



NORTHEAST INDIANA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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PUBLIC NOTICE NORTHEAST INDIANA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DISTRICT OFFICE

Tuesday, January 8, 2008

6:30 P.M.

Agenda

- ⇒ 6:30 p.m. Call to Order
- ⇒ 6:32 p.m. Minutes of , 2007
- ⇒ 6:35 p.m. Registry of Claims/Treasurer's Report
- ⇒ 6:40 p.m. Executive Committee Report
 - Resolution 2008-1 Salary Ordinances 2008
 - 2008 PERF Employer Percentage
- ⇒ 6:45 p.m. Recycling Drop-Off Contract
 - Beth Shellman/Town of Albion
 - Town of Avilla
 - Other Comment & Discussion
- ⇒ 7:20 p.m. Programs & Operations Report
- ⇒ 7:25 p.m. Legislative Issues
- ⇒ 7:30 p.m. Other Items Pending
- ⇒ 7:35 p.m. Public Comment
- ⇒ 7:40 p.m. Adjourn



Northeast Indiana Solid Waste Management District

Board of Directors Meeting

January 8, 2008

Board Members Present: Mark Pankop, Ron Smith, Donald VanWye, Don Kaufman, Mayor Norm Yoder, Sara Tubergen, Don Moore, Mayor Patty Fisel, Terry Helmer and Mayor Suzanne Handshoe

Board Members Absent: Mayor Richard Hickman, Phillip Curtis, Loretta Smart, Mayor David Wiant, Fred Brown and Yvonne Eash

CAC Present: Colleen Hake Boyd and Chad Arnold

District Attorney: Andrew Kruse

Staff Present: Steve Christman, Pam DeCamp, Jennifer Franz, Linda Zirkle and Rich Caston.

Contractor: Chris Himes

Public Present: Albion and Avilla Residents

MARK PANKOP:

Seeing the time is 6:30 I would like to call the Northeast Indiana Solid Waste Management District Board of Directors Meeting to order for January 8th of 2008. The first meeting of 2008. Seeing a large number of the public represented I would like to welcome them tonight. We're glad to have some input from the public. It's something that in most cases has been absent for some time. I would like to say that you're welcome to speak at any time if you would be recognized first and state your name. Seeing the large number I guess I would request that we keep it down to two or three minutes. And there will be a time in the agenda that allows for public input. If, indeed you have concerns or questions at any point in time, I guess I'm going to ask if you

would raise your hand. I likely will recognize you at that time. Talk louder. Delbert, I'll keep you back there into my sight and if you can't hear you make yourself known.

DELBERT SMITH:

We'll let you know.

MARK PANKOP:

Proceeding through our agenda we have the minutes of the December meeting. Have the board members had time to check those minutes and make corrections or recommendations?

DON KAUFMAN:

Motion to approve.

DON VAN WYE:

Second.

MARK PANKOP:

The motion was made by Don Kaufman and seconded by Don Van Wye. All in favor?

GROUP RESPONSE:

Aye.

MARK PANKOP:

Opposition? Minutes approved. We have the registry of claims and the treasurer's report.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

You have in your packages the treasurer's report as a cover page in the usual form. Beginning balance of \$130,833.72. You'll note incoming receipts for the month that total \$266,675.12. On the back of that page you'll see some distributions. The property tax levy from DeKalb, LaGrange and Noble in more detail. The claims to be paid out are as listed. The total claims disbursements, that I'll go through in detail here in a

moment, of \$92,748.89. For an operating balance in the Solid Waste Management fund of \$304,809.95. Moving across to the right of the page, the non-reverting capital fund is currently at \$198,123.91. The website fund is down to \$1,000.00. And the rainy day fund is listed at \$676.00. For a total operating balance of \$504,901.21. The treasurer's report is then followed by a detailed registry of claims. I'll point the one time non-routine bills. Please note on page five halfway down the page, Star Financial Bank is a payoff of one of the fleet vehicles, the 2004 Blazer. The controller wanted to go ahead and pay it off to save the remaining interest. It was scheduled to be paid off in May of this year. We just paid it off early. Also please note on page eight, Morbark, Inc. is a substantial amount of \$5,339.51. Those are new parts for the tub grinder, discharge augers, hammermill hardware, hammers and the like. The guys will be replacing those augers. It will be down for a few days while doing that. So that is a one time non-repeat. And I think I missed one somewhere. There's sand and salt charges for this past winter. That's non-routine as well. The rest are all . . . the heating bill, electric bill, the compost lot and those type of things. Mr. Chairman.

MARK PANKOP:

Are there additional questions or concerns with the claim? One entry certainly has my curiosity. A Volvo exhaust at fifty-five cents.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

It's probably a piece of hardware. Rich, a nut, bolt, washer?

RICH CASTON:

Pipe plug.

MARK PANKOP:

A pipe plug?

RICH CASTON:

A pipe plug in the engine pipe. There's another bill there too for the rest of the repair.

RON SMITH:

Right. It's \$91.39 on page nine.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

There's \$91.00 from Selking also. So there's a muffler in the claims that goes along with that same repair.

DON VAN WYE:

I move that we approve the claim.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Second.

MARK PANKOP:

Did that include the treasurer's report also, Don?

DON VAN WYE:

Yes.

MARK PANKOP:

It's been properly moved and seconded that we approve the treasurer's report and the claims dated January 8th, 2008. All in favor?

GROUP RESPONSE:

Aye.

MARK PANKOP:

Opposed? Passed. Executive Committee Report?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

There's the two routine house resolutions. The PERF resolution required by the public employees retirement fund. It sets the percent. And then the routine State Board of Accounts Salary Resolution.

ANDREW KRUSE:

Does the, Mr. Director, the PERF percentage from a letter received from PERF dated December 28th says it increased from 2007 of 5.25% to 6.75%?

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

ANDREW KRUSE:

And then as far as the other resolution, it's Resolution 2008-1 a Salary Ordinance. Does that simply ratify the salary that has been pre-approved by the board in its budget, which has already been approved?

MARK PANKOP:

Both of these ordinances are annual events that are normally taken care in the first meeting?

ANDREW KRUSE:

Yes.

MARK PANKOP:

Are there questions or concerns with these two ordinances? And I think we should take them one at a time for approval or rejection. I'm asking for a motion to approve or otherwise with these two. And as I said, let's take them separately.

SARA TUBERGEN:

I'll make a motion to approve the salary ordinance for 2008.

MARK PANKOP:

The salary ordinance. It's been a motion.

DON VAN WYE:

I'll second it.

MARK PANKOP:

And seconded. The ultimate question. All in favor?

GROUP RESPONSE:

Aye.

MARK PANKOP:

Opposed? Hearing none. Assuming it passed.

RON SMITH:

Mr. Chairman, my second, as a rhetorical question before we go ahead with the approval of it, the PERF was duly considered and funded for the next fiscal year. Is that correct?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Through the budget, yes.

RON SMITH:

Then I make the motion we approve that.

SARA TUBERGEN:

Second.

MARK PANKOP:

It's been properly moved and seconded. Again, all in favor?

GROUP RESPONSE:

Aye.

MARK PANKOP:

Opposed? Hearing none. Moving forward then to the recycling drop-off contract.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

We've provided quite a bit of time on the agenda tonight for those who wish to talk about the new recycling drop-off contract. But just before we do that let me set up some of the background information for you so that you understand where the District has been and why we've arrived at the point that we've arrived at. This may save a little bit.

What's on the screen and highlighted is page 4-38 and page 4-39 out of the Solid Waste District's State Approved Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. And under recycling and processing the original solid waste plan that's been approved by the State, that we still operate under and are required to operate under by law, calls for residential curbside collection in addition to and in conjunction with a rural recycling drop-off program. A lot of people don't realize it, but I want to point out that the plan to this day still calls for curbside recycling in seven of the largest cities from 1992 to 1995. And then starting in '96 a second tier or seven for a total of fourteen cities and towns within the Solid Waste District to have curbside collection of recyclables . . . typically it's in conjunction with curbside collection of solid waste as well . . . in place. Those programs and that technology for recovery complements the rural drop-off recovery program. Okay? And so I wanted to point that out. That's in our approved Solid Waste Plan. There are a variety of other things that are in the plan. Other programs as well that we do. Many of you may or may not be familiar with our composting program. The District physically operates and makes a finished compost product at a couple of our sites that we have control over. The first is the DeKalb compost lot and the Steuben compost lot. As many of you know we provide support services to a lot of the cities and towns in the form of processing materials and grinding brush. And there's a whole long list of cities and towns that we've ground for over the years. We can get into that a little bit later if you want that information. And then in addition to that I want to point out that the District itself operated the rural drop-off program with its own people and its own trucks for a number of years. Up until 1995 as a matter of fact. We collected it ourselves, we hauled it to a processing facility in Albion ourselves and we marketed it ourselves. In 1995 we privatized that operation. And by that I mean we bid it out to the private sector. And through employees leaving we downsized the District from fourteen

full time employees down to five full time employees. By privatizing the rural drop-off program at that point in time it freed up about three hundred thousand dollars in the budget. And that has enabled us to continue to manage the growth of the programs since '95 until today. Composting is not yet profitable in this particular area of the State and Nation. So there aren't a lot of opportunities just yet to privatize some of these services into the free market place, if you will, to move onto other services. So, quite literally, what's been happening each year is the growth or demand for our services in the program just cannibalizes the entire budget. In addition to that this program, that is the rural recycling drop-off program, came up for bid and we re-bid it. Now before we re-bid it we asked the board about the specifications. What should this new program look like? The old one, originally established back in 1992, was very simple. The goal was to try to get a drop-off opportunity in the form of a drop-off unit within five miles of the majority of the population in the district. But since that time the criteria's changed drastically. Money wasn't even on the radar screen back then. So with limited funds we had to look at very carefully answering the question, how can we deliver the most service for the dollar that we spend? So the board had directed and reviewed the specifications. The board has asked to establish a committee. The committee met twice. Once in April and once in October of 2007. And a couple of the board members here can tell you the discussion revolved around how to keep recovery levels up, but get cost down. It's a double edged sword. Our mission as a District is to try and reduce the waste stream, but at the same time we have limited numbers of dollars. So the way to do that is to get the per unit cost or the dollars per ton rate down. So the committee talked about getting and looking at previous years recovery records, that is in the early 2000's. We had noted that in the larger cities there were two units at that time, Auburn, Kendallville and Angola, for example. And in the case of Auburn and Angola, those

two units were recovering forty tons per month per unit or eighty tons minimum. So by consolidation and by moving the units closer to where the material is, even though it is rural drop-off, we can recover . . . at least maintain thirty-five hundred tons as the specification currently for the bid document . . . that level of recovery for substantially less dollars per ton. Currently we're running at a hundred and ten dollars per ton recovery cost. That's what it costs you and I as taxpayers. Under the new contract if we make the changes we can cut that down to eighty-two dollars per ton, which means about a hundred thousand dollars a year savings in the first year of the contract. So the committee grappled with those. There's two reports here and you have hard copies of 'em when you walked in if you so desired. You can read those committee reports. You have 'em in front of you. They basically laid out the direction and the specifications. One other specification then occurred later on I believe in a board meeting October 9th as the board struggled with this issue. And that specification was a motion that was made by Phil Curtis out of LaGrange County to ensure that there are at least three units per county out of fairness. And so that became an additional criteria or an additional specification for us to work with as far as establishing what this new configuration might look like. The goal was still to provide recycling across the district. And keep in mind it's one of several programs that we operate. It's not the only program. A lot of people are under the impression the District was created to provide recycling. That is not correct. The District was created to reduce the waste stream through a variety of technologies, of which drop-off recycling is one of many. Curbside is another. Composting is another. The household hazardous waste program we operate is another. As well as our education program, for example. So we do a variety of things to try and reduce the volumes of municipal solid wastes that are being generated. And what has happened over the years is the drop-off program has become the sole game in town. It

was never, ever intended to be that. As I pointed out from the Solid Waste Plan it was to be one of at least two different technologies across the district to capture the recoverables out of the solid waste stream. And what happened is when it went in place it became the drop-off recycling for the residential portion of the waste stream . . . the rural residential, that is, as well as urban residential, as well as commercial municipal solid waste, as well as open dumping. So we've incurred a lot of other costs in trying to keep the sites cleaned up. You'll recall the District has taken a hit from a public relation standpoint quite a bit over the years because of the abuse and that cost to you and I to clean up that abuse. I've not calculated it lately. I gave up calculating it. But when I did it would bounce between twelve thousand and fifteen thousand dollars a year of funds out of our budget to pick up the trash that's been dumped. So this little rural recycling drop-off program became everything to every one. The curbside program, in essence, had not occurred and so it's put continually more and more pressure and more and more cost on the limited resources the District has. So the new contract was an opportunity to reconfigure it, still provide the service, still provide the availability, but keep the per ton cost down. And that's why the map that you'll see here in a little bit is configured like it is and that's why a lot of folks are upset because of the level of service, that is the convenience, will be decreased. I would liken it to the service level in our curbside programs, for example. The mayor in Auburn can tell you that they went years ago from weekly collection of recyclables to every other week. It's the same thing. It's a decrease in the convenience in order to keep cost down. Rather than having drop-offs within five miles of everyone they're gonna be more distant. They're gonna be more strategically placed where folks travel quite frequently, either for supplies, groceries, fuel or whatever the case may be, but still be provided that opportunity. So that's some of the reasoning that's behind this. And then in addition to that the board

had directed us to keep three sites per county. And that's part of what Chris and I . . . Chris Himes, who represents the contractor, Recycling Works . . . have been working through. We have met on two different occasions and worked through what units go where and how can we capture the most amount of material and still meet specifications that I developed that he placed his bid on, for example. And that thirty-five hundred tons per year is critical. We need to try and make that or stay close to that in order for his per unit costs to stay within line. If we don't do that then he'll come back to the board and say, board, I need more money. We all know what fuel costs are doing. We all know what steel costs are doing. And we all know what health insurance costs are doing. And they're driving up costs, not only for the municipal sector, but for the private service providers as well. This is the table that's in the bid document. We have some copies here. We can run more copies if you want the bid document. In essence, it was to get a dozen facilities . . . or a dozen drop-offs rather, plus the drop-off here at this complex. After all, we're already here. We accept a variety of materials here. Household hazardous waste, for example, computers, electronics, fluorescent bulbs. So that table is literally in the bid document. And, again, if you want it we can provide it to you. And then in addition to that this is the map. It will give you a feel that reflects the new system. The current system that's out there . . . let me back up just a minute. The current system that's out there is twenty-one drop-off units. We're downsizing down from that twenty-one units to a total of thirteen, twelve units out there plus the one here is the way in which I think of it. We will redeploy two units in the larger cities, the top tier, the largest cities in each of the counties. That is two back in Angola, two back in Auburn, two back in Kendallville. My staff has been working closely with the WalMart stores. They have eagerly given their approval to host those second drop-off units. They're working with Chris. If and when we do deploy this, we need to get those

alternatives out there before we start removing units. So that that capacity can shift. Solid waste is not unlike waste water. It flows. It is very dynamic. And it does have a flow even though it's solid. So that's a map of what the system would look like. This is the average recovery levels . . . and I know a lot of you have focused on that . . . of each of the drop-off units. And I know there's a lot of concern. The larger units that we would be removing are Avilla and Albion. They're in the teens. Sometimes almost twenty with recovery. I'm looking to get forty. It's a little bit easier to justify removing at Prairie Heights. It gets three tons a month. That's not very much tonnage to spend that same amount of money on or the fixed cost of running the truck up and down the road and those types of things. So that's the setup. That's some of the background and some of the data. We also have available, I would make note to you, a recently released study in Waste News magazine that shows that Indiana is number one now for per capita generation rate. According to their study Indiana ranks first in the nation at just a little over a ton per capita per year. Typically the rule of thumb is we use seventeen hundred per capita per year of solid waste generation. But that continues to go up according to the EPA studies. Even though recycling programs are recovering more than they ever have they're losing ground because of the municipal solid waste being generated is growing faster than what we can recover through recycling technology. So we're number one. We generate more on a per capita basis than anybody else. And I'll give you that chart if you want it as well. And then finally the 2006 annual report is posted on our website. If you haven't seen it we've got some hard copies here that we'll gladly give you. Let me stop and back up just for a moment before we get there. This is a pie chart that breaks down the annual tonnage levels of those drop-off units. And you can see the pie chart creates a nice picture of the larger ones and it helps to explain why we would go in that direction. Again, to maximize recovery for dollar per ton expended.

That's what we need to do in order to stay efficient. For years now we've been saying . . . and this is not new information by any means . . . this is the recovery level of the material that we recover in our program. This great big maroon, over half the pie, 2001 tons in 2006 was newsprint. That's the majority of what we get is newspaper. There's been discussion down State for years, since at least 2001 that I can recall, discussions with the newspaper industry about paying for that portion of it. Because we're not the only Solid Waste District that suffers from these symptoms, by the way. Other of the Districts are grappling with that same problem and have suggested we need some help here. And especially the fiber. Newsprint and cardboard are the majority of the waste stream. So having said that, Mr. Chairman, that's the setup. That's the information. That's why we're here. How we got to this point, in October the board had directed staff, after presenting the results of the bid, staff's recommendation was to carry out the new contract per its specifications, tighten up this system, which decreases the convenience level admittedly, but it greatly improves the cost per unit cost . . . the dollars per ton. And we've got a spreadsheet. Well, I e-mailed it to you, Beth, earlier today. It's here somewhere. The projected savings the first year is over eighty thousand dollars we can save by doing this. So we can still provide services and still stay within budget. Something that lots of businessmen do every day. I'll stop there, Mr. Chairman.

MARK PANKOP:

Thank you, Mr. Director. Immediately after the announcement in the latter part of November of the reduction of the sites we received some comment and at least two letters here at the District. One being from the Town of Albion and one being from the town manager of Albion and Avilla. Now the board at the last meeting approved putting those two on the agenda and they are for this month. And Beth Shellman from the Town of Albion and a representative from the Town of Avilla, we are asking and requesting at

this time that you express your concerns and this is your time. Simply because on the agenda Beth Shellman is first, I'll ask Beth to go first.

BETH SHELLMAN:

Okay. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

And you can stand right there, get up or stay seated. Do whatever you want.

BETH SHELLMAN:

Okay. Maybe I'll stand up. I talk louder I think if I'm standing. First of all, I'd like to let the District know that we have all five of our council members here from the Town of Albion. We have our clerk/treasurer here. We brought along with us some of our county commissioners and county council members, chamber of commerce members and some citizens in town. So I don't want to hog the floor. I'll tell you my piece and then I'll invite those who would like to, to talk. All of you should have received my letter dated December 3rd with reasonings why we would like you to reconsider keeping the Albion site open. We have four front load bins at our Albion site. And I did bring some photos along if any of you would like to look at that. The site is very well maintained. It's on the back side of the county highway property and it is monitored by the sheriff's department. So it is not abused. You should not have any associated costs with cleanup or illegal dumping at this site. I think we had . . . in the past we did have some problems, but we haven't had any at this site for years. I did note in your October 9th minutes when Phil Curtis made the motion to approve the contract that it was to keep at least three sites open per county. And we have two in Noble County? Or are you counting the second one that you're adding in Kendallville as your third site?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

We'll have two in Kendallville and one in Ligonier.

BETH SHELLMAN:

Okay. So with those two sites in Noble County over two-thirds of our county is not being represented. State Road 6 runs across the north end of our county. We have no representation south of that. Albion is the county seat. We're the center of the county. And the county courthouse is there. We have federal, state and county offices. And we have a lot of the people coming from the rural areas into the county. So I would ask that you consider our unique circumstances, as one of the counties in your District that has a county seat that is not the largest city or town in that county. Also we do have the curbside recycling available through Noble County Disposal. A lot of our residents do use that. It's not a mandatory curbside recycling and I know that Steve and I have talked about that and curbside recycling is only for the residents in Albion. That's not available . . . it's not offered by our local trash carrier to the rural people. So our site not only services the Albion residents, but also the rural residents of Noble County. The schedule of drivers, we're on the same schedule as Kendallville and Ligonier. The stop could be made in route between the two while they're servicing one or the other. And I noted on page five of your contract that your District's goal is to provide the maximum amount of materials recovery for the dollar expended and to increase recovery of recyclables through the recycling programs, which includes the rural drop-off programs. And by eliminating our site I don't believe that you're sticking with your goals in your contract. I now would like to give the floor to somebody else.

DELBERT SMITH:

I've just got one comment. I own a business. My name's Delbert Smith from Albion. And I own D & J Tool in Albion. And for some reason the Borden truck goes past in the morning and at night. You're talking about fuel per tonnage. You're driving right within three hundred feet of our recycling center. And you're talking about keeping

your cost down, that's a good way to keep your cost down. It's right there. Your driver would go home and pick it up. That's all I've got to comment about it.

MARK PANKOP:

Even though I think that it is our preference here to address these probably in writing at some point in time, I will comment on that particular question. We have a contract with Borden Waste-Away. The contract, it's their business beyond that point . . . how they handle their drivers or their routes. Even though, yes, in my mind that may seem efficient. That is not our business. We operate on this side of the contract. Any others on the Albion concern and then I'll open it up for the Avilla concern. And I will open it up again then at the end of the two official concerns. And, Beth, I'm sorry I forgot to say that your letter was duplicated and all the board members had a copy of that letter last month. I'm looking now for an Avilla representative.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

We don't have any kind of an oral presentation. We are here tonight though to express our concern about that particular plan. The citizens in town I know many of 'em are rather angry about it. I've heard from 'em. You know, to them the recycling District is the recycler from the county. And, you know, whether you expect them to think other things or not, that is what you guys do for them. And when you take their recycling bins away and make them drive five miles to recycle when gas prices are three dollars, I mean that's kind of counterproductive to them. And they're wondering what do I pay my money for. What do I pay my taxes for. And I'm afraid that what's gonna happen here is that those people are no longer gonna be recycling. They're gonna throw their stuff right back into the garbage. Your plan sounds like it is to reduce the waste level to garbage dumps and things like that. And I don't think that's gonna happen. I think you're gonna see a large reduction in what you're taking out of the stream. Because I

don't think people are gonna recycle anymore with three dollar a gallon gas. So I think the whole plan is pretty counterproductive as far as I'm concerned.

BILL LEY:

And I have had several people in my office since the notice was in the paper . . . and by the way, that kind of irks me too. I had to read it in paper that the Town of Avilla's gonna be losing their recycling stations.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Well, it was worse for me because I didn't read the paper that day and I was actually recycling and somebody that was recycling beside me told me about it. So that's how I found out about it.

BILL LEY:

But I've had probably fifty to seventy-five residents of Avilla in my office since then and most of those people told me that if they have to drive to Kendallville they won't recycle plain and simple. So I guess my question is, doesn't the Solid Waste District have a program or a plan in place to try to counteract that?

MAYOR NORM YODER:

I have a question.

MARK PANKOP:

Excuse me, Norm. Paul and Bill I know both of you. But would you state your name for the record please?

PAUL SHEPHERD:

I'm sorry. Paul Shepherd. I'm the town council president of Avilla.

BILL LEY:

And I'm Bill Ley, the town manager of Avilla.

MARK PANKOP:

Thank you.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Do they drive to Kendallville to grocery shop?

PAUL SHEPHERD:

I don't know. And there's another problem. With the way things are today, I mean as far as run the kids here, do this, do that, do this, do that, they're just concerned about a couple of things . . . the things that are highest on their priority list. And I've gotta tell you that recycling is not up there with their kids and with their groceries and everything. They might get there and think, oh, I should of brought the recyclable stuff and then they won't do it. And then they're gonna throw it away. So it's a matter of priorities these days. And that's another reason why I don't think your plan's gonna work very well.

BETH SHELLMAN:

I applaud the effort that the committee put forth to put out the surveys, but as evidence on June 12th Mayor Yoder expressed displeasure that you only received fifty-three responses out of a hundred and sixty thousand residents. And I didn't know, the Town of Albion didn't know, Avilla's saying they didn't know. We were not contacted. We would have willingly put a notice in our water bills. We would have contacted our residents. The transportation study that was conducted did not include anyone from the Town of Albion.

BILL LEY:

Or Avilla.

BETH SHELLMAN:

I don't believe that they go to these cities on a regular basis.

RANDY MYERS:

May I make a comment, Mr. President . . . Randy Myers . . . on what Beth just said.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes, Randy.

RANDY MYERS:

I was taken completely off guard too. As well as I think most Albion residents and mostly likely most of the residents in Avilla. So I went back and I reviewed the information on the surveys. And I'm thinking, why wasn't there a red flag that was brought up on why weren't people responding. Well, now sometimes I say things I shouldn't. But it looks to me like the blame was put on us. In fact, on some of your articles that were in the newspaper it said the District even asked for comments to the KPC Fence Post. I'm sure many thought the District wouldn't listen but the District did. But we all had a chance to be heard and many didn't take the opportunity. It looks like you're pointing the finger at us. Beth just said for free you could have used the water bill. And probably Paul, probably you guys in Avilla, you guys would have done the same thing. So don't put the blame on us that we didn't respond. We didn't know it. And I think I'm an avid reader, but somehow I missed some of those things. But just don't put the blame on the consumer and don't penalize the consumer. And also don't forget that Albion is a county seat. I just surveyed one place, the Noble County Courthouse, a hundred and fourteen thousand people, minus one, went in there last year through the security system. So on your surveys you had indicated, well, we shop in Kendallville and we can take our recyclables over there. That's true. But also in Albion we have a lot of people coming from around the county. I just hope that you listen to all of us. And also don't leave Avilla out. Because I think somehow communication didn't occur. And I can see where you really tried. I can look at your front page of your book where you had articles in the Kendallville News Sun, you had the Fence Post, you had also surveys from your website, you had twenty-three post comments from the Fence

Post and it goes on and on. So you had intentions . . . you had good intentions, but somehow if you were looking for feedback to make your decision on, something failed. So don't put the blame on us. And if we can prove that you should reinstate Albion and also hopefully Avilla, frankly I think that would be in your best interest. But that's how I feel.

BETH SHELLMAN:

Obviously the sites in both places are being used. The number five and number six in terms of tonnage out of the twenty-one sites you have now in Albion and Avilla. And you're not gonna see those figures if the sites go away. Like Bill, I have heard a lot from the residents in the Town of Albion and no one that I have talked to is going to recycle in Ligonier or Kendallville. They're gonna throw it in their trash.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes. State your name please.

JAMES STULL:

James Stull, Albion town council. What she said is . . . and I go to Kendallville three days a week. You're gonna have two sites in Kendallville and trust me when I go to Kendallville to get groceries I am not going to load my recyclables in and recycle. I have Noble County Disposal that will pick everything I have up. And when you talk about the country folk, I don't know what they're gonna do. All I'm gonna do is put my newspapers, my cardboard, that I usually on a Saturday afternoon load in my van, take out to our recycle site. I'm just gonna dump it in the Noble County Disposal because I already pay for them to haul my stuff away. I can't imagine how you can think . . . and I know it's cost . . . but I can't imagine how you can think this is servicing your county and so forth. I know everybody has their own representation, but two sites in Kendallville and the center of your county . . . and you can see on your own little map

here how this is gonna eliminate this whole corner as Beth had already said before. As far as the survey, if you were supposed to read it in the paper I never read it and I read it pretty religiously in Kendallville's paper. But had you notified the Town of Albion . . . the way I even found out about it was these two . . . this gentleman came to the town council meeting after they read it in the paper. And I hadn't read the paper yet that night. And he's at our town council meeting telling me about this and we were dumbfounded. There wasn't one council person that knew a thing about you were even considering this. So whatever this survey was totally failed in our area anyway.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

TERRY ASKREN:

My name is Terry Askren and I'm a citizen of the Town of Albion. And what Beth has said I agree with wholeheartedly. And what Jim just said and Randy also. In looking at your own paper here you've got us ranked number six in 2004 I believe. I think we were six. Yeah, we were ranked number six. So I don't know what criteria you're using. I know you said you wanted to reach forty thousand tons in each site. I don't know if you're gonna be able to do that, but why you would close down number six is kind of beyond me. People aren't gonna haul their stuff to Kendallville. I can guarantee you that. Like he said, we'll just use Noble County Disposal. And I know it's a lengthy two year process for a county to withdraw from this system, but it might be to the citizens of Noble County's best interest to start to looking into withdrawing from it. And there are ways to do that. I was just looking at 'em earlier. We're pretty upset about it and I think you're starting to understand that. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes, Mitch.

MITCH FIANDT:

Mitch Fiandt, Town of Albion. I want to comment on a couple things here. It's been brought up a couple times, don't we go to these other cities to shop? Personally I come from a two person household. My kids are grown. It's just my wife and I and we do not go to Kendallville and shop. We don't go to Ligonier to shop. We shop in Albion. We go to the recyclable center every Saturday in Albion. I'm not gonna be paying three dollars and nineteen cents a gallon in gasoline to drive somewhere I maybe only go once a month at the most. Also Beth brought up that the center in Albion is monitored. It's got a camera on it. It's monitored by the sheriff's department by a camera. There's never been any violation there at that site. Also my full time job as the 911 director I can tell you exactly what's gonna happen if you close that site. It's what's happened in the past. People are gonna start throwing their garbage on the county roadsides. Anybody here can tell you . . . Delbert lives on a prime place to do that. Then we have to pay our county highway workers to go out and pick this up. And I'm just as upset about how I found out about this as James was. I knew nothing about it. My wife's the vice-president of the chamber of commerce in Albion and she knew nothing about it. She's a business personnel and knew nothing about it. We go to the town council meeting and Bob tells us. That's poor management on the board's part here by not telling us what's going on.

CHRIS MAGNUSON:

Hello. I'm Chris Magnuson, vice-president of the Albion Town Council. And I don't want to complain much. I just was curious. On your October 29th committee meeting summary you have like an option one and an option two. And I know that you had . . . what Terry had said earlier about the tonnage being . . . you know, the tonnage for the money and the best value for your dollar. Avilla and Albion are in option one and

option two. So at what point did you decide to change option one and option two to the current plan that you have now? Like the two drop-off sites in Kendallville. At what point after this October 29th meeting was that an option?

MARK PANKOP:

We are recording these questions.

CHRIS MAGNUSON:

Okay. Thank you.

UNKNOWN PERSON:

Is there an answer to that?

MARK PANKOP:

There will be. Yes, go ahead.

MARK HUNTER:

Mark Hunter. I'm on the Albion Town Council. I'm also a firefighter here in Albion. I see on the map this huge chunk of area that does not have drop-off point in the southwest portion of this district. The people down there who used to come to Albion to drop their stuff off, they're gonna start burning again. They're gonna start burning their cardboard. They're gonna start burning their newspapers. And we're gonna start having an increase of the ground cover fires . . . the brush fires and grass fires. Now the fires like that have dropped off over the last several years. I'm not saying it's connected to recycling, but at about the same time we started recycling those kind of fires started dropping off. I believe they'll pick up again. And that's just one of the many reasons why I don't understand why, if this is a rural drop-off, there are two recycling sites in the three most urban areas of the district.

MARK PANKOP:

Bob, I saw your hand up back there.

BOB KIRKPATRICK:

What bothers me most of all . . .

MARK PANKOP:

Bob Kirkpatrick.

BOB KIRKPATRICK:

What bothers me most of all is when I went to the commissioner's meeting I talked to one of the commissioners before the meeting started. He didn't know a thing about it until he read it in the paper. Now, hey, you've got one of our commissioners on the board here, why didn't he go back and discuss this with the other commissioners to see what was going on, to let us people know. We didn't know nothing until we read it in the paper. And that is poor business in my book. And I've had a lot of other dealings with the landfill and everything. They pound into our heads we were supposed to recycle. All right. Now we've got recycling and what are they doing now? They're putting it right down the drain. Cause I'm not hauling my stuff to Kendallville. I'm like the all the rest of 'em. It's gonna stay right in the landfill. That's where it's going. You people know better than this. You pound it into us. We did it. We recycled at Albion, we had people that sorted it and everything else. But, no, we had to all get together. Make it big. Now what's it doing to us? Think it over fellows. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

Paul.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

I do have some questions. One of 'em is, you said that the current recycling program is meant for rural areas. Is that correct?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

When the program was originally laid out back in '92 and it's still to this day called a

rural recycling program.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Okay. Why would you put those in the three largest cities if they're rural?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

When the program was originally laid out there were two units in the larger cities back then. Well, what you're comparing it to now . . . Ligonier, for example. At one time Ligonier actually had two drop-off units. One was at the Owens Grocery Store and the other one was at the park. So the configuration is virtually what it was in the early days. If you look back over the numbers . . . this number of three thousand tons annually that we recover now is a fraction of what we recovered. We were at six to seven tons a year back in '01 and '02 when it was peak. And when we look at that history it tends to make sense. Because that's where typically the solid waste is generated is in those larger population areas.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Which are in the cities.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

And that's the reason for that.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Which are supposed to be curbside recycling, correct.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Right.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

So, again, why would you put those rural drop-off centers in the largest cities?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Because they worked very well back in the early years where we had 'em exactly there.

They recovered double the tonnage that they are now. Another key point to point out is, there's a huge difference between subscription curbside recycling and citywide recycling under the public procurement process. Most folks in Noble County . . . I'll pick on Kendallville or Avilla . . . pay twice the amount per household per month as the folks in Auburn or Angola do.

CHAD ARNOLD:

But they get twice the service.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

But the reason they do that . . .

CHAD ARNOLD:

Is because that's what they want, Steven.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Well, that's fine. But it's a matter of tradeoffs here. You know if the board wants to keep these drop-off units that's fine. That's not a problem. But rather than focus on whether it's our fault or your fault, you need to decide how we're gonna pay for it with our cash dollars. That's the bottom line. Because we've got to figure out how to pay for more service. And every local unit of the government is up against that. We're not the only ones. Paul, did I answer your question or did you have another one? I'm sorry.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Do you have the number of recycling expenses versus the total budget? How much money you spend for recycling versus . . .

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

We do, yes.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Can I get that please?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Yes. I do a spreadsheet every year. As a matter of fact it's on the wall right here on the door. And I do the spreadsheet each year. It looks like it's going to be February this year before I get it completed. But I go through man hours and our expenses and go through each program and calculate a total program cost. And the rural drop-off program is about . . . it's up over four hundred thousand dollars if you include everything. That is our internal costs as well as the contractors cost. So it's crept up to as high as it's ever been at a hundred and eleven dollars per ton currently. I think in 1998 it was fifty dollars a ton. It was the most economical drop-off program in the State at that time. But that's not the case anymore.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

How much do you expect the new program to reduce the waste flow? I mean, that's what you're supposed to be doing, correct?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

As we've talked, it's a double edged sword. We have a limited amount of funds, but we need to maximize and recover more. At last calculations on all of the programs the District's drops accounts for about ten to thirteen percent reduction. Which is a fraction of what we should be at basically as a State. We should be well over fifty percent. In the Midwest especially. In the east and west they're achieving fifty, sixty, seventy percent waste reduction. But in the Midwest we're not at all. It bounces around that ten percent figure. And I'll run you a copy of that spread sheet.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

I appreciate it.

MARK PANKOP:

Beth. It was my intent here to allow the board to speak afterwards. But I'd like to

exhaust as many questions as we can here.

BETH SHELLMAN:

In LaGrange County what three sites were going to remain open?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

LaGrange, Topeka, Wolcottville.

BETH SHELLMAN:

And Wolcottville. So Shishewana will be closed?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Correct.

JOY LECOUNT:

When did that change?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

It was quite a debate for a couple of months. The last board meeting.

JOY LECOUNT:

It probably changed since I spoke with Pam last, which was last month.

PAM DECAMP:

I think it actually was November. But within the last couple months it's changed.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Changed from what?

JOY LECOUNT:

Well, my understanding when I spoke with Pam last was that Shishewana was going to remain open.

PAM DECAMP:

That's when they had discussed about Chris' truck coming in. Remember, Phil had said that at our board meeting. But then they switched it to Wolcottville when? Do you

remember, Chris, when?

CHRIS HIMES:

Well, when we were talking about Shipshewana there was really never an official . . .

PAM DECAMP:

Yeah, it wasn't official.

CHRIS HIMES:

Phil was using that more as an example, is why would you go to Shipshewana when you can go right through there when truly Wolcottville generated more material and literally we drive right by there after we leave LaGrange. It was a more suitable site.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

It's my understanding that the contract's already signed. Does that mean that this is irreversible or what?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

It does not mean it's irreversible. There is wiggle room in the contract. There is language in there that I've put in purposely to allow us to work through this. In working with Chris we will go with the contract, but there is verbiage that allows the District to add or subtract units over the course of the contract. That verbiage was in the old contract as well. It's a real sticking point for bidders because they need something to count on. They need specifications to count on. But Chris and I have worked together enough for years that there's a trust there. He's very nervous and we've got to achieve thirty-five hundred tons in order to get these kind of prices. If not prices will go back up. And when that happens then we'll run out of money eventually.

BILL LEY:

Well, if the residents of Avilla are any indication of what might happen and the rest of the counties in the other three counties, I don't see how you're gonna keep your tonnage

up. You know, they're telling me they're not gonna do it. I don't know how you can keep your tonnage up there.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

The tonnage was up when double units were there a few years ago. When the generation rate was less than what it is now.

BILL LEY:

And gas wasn't three dollars a gallon either.

JAMES STULL:

And that was before you offered it to us to start with and then take it away from us.

People are not gonna do it. I've lived in Albion all my life. They're not gonna do it.

RANDY MYERS:

Mr. President?

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

RANDY MYERS:

Let's say if Beth had gotten a message from you folks to put the survey in the Albion water bill. And let's say that there was just a twenty percent return. Would that have influenced the board's opinion on whether Albion would even be here tonight? Would you have just left it as is because there would have been a couple of hundred people responding, no, we don't want this change? And I suppose that Avilla may be asking that too. If, in fact, we had a chance to run a survey where people would actually respond. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

MIKE SELBY:

My name is Mike Selby. I live in Albion. And you're all taking about tonnage here. Is that correct?

MARK PANKOP:

More or less.

MIKE SELBY:

Albion, three times the tonnage as Ligonier. Why drop it? That's all I've got to say.

MARK PANKOP:

Any more questions from the public?

BETH SHELLMAN:

Other than I would like to have my question answered at some point please.

MARK PANKOP:

We will. We will respond to these questions. As I said, we are recording this. It is our intent to respond to these questions. We actually hope that you can attend another meeting. If not, we will publish these for you to understand that your questions have been answered. I would like to, at this point then in time, to give the board . . . and I'm sure . . . there's a number of board members here that you have sparked some thoughts. I see Bob and Joy holding their hands up yet. I will allow that, but let me finish. We will allow the board members to respond if they care to and I would appreciate it if you would give us the respect that we have given you by not rebuttaling or interrupting you. Bob and Joy go ahead. Joy's first.

JOY LECOUNT:

In looking over the minutes from your discussion of the committees from October the 29th, Chris had asked about the two options. My question to you, the committee or the board itself, is how much influence in the final decision did the contractor have in making the decision?

MARK PANKOP:

Joy, did you ever state your last name?

JOY LECOUNT:

It's LeCount.

MARK PANKOP:

Bob.

BOB BRALEY:

Bob Braley. Between the things that I have been hearing from people both in Albion and Avilla and the discussion that has gone on here tonight, there's one question that I have been hearing again and again and again. And forgive me. I do not mean to put down the board in any way, shape or form. But it comes back up again with the issue of the survey information not reaching the towns or the towns not knowing. We have the mayors representing the cities, but there's no voice of the towns here other than commissioner and councilman who are really representing the rural areas. And that is a concern that I am hearing from people out there. I'm not saying it's right or wrong, but it is a concern that I'm hearing. Because there is a perception that the people who are losing something here are the people who are not represented here. And that leads to other concerns, as you might imagine. And it may or may not, but it's something I think you need to hear. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

I'd like to proceed then with the board and basically open it up to the board the exact same opportunity to respond. It is not my intent at this point in time to cause rebuttals. We will have . . . as I said, we're having this recorded, in writing. The person here is a court reporter. It will be in hard copy form and not just a tape. But I would like for each of you, if you have a comment, to make a comment. Say what you want to. But, as I

said, we will officially respond to these questions at a later date. And hopefully by our next meeting. If you would like I'm opening it up to board members and we'll take it from there. Again, state your name please.

CHAD ARNOLD.

I'm Chad Arnold. I'm speaking for the CAC.

ANDREW KRUSE:

Just as a point of order. I think the official representative of the CAC is Colleen possibly. Is that your understanding?

MARK PANKOP:

I think Colleen has been our CAC member.

ANDREW KRUSE:

So you're just speaking as a member of the CAC and not as necessarily their official representative?

CHAD ARNOLD:

No, not their representative. Just a concern of mine. Right now we have thirty-two hundred tons annually coming from these sites and we're paying a hundred and eleven dollars. In the new contract we're cutting our sites to thirteen and we'll get an eighty-two dollar and fifty cent price if we have thirty-five hundred ton. How are we gonna gain three hundred ton and cut eight units?

MARK PANKOP:

That has been discussed at our meetings.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Which, I mean, another question is, what is the new . . . what's the contract price if we don't reach the thirty-five hundred? No one knows that.

MARK PANKOP:

I think it is written into the contract, an adjust scale . . . a sliding scale.

CHRIS HIMES:

Under this one there is not. On the prior one it was.

CHAD ARNOLD:

So if we get thirty-two hundred tons what's the price gonna be with thirteen sites?

CHRIS HIMES:

I don't know that right now.

CHAD ARNOLD:

I mean, because I'm a hauler. All right? The object of the game is the more material you get the cheaper you can do it. So driving from point A to point B, which is twenty miles, there's no money there. You're losing money.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, let me remind you that this was put out for a proposal to bid.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Exactly.

MARK PANKOP:

And we had . . .

CHAD ARNOLD:

And if I would have wanted . . . if I would have bid on it, I would of . . . I mean, if I would have wanted to bid on it or had the time to do it, I would have bid on it. But I . . . he's got the set up. He's got the MRF. He's got everything. You know, there's two. There's one in Allen County. Serv-All.

MARK PANKOP:

And it was open to more than just the two of you.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Oh, exactly. But I didn't see Serv-All on this list. I mean, that's my question. I wanna know . . . I think it ought to be public knowledge what the tonnage rate is if we don't reach thirty-five hundred ton with thirteen sites.

MARK PANKOP:

The board has the option of closing the District and we have discussed that many times.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Well, I think you've got some people back there that are heavily in favor of it.

DELBERT SMITH:

Close it.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Me, as being a hauler, I have gotten so many phone calls over this . . . dropping these sites. And people can't . . . I can't recycle in the country for nothing.

MARK PANKOP:

Neither can we.

CHAD ARNOLD:

But these people pay taxes.

MARK PANKOP:

They haven't paid a dime more . . . the levy . . . the rate hasn't been a dime more since 1992. Now what service do you know of that has not increased since 1992?

CHAD ARNOLD:

The CAC recommended you upping it to two cents a hundred or three cents a hundred I don't know how many years ago. And that kinda blew over someone's head I think.

MARK PANKOP:

Do you want me to put that exactly in perspective? The CAC is not an elected board.

CHAD ARNOLD:

No, but you're supposed to listen to what the CAC says. Am I not correct?

MARK PANKOP:

And we take that into consideration.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

The board listens and then the board makes the decision.

CHAD ARNOLD:

But the board is supposed to listen to the CAC. When this whole thing was set up years ago the board was supposed to listen to the recommendations of the CAC, which they do not.

MARK PANKOP:

It's not my intent to be argumentative.

SARA TUBERGEN:

May I make a comment?

MARK PANKOP:

Sure. State your name please.

SARA TUBERGEN:

Sara Tubergen, Steuben County Council. Because we're including glass isn't that gonna help increase the tonnage?

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

SARA TUBERGEN:

Would that help increase it?

MARK PANKOP:

Yes. Norm.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Well, I'd like to answer some of the questions. Bob's question where he says nobody's represented . . . that certain people aren't represented. The way the board's constructed .

. .

BOB BRALEY:

That's not what I said, Norm.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

The perception is?

BOB BRALEY:

I said the perception is.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

The way it is, they've taken the two largest communities, be it a town or a city, of each county and either the town board president, as Terry's case with LaGrange, or as mayor, as mine, and we're statutory on the board. They also took one of the commissioners and one of the county councils to represent the counties as a balance, is the way the board is currently formed. Everybody is represented by all the commissioners. The towns where most of the trash is generated was kind of the thought process on how they arrived at that. It's not perfect. You have a different model, but that's the way it was constructed.

I want to talk a little bit about the October 29th meeting. I think you are owed an explanation besides waiting a period of time.

BETH SHELLMAN:

Thank you.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

That was the LaGrange meeting of exactly what is transpiring here. And maybe next month will be DeKalb's turn and the following month will be Steuben's turn. That's the dilemma we're in. We have a program that is very popular. Everybody likes it. They

want the convenience. But to be perfectly honest with you we don't have the money to do it. There will be a point that we will just lay the staff off and pay for the recycling and that is it. We won't do anything else. Household waste and everything else we're supposed to do will be gone. In your response, we have no statutory way to raise property taxes to increase it. We have no way to do it. There's not a justifiable way that we could apply to the State to increase our levy. To the answer about rural and the largest cities, I happen to be the mayor of the largest city in the District. I'm considered a rural city. We're all rural. The largest county we have is forty-two thousand . . . a little over forty-three thousand people. And so we're a rural area. We're all about the same size. LaGrange is I think about thirty-eight thousand. And Noble and DeKalb are probably forty-two or forty-three. But we're all rural. We have so much in common. The problem we have is we would love to do what you're suggesting. We just don't have the funds and we don't have the way to raise the funds. And we've struggled with this. And if you've noticed what option one and option two were is exactly what you're . . . you could put option three and four as what you're proposing tonight. And next month we'll have option five and six. And the following month we'll have an option seven and eight. We went through this probably what, five years ago, before we took glass and they arbitrarily decided they weren't gonna take the . . . they closed Auburn's. I was on vacation. I came back and they'd closed Auburn's. And we had the most in the county or the most in the District as far as tonnage. And they closed Kendallville's and they closed several others. And what happened was Waterloo became so overflowed that Waterloo kicked us out of town. So we reduced that one voluntarily. But it's not we don't want to do it, we just don't have the way to raise the tax dollars to do it. Or are we gonna basically do away with everything else that we try to do. What is fair? I don't know. And if you've got criteria I sympathize. I've sit here showing

Terry there's six sites. The largest six contributors, irregardless of anything else, generates fifty-seven percent of the recycles. It's very odd that three of 'em land in Noble County and one of each of the others. But we can get almost . . . we get fifty-seven percent of the recycles out of just six of the twenty-two sites. And so that was one criteria that they looked at. And how we arrived at it, I used the word, there's some give and take and this is a legislative body and it's not perfect and I can vouch that every county was represented in some form. And as mayor I look as I represent DeKalb County as well as Auburn. It's not a county and a city thing here necessarily in any way, shape or form. So I don't know if that answers some of their questions, but that's my perspective on it as I've been involved in trying to develop criteria and how can we maximize the usage. The contract's written that he's gonna get paid so much a ton and he's got it out there for five years. He's taking a risk on that. We think that with adding glass back . . . and when we took glass out we caught a tremendous amount of problems. The same thing. But it's a cost thing. The grit criticizes elected officials for spending money foolishly and wastefully. But people, the absolute truth, to recycle is eighty-five . . . and correct me if I'm wrong Chris . . . eighty-five to a hundred and ten dollars for recycles. That's what we're gonna pay to recycle. We can take it to the landfill for sixty to eighty. And I hate to say that. Back in the '90's when this District was formed there was a perception that we were gonna run out of landfill space. And that's not the case today. It may be the case twenty years from today. But today that's not the case. The economics are, it's cheaper to throw it in the landfill.

MITCH FIANDT:

No, it ain't. We've got a landfill in Noble County that was supposed to have been closed a long time ago and they can't close it.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Well, right here's a bill that I was talking to Steve about that's gonna be . . . there's a hearing tomorrow . . . and it's a waste to energy. And it's about incineration to generate electricity and power and other things. But that's in that bill. I mean, things have changed.

MITCH FIANDT:

It would be nice if they'd do things like they say they can do.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Yeah. But that's the dilemma we're in. We're not here to argue with you.

MITCH FIANDT:

Well, I'm not gonna argue with you either.

MARK PANKOP:

The meeting that took place on October 29th with the LaGrange County meeting . . . it's the same as we had when we were at the LaGrange County meeting.

BOB KIRKPATRICK:

But then not too many years ago . . . I live right by a landfill. It all would run off . . . the landfill right through my property. Washed my property away. I suggested an incinerator. Five or six counties go together and put an incinerator in. It cost too much money. But our landfill's still not closed. It's still leaking. They put garbage in over water sand. Dumped everything in there. Went in there at nights at midnight and dumped truck loads of stuff that wasn't supposed to have been dumped in there. I lived right beside of it. I know what went on. So don't talk to me about a landfill.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, let's move on.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

We had some of the same issues in DeKalb County and I know that Steuben County has.

The oversights, the way they're constructed. They weren't adequate for . . . it's not adequate for what it was. I don't understand that.

MITCH FIANDT:

Maybe we're paying too money to the people that's managing the place. We'd have a little more money if they were down to where they had to live like the rest of us do.

MARK PANKOP:

That might keep us alive for another year or two.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Hopefully I answered some of your questions. I can't think of any others off the top.

MARK PANKOP:

Other board members?

RON SMITH:

Mr. Chairman, if I might share a few things with you to which I've picked up from some of your conversation. I'm Ron Smith, one of the Steuben County Commissioners and I've had the good fortune of being on the board now for about three or four years. And let me tell you folks, it's an education to come over here. And, Mayor, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but we recently lost some good leadership in the form of the mayor because, quite frankly, he was frustrated with exactly what we're dealing with right now. And so fortunately Mr. Pankop has agreed to step up. Otherwise they were going to try and hang it on me. First of all, some of you mentioned that there will be people who will begin to use the roadsides for recycling. Yes, that's true. I live between Pleasant Lake and Hamilton. And just a mile and a half away from me there's a place called Jackson Recycling or Jackson's Junkyard or whatever you'd want to call it. They charge five dollars for appliances if you take appliances over there. As soon as people are told it costs them five dollars to deposit an appliance, they'll haul 'em right back out

of there and throw 'em off on the side of the road. Folks, if you wanna come over for a washing machine, a refrigerator, a freezer or anything, come over to my neighborhood. Because people will go to a place to recycle and then when they find out it costs them a couple bucks, they throw it in our side ditches. Any size tires that you might want, come on over. I can fit you up with any size, any number of tires. Because when they're told they're gonna charge them one to three dollars, depending on the size of the tire, they toss 'em out. So my neighbors all call me thinking, you're a politician, you'd probably like to pick up tires. And so as a result they call me and ask me to come out. Now our highway people are not happy when I call and suggest that they do it too. Because one of the things that happens, as soon as highway is perceived as being a garbage and a refuse collection group, people will say, well, that's not a bad idea. Let's just start chucking 'em out the side. And so for that reason we don't want our county highway trucks out there showing them that we're running a recycling program for them. So you are right. There's going to be a certain amount of that and, yes, there's gonna be folks that are gonna do it in that respect. Another issue that came up was, why did the other commission or commissioners not know anything about it? If one knew why did the others not? I'm speaking only for my county. This last month we sat down and did our appointments. One of them I believe has three appoints and the others have five. And I don't know why, but I have about nine appointments to go to different boards and so forth. Okay? I have the good fortune of sharing one with Paul here at seven o'clock in Kendallville, Indiana. And so, anyway, with the things that I do as a commissioner, when our commissioners are winding down I then say to the other commissioners, gentlemen, these are the meetings that I have attended in the last month and this is what transpired in each of these. And then I inform them that was a part of this process here. That we were downsizing a number of sites. The information was in the paper and so

forth, but we also had a discussion on it. And I said, you might as well get ready for it because you guys are going to hear it. And so I want you to know what's going on. So I do, at least in that way, try to share. It's not always a hundred percent then, but at least that's the way we handle it. The other thing is, I live right out here just a few miles. I can drive home in about three or four, maybe five minutes. And nonetheless the rates for mine keep going up. And I've had environmental attachments to it and fuel attachments to it and I'm approaching eighty dollars a month now for my trash pickup and I recycle a good deal of my trash. I feel very proud when the ladies look out and see me out here throwing out trunk loads of newspaper, which is one of the biggest items that I recycle and/or I haul it to Angola or to other places. It's my wife and I and I don't even put the trash barrel down there but about every other week. Sometimes every third week. And we have one or two items of material going in it because I am recycling and so forth. Now I've told National Serv-All that, but they said it doesn't make any difference how much you put in there. You're going to pay the going rate. So my point is this, it isn't the cost that's gonna cause people to recycle. It's their perception. And I even hope the ladies are looking out. I hope they're looking out and saying, look at, Ron, he's recycling. Because that's why most of us do it. Not because we want praise from them. It's an inter-being that we have ourselves. You either choose to recycle because you're a proud person because you're participating in being part of the solution or you'll go ahead and chuck it wherever because you really don't care. So at least when it comes down to this we are a part of a process. I do feel bad because I sat through many of these meetings here. And I kind of amusingly said to one of the persons who sat on the committee who helped decide what the final ones would be . . . and I was not at that meeting was I, but at that particular one I said it would be fun if I would share because these agonized again over what sites do we keep open. It's been a

very difficult decision. And, again, it would be difficult. Had I been on the committee I would be feeling just as much guilt if I were sitting here looking at you people saying Albion and Avilla, you do matter as much as any other community. And for what has happened as a result of making these decisions, I feel very bad about it. And I have to say the same thing at Steuben County. So I do want to say that I understand why you are feeling this way. Because there is a certain sense of frustration that comes from that. And, as an example, if we had any number of other things that happened in government where you are disparaged, meaning in other words, you're put at a disadvantage, you're not going to be happy and nor am I. So I sympathize with you. But, again, I've sat on this board and listened to this executive board and also this general board talk about it and they're not happy with what they had to do. It came down to the fact they had X number of dollars, they've said let's give the best bang for the buck that we can afford, give it a try and see how it works. That's where we are. We apologize for the fact obviously you folks again are having to pay the price in some ways, as are some members of the committees in the other counties. I don't have a resolve. I don't have a suggestion. I wish I could be the guru, could say something right now which would solve your problem, you could go home happy and very fulfilled. I don't have that to say to you at this point. I don't think this board can do it. The main thing is, if any of you have something that could make us feel that way we'd like to hear that as well. Because that's the resolve that we want. And so with that let's keep working together. If there are those that feel that it's served its purpose, it's overdue, we should disband, then maybe we ought to take that consideration. There have been some that have suggested it. But at this point and time I'm not willing to throw in the towel. I wanna keep working with it. And, again, think about it. If you want to come back to us and you have some suggestions and so forth and if it's imperative you keep it open in your

community or your community just says that's it, we've had it, we're done, we're out of here and you convince your commissioners and so forth to go that direction, it will put the other two or three counties in duress if that happens. So, again, all I ask of you is to think about what you heard tonight from yourselves and what you've heard from us. Let's do some thinking and if anybody comes up with a suggestion please let us know. Thank you very much.

UNKNOWN PERSON:

Thank you.

SARA TUBERGEN:

I'd like to just say something. I'd like to address you. Again, I'm Sara Tubergen from Steuben County Council. One of the reasons I voted for the bid was because I feel it's important. Recycling is important and I know a lot of the recycling is now going to end up in the trash. But I think it's important to keep part of our budget available so that we can do toxic waste. Because if toxic waste, you know, batteries, computers, if those kind of things get into the landfill that's really gonna harm the environment. But at least the things that have been recycled if those go into the landfill fully it stops the toxic stuff then. And a part of our budget needs to be saved to try to help collect more of the toxic items in our environment. So that's one of the reasons I voted for the bid. I also feel that people who recycle . . . I know I've heard this over and over that we're gonna have more trash on the road, but I really don't feel like someone who recycles is just because they can't take it to the recycling bin, I don't feel like they're gonna throw that trash on the road.

UNKNOWN PERSON:

Yes, they will.

SARA TUBERGEN:

Aren't they just gonna throw it where they throw their other garbage?

UNKNOWN PERSON:

They're gonna throw it on the road.

SARA TUBERGEN:

They're gonna put it on the road instead of where they put their regular garbage?

CHAD ARNOLD:

Well, there's bag limits. I mean, Norm knows. What's the bag limit in town?

MAYOR NORM YODER:

We have the eighty-five gallon container.

CHAD ARNOLD:

Yeah. And that's all they can have per week, correct?

BETH SHELLMAN:

A lot of people that recycle don't even have trash pickup at their house.

SARA TUBERGEN:

Oh, in the county. Yeah.

JAMES STULL:

We don't have a bag limit yet.

RON SMITH:

One more little tiny editorial, folks. I'm a farmer and one of the things that irritates me the most is when people chuck those bottles out the window and then I pick them up in a different form. I've lost combine tires and wagon tires and everything else. Before I mow hay in the spring I have to walk my roadsides to make sure. Because I know I'm gonna pop when I run. And if I see somebody throwing one of those out, I'll chase 'em down the road. Because especially . . . I don't know if you know what Snapple is, but Snapple makes a very firm bottle and those babies are bad news. I wish somebody could

get it legislated to where they could not even make those bottles because those are very dangerous and damaging.

BETH SHELLMAN:

I would like to ask the board to provide the town with a cost. If you were to decide to keep the Town of Albion's site open what is the additional cost to do that? I had talked to Chris about that and you never got back with me on the total cost.

CHRIS HIMES:

It's kind of hard to tell until . . . we just signed the contract last week. So we kind of know how things are gonna gel, as far as the sites are gonna be located. We can do that pretty accurately now. I can't give you an exact cost, but I can be a lot closer to where I was when you and I spoke.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Could you do that for the Town of Avilla?

CHRIS HIMES:

Sure.

MARK PANKOP:

Let's continue with board members. Don.

DON MOORE:

Don Moore, Noble County Council. I look up to the people that have been on this board for so long. What a pain in the butt this has had to have been for all those years. Along with Sara and Patty I'm pretty new on here. We still have some unanswered questions and you said we're recording it and we're keeping track of it and we'll let everybody know. Since we didn't communicate the survey too well, how are we going to communicate this back to Albion and Avilla?

JAMES STULL:

We will remind you, Don.

DON MOORE:

What's that?

JAMES STULL:

We will remind you if we don't hear.

DON MOORE:

I would like to know myself as a board member now.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, I think that we can forward letters to the town managers and the boards. And obviously we need to do that in all four counties. Because what happens and it was mentioned here earlier that this is basically the second go around. But, quite honestly, this is the third go around. A few years back we had members from Steuben County, Prairie Heights area, out here, just as many and the same questions, same concerns. So I think that we can get the information out. It just it has to be understood that this is the information you want.

DON MOORE:

I guess I just want to make sure that we don't leave these two particular towns hanging again. So whatever we have to do to get the information out there.

MARK PANKOP:

Yes, Terry.

TERRY HELMER:

I'm Terry Helmer, the Town President of the Town of LaGrange. And I guess I'd like to take things a little different at this time. If we're spending twelve/fifteen thousand dollars on cleanup from things that are dumped at the sites, what if we wrote some language where each drop-site, the property that the site's sat on, whether it's in a town

or a WalMart or wherever they're located, they're responsible for the . . . if they agree to have those recycle bins there the town or a business is responsible for that cleanup of the site. It would save the District twelve to fifteen dollars. That would be one step. And then we could . . . you know, I've been on the board as long as anybody in this room, with exception of Steve I guess, but there's always problems of Steve and Pam, I know they believe strongly in the education programs that the District does. But if we've outgrown our business at this time and we can't meet our needs, I would be in favor of dropping the education programs, the billboards and things and just maintaining our business that we presently need to take care of. Like Steve said earlier, the drop-off sites and the compost sites and things like that are the things that are flourishing today. And with all the environmental things in the news today with all the green things and stuff, I don't know how much people really need to be educated anymore. Because any magazine or newspaper you look at that stuff's being promoted. And just looking at the wage and salaries we paid last month, we have a consultant we paid sixteen hundred dollars to and about sixteen hundred in education expenses. And, like I said, I know some of the staff here believes strongly in the education and the billboards and stuff and I would hate to see some of that stuff go when they believe so strongly in that, but if we can't take care of our business and service the communities and the towns and the counties the way we're supposed to be doing I would like to see the board maybe reconsider things and go back. And, Steve, a year or so we talked about a wage . . . not a wage, but a fee that we would charge every homeowner in all the four counties. And a very minimum fee of just a dollar or two per year per household would generate hundreds of thousands of dollars to keep the District above . . . their heads above water right away I guess to continue to meet the needs of the communities and the towns.

MARK PANKOP:

Suzanne.

SUZANNE HANDSHOE:

I'm Suzanne Handshoe, Mayor of Kendallville. I too agree with what you're saying. Because most people that recycle . . . we learn from our family to recycle and most of our children are learning the pattern from us. So if we had a choice between spending money on educating and spending money to keep recycling open I would prefer to have the recycling. And I'm sure some of you may recall, but in my first month in office of 2004 the headline in the paper was recycling center's leaving Kendallville. You wanna talk about being bombarded with phone calls. So I can relate to what you're dealing with here. And we are down to one recycling center and I know we had to lose one because of the abuse. And that hasn't gotten a whole lot better in Kendallville. When I go drop off my recycles I will see carpet, luggage, toilet seats. I mean, it's pitiful what the people will drop off at those centers. But I hope it's something that we can continue to keep. And I want to apologize as well because I was not here in October when the decision was made. And as a board member I apologize that I wasn't here. So I can see your point. If you're saying that the numbers were there with two recycling drop-offs in Kendallville, yes, those numbers will come back. But it will be from Kendallville people. It won't be from them. Because more people in Kendallville will recycle if it's more convenient. And that's just my spin.

MARK PANKOP:

Other board members?

MAYOR NORM YODER:

I think I forgot my name before. I'm Norman Yoder, Mayor of Auburn. To answer one question, about one in four dollars of what we spend goes to this. Our total budget next year is roughly one point six million. Four hundred thousand of it is allocated from

recycling. So it's about one in every four dollars.

MARK PANKOP:

Go ahead Steve.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Four hundred and thirty-eight thousand two hundred and fifty-nine dollars is what I calculated about a year ago. That's noted on the February of '07 worksheet. And I just haven't gotten to it to recalculate everything this year, Paul. But I made a copy of that one. It's an in-house working sheet. It's really not a document for publishing. Because the numbers can move. So people tend to take this and think those numbers are set in granite and I get hammered pretty hard when it's a moving target. They fluctuate up and down. For example, the number works out on the compost program to about twenty-seven dollars per ton of compost that we process. So we're able to report to you what it cost per ton and what the total program cost is. And that's what the board has struggled with, quite literally, since 2004. 2004 was a crisis. We got a letter from the Department of Local Government Finance that said you shall cut your budget by four hundred thousand dollars. We had to immediately do something.

MARK PANKOP:

Joy.

JOY LECOUNT:

I can appreciate the situation and the decision making that goes around this table because I served here when the District was formed. In fact, I lobbied hard and long in Indianapolis to get Solid Waste District formed across the State. My question to you is, which of your programs that you currently fund do you believe the majority of the people in your district use the most?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

I can answer that.

MARK PANKOP:

If you want to answer that at this point go ahead.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

The top four programs, Joy, are recycling, composting, household hazardous waste and education. Those top four programs are cannibalizing the budget.

JOY LECOUNT:

And how many people do you think actually receive a benefit from your composting program by comparison?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

An exact headcount? We can get you number of vehicles that visit the site. The majority of the people I talk to, it's the majority of the population of the district either use a recycling drop-off or a composting service at some point in time throughout the year. They're pretty comprehensive though. It appears to be pretty comprehensive and pretty popular.

SARA TUBERGEN:

May I make a comment?

MARK PANKOP:

Sure Sara.

SARA TUBERGEN:

I'm Sara Tubergen again from Steuben County. My main concern, and it benefits all of us, is to keep the toxic waste out of the landfills. And I know more people may use the recycling, but I think that should be our top concern because . . . I mean, I have children and I want to leave them with as clean of an environment as we can. And I just really feel that we need to keep enough of the budget to try to aim for as much toxic waste and

keeping that out of the landfills. That benefits all of us. Even if some of us may not . . . it may not be as convenient to do the recycling, but keeping as much toxic waste out of the landfills benefits everyone.

MARK PANKOP:

I suppose we all still have thoughts. I don't think there's a board member here, anyone sitting at these tables, that wouldn't like to keep every recycling center open. We do not care to close a one of them, but unfortunately money still talks. We have to use our money wisely. The four county area has different priorities in areas. The lake areas appreciate very much the composting sites. In the lake areas we have heavy usage of the drop-off of the yard waste and the trash from the trees to clean up their lots and their properties. Those people have to represent those people. We hear voices from board members that represent that. You people have expressed a high interest in the recycling centers. There's other areas that are . . . and in most areas recycling is a very high priority. How convenient can we make it? Can we keep centers within three to five miles of your home? No, we cannot. There was a time we probably could. We know we cannot. What can we do? Well, we try to put them in the locations that would be frequented by the most people. We think that would be the grocery stores, areas that are traveled by the highest populous area of the counties or the district. We have a number of plans. And airing our dirty laundry isn't exactly fun, but sometimes we have to do that. Our sites are abused in many cases. Our sites are taken advantage of by sometimes industry. As you heard and others mentioned, we get all kinds of stuff at recycling sites. Yes, the Albion site is a very clean site. I think we made a very wise decision putting it that close to the jail and the highway department and having a camera on it.

UNKNOWN PERSON:

Well, you pulled it once.

MARK PANKOP:

That site is carefully watched. I wish all sites were like that. And this brings up one of our major problems, is control of these sites. We have little or no control over almost all of the sites. What happens there happens and then we take care of it. And taking care of too much or too little becomes an expensive problem. And then there's other priorities. You mentioned toxic waste. And toxic waste is one of the things that's a high priority in my mind. Because mercury and PCB's in the old times and certain types of plastics are very toxic to our environment. But they're also very costly for us to handle. What is it a ton for a household hazardous place?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

It depends on the program. Our program is currently a drop-off once a week. We've been able to get the cost per ton for HHW down to seven hundred and fifty dollars per ton. Our toxic away meetings that we held years ago that some of you might remember were running as high as \$1500-\$1700 per ton. So we went to a drop-off to cut that per ton cost again in half. But it's still pretty expense in the case of HHW.

MARK PANKOP:

But we think we have to weigh these things. And is it important enough to pay that large amount of money to have things like mercury and such, batteries, lead, out of the system? Yes, we think it is. But that takes money. It takes money out of the budget. We've struggled with these problems and we think we do the best we can. But generating additional revenue to support these programs . . . and maybe we've overeducated. I welcome you back to the following meetings to resolve this as the best we can. Jim.

JAMES STULL:

I just ask . . . you welcome us back and Mayor Yoder gave me a little indication that

there was another meeting that somebody came in and voiced their opinions and maybe some things changed. Is this a done deal or is it not a done deal?

MARK PANKOP:

You heard the executive director say there is some wiggle room, but it's not very much.

JAMES STULL:

Well, I think that's our first priority is that it, you know . . . but . . . and excuse me if I read anything into what you said, Mr. Yoder. And even Mr. Smith kind of said, you know, gave an indication if we had some ideas. So that means there's hope or a chance. But what do we do . . . and the next thing I would ask is, you all represent different areas and I'm not gonna point no fingers because I know we have a commissioner and a county council person that represent Noble County.

MARK PANKOP:

Two mayors.

JAMES STULL:

Okay. And, by the way, if I was the mayor of Albion . . . please take this as a compliment, Mayor . . . I'd represent my town. She don't represent Albion. She represents Kendallville like I would if I were the mayor of Kendallville. I mean, as far as the people. You're not gonna call me, James Stull, in Albion. That . . . please don't take that as a . . . I remember you driving your truck around picking the trash up in Kendallville when you were talking about that. So anyway who is to communicate with the Avillas . . . and nobody even mentioned Rome City . . . and the Albions . . .

UNKNOWN PERSON:

And Cromwell.

JAMES STULL:

Yeah. Is Don supposed to let us know what's going on or Mark or who does represent . .

. I know they represent Noble County, but who represents us? I guarantee the people in Kendallville would know what was going on. Nobody would come into Mayor Handshoe's office and say, oh, did you know they're gonna close our recycling center. That lady would of known and so would her constituents. She would not have been embarrassed as we were.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

Oh, I don't know.

JAMES STULL:

And the same with Norm. Well . . .

MAYOR NORM YODER:

In 2004 I came back from vacation and it was gone and I didn't know.

JAMES STULL:

I just want to know where the communication comes back down. Because if there's ever another survey . . . I think we've hit on a few things tonight that . . .

TERRY HELMER:

One question I have, Steve.

JAMES STULL:

And is it a done deal?

TERRY HELMER:

One question I have, Steve. Your recycle bin here, how many tons do you bring in in a month's time here at this location since it's one that you're gonna keep open?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Oh, it's less than ten tons. It's small right now because there's one just down the road at Ashley.

TERRY HELMER:

From what I see the numbers are three ton or less.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Yeah. Because there's one in town at Ashley.

TERRY HELMER:

And I guess what sense does it make to keep this one open here . . .

MARK PANKOP:

What would you do with the toxic waste, Terry?

TERRY HELMER:

Make a separate facility.

MARK PANKOP:

Put it into one of these unmanned facilities? I'm speaking to a board member now.

TERRY HELMER:

No, we're talking recyclables now, the bins. This is one of the thirteen sites that's gonna be left open for recyclables here.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, I had thought that you were going in the direction of closing this site.

TERRY HELMER:

No. No, not closing. Just removing the recyclables from here and put it into someplace where they're fifteen tons of use.

JAMES STULL:

Well, the numbers speak for themselves, Terry. I mean, excuse me, but the numbers are already speaking for themselves.

TERRY HELMER:

And why would you want to keep a site for recyclables when you're closing everybody up that's got three ton or four ton or five ton and not allowing them to remain open I

guess. And, again, I apologize because I wasn't here in the October/November meetings.

JAMES STULL:

I apologize if I'm out of order, but all I want to know is if it's a done deal? It sounds like a lot of wiggling to me.

TERRY HELMER:

Well, I hope it's not a done deal.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, let me say this. Something has to be done. We have struggled with this problem for three or four or five years.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

For four years at least.

MARK PANKOP:

Yeah. And we're to the brick wall. Our back's against the wall. There's very little we can do. You've suggested that we drop the educational part. That sure sounds like suicide, but I guess that would keep us open.

CHRIS MAGNUSON:

What about the, you were saying the one to two dollars, can you do that?

MARK PANKOP:

Well, the one to two dollars, let me explain. Noble County's the highest population in the four districts. Their population being officially forty-three thousand. Take that times four. A hundred and sixty thousand or thereabouts. Now, we're talking a million and two. One to two dollars doesn't quite cut it there in my mind, but maybe I'm figuring wrong.

JAMES STULL:

Well, doesn't our county already pay two hundred thousand dollars a year? Don't the

taxpayers already pay it?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Roughly. Each county it bounces between two and three hundred thousand a year, yes.

JAMES STULL:

Of which we're all taxpayers and it comes out of our budget. And so our county is already paying two hundred thousand.

TERRY HELMER:

Our expensive consultant, J. Spear's, numbers for us was that two dollar number or whatever it was and told how many thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars that would generate. We paid him a large sum of money to give us that information.

MARK PANKOP:

And in response, and this is a little bit tangent because it only pertains to Noble County, but the Noble County commissioners visited Whitley County, viewed their site, reviewed their operation, reviewed their budgets, their collections. They collect forty-one dollars per household. They have fourteen thousand five hundred households. It's a little under six hundred thousand they collect. What that provides is a bi-weekly curbside pickup for all of the households that pay within the county, including the cities and towns. Now we're talking six hundred thousand now. They have a central site that's somewhat like this site right here. A bit smaller. They do take trash at that site. They charge for it. They charge per pickup. I have those figures here. If you'd like them after the meeting that's fine. It doesn't compute money wise. Go ahead.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

Could I just say one more thing?

MARK PANKOP:

Sure Paul.

PAUL SHEPHERD:

I just want to say that I know that you folks are all dedicated public officials and that you're doing what you think is best for the area. I know that. It's just that we disagree on the solution. And I just want to make that point. I know several of you personally.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, first off, we've dealt with this time and time again. The solution has to be a workable solution within the budget constraints that we have.

BETH SHELLMAN:

It's obvious that you're not gonna make a decision tonight. You invited our town council back. They rescheduled one of their regular meetings that was supposed to be tonight in order to attend your meeting. So we do have regular meetings on the same nights that you do which makes it really hard for us to come up here.

MARK PANKOP:

Our meetings are always the second Tuesday of each month.

BETH SHELLMAN:

So are ours.

MARK PANKOP:

Let me also make you aware that whatever decision we make has to be somewhat fair to all four counties involved. Just because Noble County has the highest population and the highest tonnage generated and . . . what was it? . . . four sites that were in the top ten . . . five sites that were in the top ten or thereabouts. Other counties do not think it fair that we would maintain five sites in Noble County when they may only have one that would generate in that category. So therefore we have to balance all those things. We have to make those things work. And, yes, we could revert back to just Noble County. But here again in comparison with Whitley County, which I believe is an excellent operation,

forty-one dollars a site . . . Noble County collects approximately, I believe it's six or seven dollars per hundred thousand. If your home is worth two hundred thousand you're probably paying fourteen or fifteen dollars.

RANDY MYERS:

Mr. President?

MARK PANKOP:

Yes.

RANDY MYERS:

But I hope the board doesn't forget that Albion is a unique situation, in that we are the county seat and we are in the center of Albion . . . or center of Noble County. And I've been on several boards so I understand how hard it is to make these decisions. But from one point of view it is very unique. We are the county seat. And any other entities that are talking about this situation, they are not like us. We are the county seat and we are the center of Noble County geographically. And I do appreciate what I see from the board. I came up here thinking that this was all set in stone, but I see there may be some wiggle room. And I appreciate everyone serving on the board. Because I know sometimes it's very time consuming and not very pleasant. So thank you very much.

MARK PANKOP:

Randy is a council member in Noble County and so sometimes I maybe am a little more direct with Randy. But Randy you know that Noble County is unique. Auburn is the center of DeKalb County.

RANDY MYERS:

Yes. But every county can say we're unique. All I'm saying is that we're unique in that we are the county seat.

MARK PANKOP:

Angola is the center of Steuben County. LaGrange is the center of LaGrange County.

RANDY MYERS:

But we are the one that's being closed.

MARK PANKOP:

And they are also the largest population area in each of those counties. Albion is the third smallest town . . . and maybe the fourth if all things were taken into consideration . . . in Noble County. It presents a very unique problem, as you know, for Noble County in almost everything we do. And I'm taking up a lot of the board's time in discussing Noble County's problems, but Noble County has the representation here tonight. So the problem that seems to be unique with Albion is also a unique problem in Noble County. In any one thing that we establish in Noble County where would we establish it?

JAMES STULL:

Probably Kendallville.

MARK PANKOP:

Probably Kendallville. And why would that be?

JAMES STULL:

Because it's the largest. But we are the county seat and we are the center of the county. And it doesn't matter if anybody likes it or don't like it, Albion's the county seat and it's the center of the county.

MARK PANKOP:

So therefore you pay more taxes?

JAMES STULL:

And it's probably not going to move, as much as you might want it to.

JOY LECOUNT:

It isn't an issue of paying more or less taxes. But about two-thirds of our county is

certainly going to be under served by the decision that has been made to close the recycling center in Albion.

SARA TUBERGEN:

I would just like to say that if we think of the District as a whole and what we're supposed to be doing here is trying to keep the largest amount of trash out of the landfills. You know, it may not be convenient for some people to recycle. But for the amount of money that we pay for the future for our kids to keep . . . for the amount of money we have to keep the largest amount of trash out of the landfills. It may not be your trash, but it's all of our environment and if we can use the money we have to capture the largest amount . . . and maybe there's some disagreement. Maybe it won't work out the way we think it is, but I think that's the goal to try to keep . . . use the money we have to get the largest amount of trash out of our landfills.

JAMES STULL:

And we were the sixth largest. We keep hearing the largest amounts. We recycled . . . we were the sixth on your list. And if the goal is to get the most trash out of the landfills it seems like number six ought to light a lightbulb.

TERRY HELMER:

Well, Avilla's number four.

JAMES STULL:

Exactly. So four and six.

MARK PANKOP:

I will pledge to the people of Noble County that I will present to this board the idea that Noble County has some unique problems when they accepted us into the Solid Waste District . . . the four county Solid Waste District . . . and therefore they must deal with us knowing that we have unique considerations. I will do my best to convey that to the

board.

JOY LECOUNT:

When we came into the District we had an operating recycling center that serviced the entire county.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

I agree Noble County is unique in the fact that three out of the largest generators of recyclables are in Noble County. Which I've got a list here and that's one of the criteria that we started with. It's not where we ended up and it maybe not be where we end up when we're done. I have no idea. Interestingly Garrett still operates its own recycling. They actually operate it and generate money and do it voluntarily. The things that they struggle with to get rid of the District takes off their hands. But most of the items they actually still operate. Waterloo . . . when they closed the Auburn site all the material went to Waterloo. It became overwhelming. They elected to go with curbside recycling and just asked us to finally leave, which is a blessing. There's no right and wrong answer. And I agree with you it makes sense historically if you look at that. Noble County is unique that the two largest communities run six and four in the county. I know Chris struggled with the fact Fremont's the next largest city, but it's not the best place for him to most efficiently collect. There's no right and wrong. And we really do struggle. And I'm not remiss in saying that I would be shocked if we don't have representatives from other counties to follow up. On a little lighter note I want to invite Ron . . . our garage and recycle pickup in Auburn is nine thirty-five a month . . . if you ever thought about lowering your cost of living you might consider moving to town.

MARK PANKOP:

We have a number of agenda items left and the hour is getting late. I certainly appreciate all of you being here. Please follow up with us. I hope that you have seen some of our

problems and we will be continuing to struggle with that.

JAMES STULL:

One more thing. Nothing personal and you do a thankless job. I know that. I serve on a few committees myself.

RON SMITH:

Thank you, sir.

MARK PANKOP:

Thank you. Let's regroup and continue on. We will try to proceed through the agenda. Maybe at the point of adjournment we may take a few comments from anyone who wishes to do such. Programs and operations report.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Pam's got one thing.

PAM DECAMP:

I wanted to bring before the board, and I forgot during the executive committee meeting, we did have a seminar here in our office in November. It was a seminar on Indiana's yard waste solutions. It was sponsored by the rural community assistant's program. And the neat thing about this was a lot of cities and towns attended this training and so did a lot of the board members. And Steve presented some sessions during that time. But the one thing is, in this binder our compost program was a model program that was used for training. So I think that's pretty significant that there are other people in the State looking at us as a model program in our composting program. That was it. Thank you.

MARK PANKOP:

Something I noticed in the treasurer's report, funds are dwindling at a greater rate and we can sustain for the end of the physical year in June. Is that right?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

No. Our fiscal year is a calendar year.

MARK PANKOP:

I thought we had to make these funds last until June?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

No. There's still some delayed distributions to come yet.

MARK PANKOP:

All right. Well, that's a plus.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

So there's some more to come. Now that's not to say we may get into a bind temporarily as we have in the past couple years. I don't know if all the counties are completely distributed.

MARK PANKOP:

I meant our operational budget. Our monthly budget.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Okay.

MARK PANKOP:

Isn't the three hundred thousand that I see in the budget to last us until June? Aren't we operating under that?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Yes. But to be honest with you I've got to look at the controller's reports to see if all the distributions have come in. And I don't think they have.

MARK PANKOP:

So we've got more distributions?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

We've got some more funds to be distributed yet, Mark. I don't know what that number

is off the top of my head.

MARK PANKOP:

Legislative reports.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

I'll forgo it, Mr. Chairman.

MARK PANKOP:

Other items pending. Public comment. Mr. Fox, you're still here and I'm glad you're still here.

WAYNE FOX:

I'm here.

MARK PANKOP:

That's the public comment, he's here. Thank you. Does any board member want to make any statement, concern, finalize this night or send us off with good cheer?

DON KAUFMAN:

I think there was a lot of good give and take here tonight. And I appreciate what Mayor Yoder and Ron Smith said and agree totally with them. I wanted to ask them how they would operate if they had a business and it was showing in the red all the time what they would do about it. On the other hand, I am extremely disappointed in apparently the lack of communication.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

We struggled with that, didn't we Steve?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Well, I can stand before you as I always do and tell you we tried and we tried and we tried and I'll leave it at that.

SARA TUBERGEN:

How much does the education cost us?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Recently . . . we cut it a year or two ago to sixty.

PAM DECAMP:

Right. Sixty thousand.

MARK PANKOP:

We cut it about in half if I remember.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Yes. Just a couple years ago we cut it.

PAM DECAMP:

Between fifty and sixty for the educators and the billboards.

TERRY HELMER:

And the consulting fees normally run what, eighty to a hundred thousand a year?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

It depends on the year. It depends on the project, Terry. They've been as low as twenty.

On a busy year they might get as high as eighty.

TERRY HELMER:

Okay.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

There's only two task orders in effect right now. One is for general services. That means whatever this board will direct the engineer to do he will do. The other task order that's outstanding right now is he's designing the scales for this facility. Other than that, that's it.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

I look forward to the next meeting.

MARK PANKOP:

Let me remind you that we do have a sheet here that's been generated of all the communications and everything that's been put out with the newspapers. And maybe we are at fault, inasmuch as we have struggled with this for so long that we think everyone understands that this is our problem and we need to renew our efforts to bring this to the public. The engineer that we have hired has not done anything that we have not asked him to do. He has not billed us for anything that we have not contracted with him to provide. So I think that we have to chastize ourselves, but maybe this is one of the areas that we could cut back on. Here, again, there's certain things that build for the future and certain things that just maintain the status quo. And, quite honestly, when you get down to cutting maintenance you're just pretty well to the point of committing suicide. But maybe that's the point we're at. Maybe we should try to survive for two or three more years and think that that is the end of the rope. I don't know. We've talked about this in executives. I think we've even talked it in board meetings.

RON SMITH:

Mayor Yoder, he's only been in office for a week and now he's getting suicidal already.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

That's why I was wanting to get out. It was so ironic that Noble County showed up tonight too, isn't it?

MARK PANKOP:

Yeah.

DON MOORE:

Do we go through budgets periodically to see if there's anything that we can cut?

MARK PANKOP:

We certainly have that opportunity.

DON MOORE:

I'm sorry?

MARK PANKOP:

We certainly have that opportunity. That is our right. We are board members. We're an oversight board. We're not a fund generating board. We're an oversight board.

DON MOORE:

Maybe that's something we should do, to go through all of our budgets.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, I know that in the executive committees we have certainly discussed every aspect of cutting that I can think of. And we have cut staff over the years. Steven's got a couple items yet.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Try to remember to remind everybody to go to our website. We post the minutes of the board meetings. We post the agendas. There's a lot of reports out there. And particular this report that we did in '05. And we're currently updating in '07. That is a detailed cost analysis of what the cities and towns get out of the District based on the assessed evaluations they pay into the budget. And we work through a series of analysis that assigns dollar values those benefits that they receive. It's been out for quite awhile. Apparently the word's not out or people are just choosing not to read it. But we'll have an updated version here in a few weeks. Jenni and I are both working on reducing that data. That's on the website. We're utilizing the website more and more as a communication's tool. Other things we're doing is I've directed Pam to put an e-mail list together for all the cities and towns to where everything and anything we do, they'll all get any press releases and those types of things on a routine, uninterrupted basis. And then the other thing to please make note of, is every year with the start of a new year we

try to do a board orientation that benefits older as well as new members of the board. We're gonna try to combine that this year with the February 12th regularly scheduled board meeting next month. The orientation will begin at four and run to six o'clock for those who want to sit in for the orientation. If we need to we'll do an executive committee meeting from six to six-thirty and then the regular scheduled board meeting at six-thirty. The second Tuesday, as usual, and that's February 12th.

MARK PANKOP:

The thought just passed my mind, is it possible for us to generate an information packet and actually mail it to concerned entities?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Well, Pam's done a gazillion million packets over the years. We've got a lot to choose from.

PAM DECAMP:

And when new board members come on there's a packet that I put together. Plus try to meet individually with them. I am available to go to any meetings.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, the packet of information that I'm thinking of would be targeted towards the type of concerns that we had tonight. And of course when we answer those I think that would be probably the first piece of information that could be in that packet.

PAM DECAMP:

We are working on ideas like a newsletter and those types of things. I try to do a weekly column in the newspaper.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, a newsletter many times is general information and encouragement and feel goods and warm and fuzzies. Sometimes I think we need to actually send . . .

PAM DECAMP:

Not my newsletter, Mark.

MARK PANKOP:

We actually need to send the problems and the discussions here that we have to the decision makers in the cities and counties and councils.

CHRIS HIMES:

Mark, if I may say, Linda e-mails me that stuff after every board meeting or before the next board meeting. Why can't those people be on that same distribution?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Why can't they go to the website and read it.

MARK PANKOP:

Well, quite honestly, the people that sat out here in these folding chairs back here I would . . . and maybe I'm wrong, but I'm going to say that seventy-five percent of them would not check an e-mail from Solid Waste District.

PAM DECAMP:

Right.

MARK PANKOP:

Probably would even delete it without even looking at it.

CHRIS HIMES:

Even the public officials. the town managers and the city council people?

MARK PANKOP:

Well, that might be a bit different, but . . .

CHRIS HIMES:

Because that's really who you need to reach. Not necessarily the citizen, but the people that are responsible for those citizens.

TERRY HELMER:

Speaking for our town council, and knowing my town council, four of the five don't even have e-mail at home.

MARK PANKOP:

Chris, I hate to mention some of the things that I've witnessed at council meetings, but our council and commissioners receive a packet of material and most boards around here have a packet of material and when you open that when the meeting is opened . . . go from there.

PAM DECAMP:

You know one of the things, Mark, over the years, our primary focus dealing with education has been to our youth. And that was the directive of the board at that time and that's what we've followed. As far as adult education, there really isn't any other than the occasional times when I'm asked to do a presentation or whatever. But there's so much that needs to be given to the adults that may influence some of the decisions that . . . or things that were promoted tonight, maybe we should not focus on the youth and focus more on adults . . . cities and towns and make it a priority that we attend those meetings or something. I mean, I don't know. Like Mayor Handshoe said, they learn from example, the children. I don't know.

MARK PANKOP:

We could certainly redirect our focus.

PAM DECAMP:

Correct. Because it's not working evidently.

SUZANNE HANDSHOE:

And I noticed today in the Indiana Association Magazine the big focus is going green . . . cities going green.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Everybody is. What I would point out to you. What you're all touching on, from Donnie's suggestion of revisiting the budget to changing the focus of the education program, what you're talking about doing . . . and we can certainly do that . . . is sitting down and rewriting the Solid Waste Plans to change the focus of what we do. Mayor, you remember. We touched on it today. We tried that about three times.

MARK PANKOP:

But we cannot change the state's mandate, can we? Do we have a state's mandate?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

The state mandate is to draft a plan and implement the plan. That's the state mandate.

RON SMITH:

One of the things that we've struggled with fees and tipping fees, I thought I heard tonight there was almost a consensus that that might be part of the process. Did you all hear that?

PAM DECAMP:

I heard that.

MAYOR NORM YODER:

We do have a few other mandates and certain things that we are responsible to do.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Within that plan. In other words, you're mandated to write the plan, but there's a few things the state mandates that you have in the plan.

MARK PANKOP:

Is there anything that should be brought before the board at this time?

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Chris, thanks for coming in all night.

MARK PANKOP:

Thank you, yes, for enduring this with us.

CHRIS HIMES:

Happy to be here.

MARK PANKOP:

Can I get a motion for adjournment?

DON VAN WYE:

I move we adjourn.

MARK PANKOP:

We're done.

STEVEN CHRISTMAN:

Thank you for coming.