tipping fee on Ohio landfills. In the proposal, it is recommended that a State tipping fee increase of \$2.75 be incorporated in addition to the current fee of \$2.00. This proposal will cost waste generators in Hamilton County \$3 million; \$2.2 million from the commercial/industrial and \$800,000 from the residential sector. Of the \$3 million, \$1 million will go to ODNR and \$2 million will go to OEPA for regulatory programs such as air and water quality.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District is concerned with waste flows. Any change in tipping fees could affect the amount of waste that could be exported out-of-state which would affect District revenues. Another concern of the District is the increase in fees to local communities. Attachment C of the Policy Packet outlines the financial impacts to local communities. On an individual basis, fees would increase by approximately 2-3% with the City of Cincinnati being affected the most with an increase in disposal fees of roughly \$300,000.

Ms. Christmann stated that another concern is the impact this fee will have on recycling programs. As communities will be paying more for their waste collection contracts, they may be looking at ways to reduce their overall solid waste management costs i.e. eliminating curbside recycling, drop-off programs, etc.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District has spoken with a few communities that contract for waste and recycling and they didn't seem too concerned with the increase; they feel that their recycling programs are too popular and they do not think they would be cut.

Ms. Christmann stated that in terms of ODNR; one million dollars goes to them and the District receives \$283,000 from them in grant funds. The District receives \$141,500 and the Keep Cincinnati Beautiful receives \$141,500 to provide litter programs. Given that Hamilton County only receives \$283,000 and ODNR receives one million from Hamilton County, the cost exceeds the benefit.

Ms. Christmann stated that because of all of these concerns, the District has been approached by the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (Franklin County), who would like to put together a coalition

of large urban solid waste districts. Cuyahoga County is included in this coalition and they have asked that Hamilton County also be included in this effort to provide negotiations with the State to really look at the OEPA fee and 1) Justify the increase to their budgets because both will be getting increases and 2) Inform them of the negative impacts this will have on solid waste districts in meeting state mandated recycling goals and 3) The coalition is hoping this will be a negotiation effort so that solid waste districts can provide input into the financial and programmatic decisions that the State makes.

Ms. Christmann introduced Mr. Robinson from Schottenstein Zox & Dunn and stated that he was representing Franklin County and Cuyahoga County in this effort. Mr. Christmann stated that she just found out that Ohio Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America were also in opposition to this tax and Ms. Luken was present on behalf of that Chapter to answer any questions.

Mr. Portune stated that as he understood, the effort to forge a coalition of the large, urban districts includes a request that the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District allocate \$30,000 to help underwrite this effort. Mr. Portune asked Mr. Robinson that what exactly is it that would give any hope that a lobbying effort would be successful and what is it that \$30,000 would buy the District?

Mr. Robinson introduced himself and stated that he appreciated the opportunity to speak with the Policy Committee. Mr. Robinson stated that his firm has been working with SWACO doing government affairs for about 5 years and discussed his background.

Mr. Robinson stated that in answering Mr. Portune's questions 1) Yes, he thought the District, along with Cuyahoga County and SWACO did indeed have a shot; A lot of work has gone into this from the public waste district side, strong group of coalition partners (Rumpke, Waste Management, BFI, CCAO, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Township Association, they are hoping that the local government associations will be in support of it, Ohio Chamber of Commerce). OEPA and ODNR do not have a broad base of constituent support among the legislators.

Dr. Evert asked what part the District's \$30,000 would be of the total? Mr. Robinson stated that he was on a standard \$5,000/month contract with SWACO and the typical lobbying contract. Cuyahoga County has contributed a similar amount. Dr. Evert asked if the District would be paying half, one-third, etc. Mr. Robinson stated that the District was paying approximately a little less than one-third.

Dr. Evert asked if Mr. Robinson's firm had a strategy for an alternative. Mr. Robinson stated that they would. Part of the strategy is that the Agency didn't consult with any districts prior to putting this state issue in the State budget and he would rather negotiate with them once the tax is removed from the budget.

Mr. Fiedelvey stated that from what he's heard, the trash would go somewhere else; wouldn't that be a good thing? Ms. Christmann stated that the District's overall goal is to reduce reliance on landfills; whether it goes to Rumpke or a Kentucky landfill. Mr. Fiedelvey stated that the District does not receive any funding on what is recycled; so wouldn't this be a tremendous incentive for people to recycle more? Ms. Christmann stated that the District's concern is that most communities contract for waste services on a per household basis not a per ton basis. Mr. Fiedelvey questioned 1) How the District supports something, if it costs money, that could save our landfill 2) It would increase recycling, be more of an incentive for recycling, and yet, the District is saying "let's fight this because we really don't want to support recycling.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann what the percentage of the waste that goes for recycling was. Ms. Christmann stated that Hamilton County was recycling about 500,000-600,000 tons and disposing over 1 million tons. Mr. Portune stated that this was approximately 33% and it would take a lot more recycling to counterbalance the increased cost. Mr. Portune asked if the District had done any kind of calculations on what a break even point might be and further, given what the existing waste stream is

whether there is even a possibility to arrive at a break even point in the event that recycling was increased? Ms. Christmann stated that the District does know what is going in the waste stream after reviewing ODNR's waste characterization study. In the staff analysis, an example was given from a community and what they would do to off balance the increase in fees. Ms. Christmann discussed this example.

The Policy Committee as a whole discussed the entire issue from each member's perspective.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Robinson what the timing was for this issue. Mr. Robinson stated that it was months away and that the State's fiscal year begins on July 1.

Ms. Luken stated that SWANA voted on this yesterday and Mr. Aluotto was not part of the vote. SWANA's primary concern is that none of the fee revenue going to OEPA from these fee increases are going to solid waste division. It is all going to the air and water division which SWANA is supportive of but their concern is that OEPA has not tried to develop a funding mechanism that would assess the fee to the generators of air and water pollutants. In conversations with OEPA, their response has been that there was already this funding mechanism, landfills have the scales, etc., instead of trying to figure out a way to equally tax or assess a fee to air and water pollutant generators.

Ms. Luken stated that if the waste flows do go out of state, SWANA's concern will be the constant fee increase. The fee increase may not have a market impact but it is a very volatile funding source and not the appropriate funding source because it is not going to solid waste regulations.

Mr. Portune thanked Mr. Robinson for his presentation.

Mr. Portune stated that he was not prepared to act on this item today because there remain a lot of unanswered questions regarding the effect and impact as well as strategy. Mr. Portune stated that he would like to see this develop a little more, and it might give the District more insight to see how the debate goes in the House.

Ms. Christmann asked if, at a very minimum, if the legislators could be informed about the ODNR portion of this bill by giving a quick background and state that their goals are not in line with solid waste district goals in what they fund through their grant programs.

Mr. Portune stated that if the District wanted to take a position on ODNR and the District's work plans not being in line, that this is a completely different issue as what was being discussed. Mr. Portune stated that the Policy Committee did not have a Staff analysis on how ODNR work plans differs from what the District's goals are, but if the District wanted to prepare something and circulate it to the Board, then that is OK and quite helpful.

Mr. Riddle stated that each member represented a different group and gave examples. Mr. Riddle stated that the additional \$2.75/ton would do to the City's budget is pretty clear. Manufacturing would also be affected by the \$2.75 on their waste disposal. Mr. Riddle stated that he has information, similar to Mr. Robinson's but was not at liberty to share, the strategy that they have. There are plenty of other areas and opportunities to achieve that \$2.75 without impacting the ability of OEPA to operate through the system.

Mr. Portune requested a follow-up report from Staff that addresses as many questions as possible that were brought up today so that this issue could be voted on at the next meeting.

Mr. Ingram stated that this proposal came right out of the blue and no one has had a chance to see where expenses can be cut and what can be done to offset some of the tax without harming the

operations of OEPA. Mr. Ingram asked Mr. Robinson if he had this information. Mr. Ingram suggested that a Special Policy Committee meeting be held in April since the next regular Policy Committee will not be until May.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that this proposed fee increase was supposed to replace the franchise tax and asked Mr. Robinson if this was correct. Mr. Robinson stated that as he understood it, the franchise tax portion was for ODNR and the OEPA portion is general revenue fund. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that he would have a hard time supporting it at this time.

A brief discussion on tax reform ensued.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Chin what the requirements were for holding a special meeting. Ms. Chin stated a 24-hour notice would need to be made. Mr. Portune requested a supplemental report be shared with the Policy Committee as soon as possible, that he was open to the idea of a Special Meeting in April, but needed the information first.

Mr. DiPuccio asked about legal representation from the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office regarding proper procedures. Mr. Portune stated that this item was not presented in the form of legal representation but as a single item lobbying contract. The contract would need to be reviewed by the Prosecutor's Office before any action could be taken. Mr. Portune asked Ms. Chin if he was correct. Ms. Chin concurred.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if this was an acceptable expenditure by the District. Mr. Portune stated that as long as its within the interest of the District and this clearly relates to the revenue source of the District, it would be a permissible expenditure. Mr. Portune stated that if Mr. Fiedeldey had a question about it, he would ask the Prosecutor's Office to render an opinion on whether this is a permissible expenditure. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that yes he would want a Prosecutor's Opinion because he thinks it's a stretch.

C. Host Community Fee

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that Attachment D of the Policy Packet provided a Staff analysis of the Host Community Fee and he thinks the host fee should be increased because it hasn't been increased since 1988. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that in past discussions, it was construed as Colerain Township only and this is not the case. This is a State law and he wonders if some of the items the Staff report mentions apply today.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that in 1988, the State legislators stated that .25/ton was the maximum a host township could charge. There have also been discussions that Colerain Township is receiving more trash today than in 1988. That is not what this is about; the fee has not been increased since 1988. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that due to inflation, that .25 is approximately .15 today. In the Staff report, the .25 fee was compared to applying a 3% inflation rate for 15 years; this yields a revised rate/ton of .39/.40.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that if you took the .25 and reversed it out, Colerain Township would probably be getting only .10/15 per ton. Based on what the legislator said in 1988, it was .25/ton and that was 1988 dollars. Mr. Fiedeldey stated if he didn't live in Colerain, he wouldn't be talking about it but since he does and is representing Colerain, it is an obvious slice that needs to be looked at and he is doing this as a trustee where he can generate money.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that it is all about inflation; the fee has not been raised and everything else has raised. This is not about Colerain; this is State law. Mr. Fiedeldey quoted some cons of the Staff report.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that he would love to have the support of the District to go forward and he would like to see it at least raised to 2005 dollars which would probably be .40/ton with every 5 years being adjusted for inflation.

Mr. Portune asked if recently there had been an adjustment or renegotiation of the amount that Colerain Township was receiving? Mr. Fiedeldey stated that what Mr. Portune was referring to was a court settlement between the Township and Rumpke and had nothing to do with what he had stated earlier regarding the .25/ton.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that the court settlement was an additional .20/ton but the .25/ton was in 1988 dollars. Mr. Portune asked Mr. Fiedeldey what Colerain was receiving currently. Mr. Fiedeldey stated .25/ton in 1988 dollars and the additional .20/ton has not started yet. Mr. Riddle stated the new fee will start in 2007 or early 2008 when the expansion is finished.

Mr. Riddle stated that the .25 was established to offset the various things the Staff report refers to. If you look at some communities where there is a true cost for having a facility in their community, the fee makes sense. i.e. truck traffic. In Rumpke's case, it is a little different. Colerain Township does have truck traffic but the traffic rides on an Interstate Highway, exits on a state highway, and enters the facility on a county highway. The township has no road maintenance that is applied to that revenue source. Rumpke may use the police and fire department sparingly. Property values; Rumpke pays a premium for property around the facility which raises comparables when you go to buy or sell a house in that area.

Mr. Riddle referred to the example in Attachment D and stated that it was an unrealistic evaluation and stated his reasons why. Colerain Township is gaining revenue for very little cost associated for having the facility. The State did not preclude the local community from negotiating rates on occasion. ORC states "no more than .25/ton for the host community fee." Mr. Riddle stated that the \$480,000 that Rumpke is currently paying will increase to approximately \$900,000/year with the additional .20 ton from the southern expansion. Hamilton County has a very large facility that produces a lot of revenue for the District and Colerain Township.

Mr. Welling stated that it seemed like there are two sides of the argument are 1) When the legislature first passed the legislation, they assumed there was going to be some impact on host communities and rather arbitrarily set the fee at .25 and this fee should be indexed up over time 2) There should be a more specific job of determining exactly what the specific impacts are to specific communities and adjusting that based on those specific reports. Mr. Welling asked Mr. Fiedeldey if he correctly stated what the two sides were of the argument.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that he didn't think what Mr. Welling stated was the two sides of the argument. Mr. Fiedeldey asked if he was to prove that the tipping fee should be raised to \$5/ton, wondered if this was realistic to go to the State; absolutely not. The intent was to compensate communities for lost taxes due to lost property values. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that he could assure the Board that residents have gone to the County Auditor to get their taxes reduced because of this.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated there have been many homes that were bulldozed down just so there will be a place to put the landfill. What they have lost is now gone. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that Mr. Riddle touched upon the fact that Rumpke did purchase the homes and paid good money for them but as soon as they were bulldozed down, to put more waste there, Colerain Township has now lost that tax base. Once the landfill is filled up with trash, in theory, the property is that value. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that when he pulled records of what property's were; if the property would normally be worth \$15-\$20,000/acre, its now valued at \$400/acre. The loss is tremendous.

Mr. Riddle stated that Mr. Fiedeldey was talking about Rumpke's unique situation but they haven't bulldozed one house to build the landfill. Mr. Riddle and Mr. Fiedeldey discussed this issue.

Mr. Welling stated that on a Statewide perspective, Mr. Fiedeldey stated that .25/ton has not changed and should be indexed. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that the same .25 in 1988; make it the same .25 in 2005 and there seems to be a major problem with that. Mr. Welling stated the other side of the coin seems to be to demonstrate what the true costs are and a decision will be made to compensate accordingly.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that they won't if the fee is above inflation and stated that he didn't want to get into a debate about Colerain Township.

Mr. Portune stated he did not know how the Committee could have the discussion without talking about Colerain. Mr. Portune stated that the State Legislature deemed 17 years ago that it would be appropriate for host communities with landfills to be able to receive an amount up to .25/ton for the purpose of addressing the negative financial impact of the landfill on that community. Whether it is decreased property values, lost residents therefore lost tax base, increase on demands of services, etc. but its very specific to the host community and didn't understand how the discussion could be had without talking about Colerain, in part.

Mr. Portune stated that long before Mr. Fiedeldey was a trustee, Colerain Township decided that they would seek and obtain the full .25. By law, this is a permissive amount; an amount up to .25. Colerain Township took the whole .25 and has been collecting the full .25. Mr. Portune stated that Mr. Fiedeldey raised the issue that he would like the Policy Committee to support Colerain Township in an increase in that amount; whether it is petitioning the legislator to raise it or index it. So at a minimum, this would require some form of State action in order for this to happen. Mr. Portune stated that he thought the issue of indexing may be impermissible because it is deemed to be a taxing function and one can not index so that something increases automatically. Ms. Chin concurred with Mr. Portune. Mr. Portune stated that he did not know if that would apply here or not.

Mr. Portune stated that he would like to see what the settlement was in the legal case that led to the increase (additional .20/ton) that will be effective in 2007 or 2008. There is no doubt that there is some impact on the host community by having a landfill there and he thinks host communities are entitled to a measure of compensation for that it is legitimate for a broader community to support that because everyone benefits by virtue of the fact that Hamilton County has a landfill and a lot of other places are glad it is not in their backyard. Mr. Portune stated because of that fact, it is appropriate that everybody pay for the privilege of having this landfill and that the host community is appropriately compensated for the damage done by everyone to that community by virtue of siting the landfill there and relying on it being there.

Mr. Portune stated that there were a lot of factors to this and whether it is a straight indexing, or if its related to the actual economic harm, there are legitimate differences in ways that one can look at the issue. Mr. Portune stated that he did not know where he stood on this issue but would like to receive additional information.

Dr. Evert stated that an information item that should be in the records is the total taxes lost by appeal to the tax commissioners related to the landfill over this period of time. This is a direct loss and to recognize it, it must be on the record. Other infrastructure improvements that were required as a consequence can be demonstrated by the presence of the landfill and if the landfill compensation money fails to cover that proven expense, then there is a case if it is not, then you are still in the black.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if he was looking at Colerain with blinders on or are we looking at State law. Dr. Evert stated that if Colerain makes a model than certainly that could be promulgated model to the State

level but you have to have a case to start with. Colerain Township has the classic case that could form the argument for the rest of the people to move forward to do likewise to make a State issue.

Mr. Ingram stated it would be nice to quantify these costs and then go in; it will still be negotiated, just like any other piece of legislation. He would also be interested in what the other host communities are saying. Mr. Ingram compared tipping fees for solid waste districts, HB 432 and host fees. Mr. Ingram stated that he knew where both Mr. Fiedeldey and Mr. Riddle were coming from. Mr. Ingram stated that it has to be more than just Colerain Township, it has to be factual, and quantifiable.

Mr. Riddle suggested that a good place to start would be taking this debate to the township association or a association by host communities and let them take it to the legislature. The debate in Hamilton County may be different than others and it is truly a Statewide issue then take the debate to a Statewide forum.

Mr. Portune agreed with Mr. Ingram in obtaining as much factual information as possible and this is where he would go with this. Keep the issue alive and moving forward but lets get as much detail as possible in respect to what has gone on, what went into it, and where things stand today and the Policy Committee will carry it forward.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked Mr. Riddle why Rumpke's waste fees, as far as disposal fees, not the same as 1988? Mr. Riddle stated that Rumpke's disposal fees have not increased much, the industry thought that the RCRA & Subtitle D regulations would force the price of disposal up. That didn't happen. So Rumpke has not seen a representative increase in disposal as one would think.

Mr. Portune stated that they were going to move to the next item.

D. School Grant Program

Ms. Christmann stated that each year, the District awards grants to schools for various recycling programs. This year, the District is recommending funding for Hughes Center, Purcell Marian High School, and St. Bernard-Elmwood Place High School.

Dr. Evert asked what the nature of the recycling was. Ms. Magness stated the recycling programs that are going to occur in the schools are the single stream programs that the District is test piloting with Cincinnati Public Schools where everything accepted is also accepted in the curbside bin program.

Mr. Ingram motioned to approve the school grants. Mr. Welling seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

V. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Portune stated to carry the informational items to the next meeting in the event that there needs to be discussion about them. Ms. Christmann stated that they were just updates. Mr. Portune stated that the Policy Committee would accept the Manager's Memo as adequate for those items.

VI. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. DiPuccio complimented the District for saving \$60,000 regarding the operation of the yardwaste drop-off sites.

Dr. Evert asked about the status of Nu-Blend. Ms. Christmann stated that the District was attending weekly meetings with Nu-Blend and some of the non-profits that are working with them now.

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Mr. Welling stated that as the minutes indicated from the last meeting, the possibility of the members doing some sort of strategic planning exercise. Mr. Welling stated that he has been in contact with some community development specialist's and there is a person lined up ready to facilitate the exercise. Mr. Welling stated that the Policy Committee needs to discuss it to find out when and where this could occur and that the charge would be minimal. Mr. Welling stated that as soon as dates are identified, this can be accomplished.

Mr. Portune stated that Mr. Welling should meet with Staff so that something more concrete could be brought to the next meeting and the Committee can move to act.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if it was ever found out if the strategic planning meeting was required to be advertised. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff would find out. Dr. Evert asked if this was for the Plan Update. Mr. Welling stated that this is different than the Plan Update meetings; this is not Policy related - this is related to how the Board functions as a group. Mr. Portune stated that it would still be the Board getting together as a group. Mr. Portune stated that he recently received a Prosecutor's Opinion on other task forces, commissions, etc. and their work was to required to be publicly noticed and he thought the same would apply for the strategic planning meeting.

Mr. Welling stated to be clear, the strategic planning meeting is not related to the Plan Update meeting.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nutini stated that he wanted to introduce Chuck DeJonckheere as the new Waste Management Director for the Hamilton County General Health District. The Committee welcomed Mr. DeJonckheere.

VIII. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

Regular Policy Committee Meeting - Thursday, May 12, 2005 at the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services, 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219 at 2:00 pm. Mr. Portune stated that in lieu of discussions today, there may be a Special Policy Committee Meeting in April.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 4:15 pm .