

**APPROVED MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
HAMILTON COUNTY RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** May 16, 2019

**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.

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

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

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative  
Bob Gedert, Public Member  
Karen Hurley, General Interest Member  
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative, Vice Chair  
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative  
Raj Rajagopal, Township Representative  
Larry Riddle, Rumpke  
Sydney Sauer, Student Representative

**Staff**

Michelle Balz, Solid Waste Manager  
Abbey Cherry, Public Relations Specialist  
Brad Johnson, Director  
Ali Khodadad, Operations Manager  
Jenny Lohmann, Program Specialist  
Brad Miller, Assistant Director  
Cher Mohring, Program Specialist  
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk  
Mary Sticklen, Business Specialist

**Others in Attendance**

Nee Fong Chin, HC Prosecutor's Office  
Chuck DeJonckheere, HCPH  
Dean Ferrier, Rumpke  
Greg Kesterman, HCPH  
Deputy Bryan Peak, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

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

Todd Portune, Hamilton County Commissioner, Chair

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Ingram called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm and stated that he would be chairing the Policy Committee in Commissioner Portune's absence.

Mr. Ingram congratulated Ms. Sauer on her upcoming graduation from high school on behalf of the Committee.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Department Environmental Services has an award winning team receiving the Circle of Excellence Awards from the County Commissioners. The Professional Achievement Award went to Brad Miller; Rookie of the Year, Mary Sticklen; and the Team Impact Award went to Joy Landry, Michelle Balz, Susan Schumacher, Brad Johnson, and John Nelson (from Soil & Water). The Committee and audience gave each a round of applause.

Mr. Ingram congratulated everyone and stated that he was very proud of each.

**2. CLERK'S REPORT**

**A. Approval of Minutes – March 21, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting**

Mr. Ingram asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions.

Hearing none, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Hurley moved; Mr. Rajagopal seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

**B. Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda at this time.

**3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS**

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment B compared revenue through March from 2019 and 2018. Revenue is up about eight percent. Ms. Balz stated that there has been a decrease in in-district tonnage, four percent or nine thousand tons and an increase in out-of district and out-of-state of about 13 percent.

Ms. Balz stated that seeing a decrease for-in district tonnage is what the District has control over and is the mission of the District.

**4. POLICY ITEMS**

**A. Continuous Organics and Waste Reduction Grant Program**

Ms. Balz stated that at the last meeting, the Committee voted to approve the \$23,000 in funding from the original budgeted amount of \$100,000 for the applications received for the original 2019 Organics Diversion Grant. There was a long discussion about potentially having another round of grants.

Ms. Balz stated that Ms. Mohring asked the people who attended the grant meeting or showed interest why they did not apply. A few barriers were uncovered with one being several organizations did not apply because of the timing.

Ms. Balz stated another reason was one that was discussed at the last meeting which was the match amounts; organizations could not afford the match amounts or did not have the capitol at that time.

Ms. Balz stated that this was the first time the District really focused on organics. Past grants offered had a broader waste reduction project and thinks that some people didn't have a specific organics project.

Ms. Balz stated that staff is proposing a new grant program called the Continuous Organics and Waste Reduction Grant Program, which is the first time this sort of grant program has been offered. The grant would be open continuously; there would not be a strict deadline; it would be open until the county budget closes or a few weeks before.

Ms. Balz stated it would add some flexibility so the grantees could pull together their project. The project would still be evaluated by a committee, grantees would still have to meet criteria, etc. but it would be open continuously.

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Ms. Balz stated that this would sort of be a pilot to see how much strain it would put on staff resources. Staff likes the idea because staff is often out working with organizations and identifying potential projects so this would open up flexibility in that potential grantees would not have to wait until the once/year grant cycle.

Ms. Balz stated that this new grant would be capped at \$10,000. Because it is a continuous grant cycle, it would not necessarily be competitive; all the applications would not be evaluated at the same time. It would still be evaluated critically and no projects would be funded that staff did not think were worthwhile projects.

Ms. Balz stated that staff felt it was important to have some caps so the whole pot of money was not granted immediately to a big project.

Ms. Balz stated that year's ago, the Policy Committee voted that any grants over \$15,000 would need Committee approval so these grants would not need Committee approval, but staff would provide grant award updates at each meeting.

Ms. Balz stated that the match was critically considered. Staff feels that it is important that the grantees have a match because by having a match, grantees have a stake in the game. Staff has found that when a match is not required, the grant project ends up ballooning.

Ms. Balz stated that staff decided that in-kind matches would be allowed so organizations that were providing staff time, etc. would count as a match. A 25 percent match would still be required but in-kind matches would be allowed if the cash match was a barrier.

Ms. Balz stated that the final point that was discussed was to make this grant not just for organics but to open it up to any kind of waste reduction project which would include reuse, waste reduction and recycling, etc.

Mr. Ingram stated that this was a well thought out proposal. Mr. Gedert discussed how a continuous grant program worked when he operated the Indiana grants program years ago. Mr. Gedert stated that as the program moved to continuous, the competitiveness was lost so a rule was added that if the grant application did not seem to meet par, then staff did not necessarily reject the application but meet with them to upgrade the application to meet application/project standards.

Mr. Gedert stated that moving to continuous proved to be successful because many organizations cannot meet deadlines and in-kind being able to be used for the match was very successful. Mr. Gedert stated that his caution is that when organizations add in staffing expenses for in-kind matches, they are very hard to track.

Ms. Balz stated that this was why staff originally did not include this. Mr. Gedert stated that time sheets were allowed to be used but when electronic time sheets were added, it was much more difficult. Mr. Gedert stated that "in-kind" is what the organization wants to submit but staffing is hard to track.

Ms. Magness stated that she was glad staff did the research to find the barriers, addressed them, and are widening the scope a little bit and gave examples of things she would like to see funded that would fall under this grant now.

Mr. DiPuccio asked, relating to the labor of the in-kind services, how would a cost be calculated? There is their salary but then there is overhead costs, etc. and asked how this would be taken into account. Mr. DiPuccio stated he was not looking for an answer now, but to take this into consideration and that each organizations labor could come in at a different cost.

Ms. Magness stated that the application could state that in-kind labor can be claimed up to a dollar limit. Mr. Gedert stated that as an example, universities claim 33 percent overhead but he has rarely seen documentation for that 33 percent.

Mr. Ingram stated that he thinks the Committee has offered good points to help the staff. Ms. Sauer stated that it would be interesting to see if making the 25 percent match required if the organization was for profit, but allowing the in-kind being an option for a non-profit or a school. Ms. Sauer stated that this could be an interesting way to get kids involved for a school or community for in-kind service while the business could pay that 25 percent easier.

Ms. Balz asked Ms. Sauer if she was saying that the in-kind option would not be available for businesses. Ms. Sauer stated yes and that if you are a business, you need the 25 percent match because you have capitol and that if you are a school or community, you can use the in-kind because you have people labor and that would fulfill an education piece of part of the District's mission as well.

Mr. Ingram asked for a motion stating that there is a total amount of \$76,955 available for the new Continuous Organics and Waste Reduction Grant Program for 2019, not to exceed \$10,000 in funds, a 25 percent match for the for-profit community but not for schools. Ms. Sauer stated that this was not exactly what she stated. Ms. Hurley stated that Ms. Sauer was saying that in-kind could be for schools but it was just a suggestion. Ms. Hurley stated that Mr. Ingram said no match for the schools and that is not what Ms. Sauer said. Ms. Sauer stated that she meant a monetary match of 25 percent for-profit and have the option of in-kind for communities or schools.

Mr. Ingram asked if the Committee was ready to vote and stated that these grant applications would not come back for Committee approval since they are under \$10,000 dollars but will receive reports on how successful the program was.

Mr. DiPuccio moved; Ms. Magness seconded. Mr. Ingram asked if there was any more discussion. Hearing none, all in favor say "aye" and all were in favor. Mr. Ingram stated that the new Continuous Organics and Waste Reduction Grant Program has been approved.

**B. Carryover Balance, Additional Spending**

Ms. Balz stated that at the March Policy meeting, members asked staff to brainstorm ideas to spend down the carry-over balance.

Ms. Balz stated that she wanted to give a brief primer on the budget in the form of a three slide presentation. For 2019, \$3,310,726.77 is budgeted. Grants are 30 percent with the Residential Recycling Incentive Program being the largest grant, 18 percent in personnel which is the solid waste staff but also the shared staff with Environmental Services, 11 percent for household hazardous waste, eight percent in yard trimmings drop-off programs, and 11 percent for Hamilton County Public Health and Cincinnati Health Department for inspections of facilities.

Ms. Balz stated that nine percent of the budget was going to awareness which includes the District's large outreach campaigns such as reducing wasted food and residential recycling as well as compost seminars, etc.

Mr. DiPuccio asked about school programs. Ms. Balz stated that this was where the District paid contractors to go into schools and conduct programs and the District also pays for schools to have field trips, and a staff person also does programming.

Ms. Balz stated that the next slide was a solid waste fund trend which Mr. Khodadad updates quarterly. Ms. Balz explained what each line of the chart showed with one line representing the eight month operating expense line.

Ms. Balz explained that the eight month operating was if the District would ever need to find a new source of revenue, eight months would be the bare minimum of what it would take to get a new fee structure.

Ms. Balz explained that the line showing 2018 revenue was a little bit higher than 2019 because 2019 is a prediction of revenue. Mr. Ingram stated that the expense line may not cross the revenue line or has it already? Ms. Balz stated that staff does not know the 2019 revenue until the end of the year. Mr. Ingram stated that his speculation is that it will not and asked Mr. Riddle.

Mr. Riddle stated that revenue should be pretty consistent for right now. Mr. Ingram stated that there was a big gap between revenue and expenses in 2017 and 2018. Ms. Balz stated that this was intentional and that over the last year, the Committee has voted to add \$400,000 in expenses in order to spend down the carry-over. Even if revenue was the same as in 2018, expenses would still be a little over but it was intentional in that the Committee wanted to spend some of those funds.

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment C shows how those additional funds were spent and asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Balz stated that there were two meetings last year where the Committee voted in extra items; the Organics Diversion Grant, Compost Bin Sale, etc. Some items have already happened, in the process, or will happen in the fall.

Ms. Balz stated that staff put together four ideas for spending extra funds. These ideas were put together based on what we think would have the highest impact on waste diversion but also would have limited staff resources required for implementation.

Ms. Balz stressed that staff is at the limit of what we could do as a staff regarding adding programs so if additional programs were added; the District would need to hire additional staff. Ms. Balz stated that staff does have a lot of other ideas that could have been added but kept it limited because of that reason.

Ms. Balz stated that \$50,000 is currently set aside for what is being referred to as Save the Food Campaign. Staff is proposing adding \$50,000 to the current Save the Food Campaign to reduce residential wasted food. This would greatly increase the impact of that campaign because it would put it in line with the current residential recycling campaign but it would, even more importantly, allow staff to contract out and create some new tools.

Ms. Balz stated in the past couple years, staff has been using campaign elements developed for the Save the Food by the Ad Council NRDC. Ms. Balz stated that from an awareness basis, staff really loves these. The Save the Food website is fantastic which is where staff has been directing people because there are a lot of tools.

Ms. Balz stated that staff wants to end the pure awareness building and give people tangible things they can do. So rather than just say, the average family of four throws away \$1,500 of food, staff would like to say, this is what you can do, this is how you store your asparagus, etc. to hopefully change behavior.

Ms. Balz stated that staff would like to work with a firm to develop those campaign materials. This is something the District's counterpart in Franklin County is in the process of doing and the District will be involved in their process as well.

Ms. Balz stated that adding \$50,000 will increase the impact and allow staff to develop new materials which will be exciting.

Ms. Balz stated the Residential Cardboard Campaign would happen in November or December when all the holiday buying is happening and people have a lot of cardboard boxes. Ms. Balz stated that data from the waste characterization study that was recently done at the landfill shows only about 32 percent of residential cardboard is being captured.

Ms. Balz stated that cardboard has value and it is something Rumpke Recycling has expressed that they would like to see more of. Ms. Balz stated that conducting a small campaign on increasing cardboard capture would be impactful.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Committee talked about this before and thought it might be good to approach Amazon since a lot of cardboard is coming from Amazon. Mr. Ingram wondered if Amazon would somehow support the campaign; not necessarily for money but in a way of marketing perhaps.

Mr. Ingram stated that he did not know who staff could get a hold of other than Jeff Bezos, the CEO, but it would be interesting to approach them and thinks that they would be sensitive to this issue. Ms. Hurley stated that it would be great if they could just have a recycling message on the cardboard mailers. Ms. Magness stated that she agreed and that some people do not realize that the plastic needs to be removed and the cardboard broken down, which, if not done, is improperly recycling.

Mr. Ingram asked if Ms. Balz could reach out to Amazon to see if this message could be promoted.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the message on the boxes and that shipments are happening nationwide.

Ms. Magness stated that she liked the idea and suggested maybe a little box cutter from Ohio might be a good idea as well because some people just do not know to break it down. This would be a really good prompt and tool that people could use. Ms. Balz stated that this idea may need to be run by the Prosecutor's Office.

Mr. Ingram asked Mr. Riddle, if something like this could be started, would it help Rumpke Recycling. Mr. Riddle stated yes.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that staff should talk to the Rumpke organization about what their ideal situation on how to handle their cardboard in the residential program from the collection to the processing.

Ms. Balz stated the Commercial Waste Audits are where the District would hire a consultant to go into large organizations and do a waste audit. Ms. Balz stated that hopefully the audit would find new materials that the company could be diverting.

Ms. Balz stated that this was done years ago with Findlay Market and they developed a great program with it and now have one of the longest lasting in-vessel composting systems. The District has already received interest from two large organizations. Staff would like to increase the budgeted \$10,000 by another \$10,000 due to the interest in this program so far in 2019.

Mr. Gedert stated that he saw this large hit on the waste stream that could use more funding when available. Mr. Gedert stated that he has seen a larger funding base for commercial waste audits in many solid waste districts. One of the techniques is looking at the largest industrial and commercial waste haulers to the landfill. This can get a little tricky because sometimes this is confidential at the landfill. But sometimes you can gain a list of businesses that haul to the landfill by volume of waste and create a list of the largest waste generators and use that as the list for waste audits.

Mr. Gedert suggested that maybe this can be looked at when the 2020 budget is being done.

Ms. Balz stated that the item that would require the greatest amount of funds would be a Community Yard Trimmings Infrastructure Grant.

Ms. Balz stated that about 30 percent of residents do not have access to curbside organics pick-up, which is about 30 percent of the communities. These communities do not have any kind of trucks or any service that they offer. There is another 11 percent of communities who have seasonal curbside pick-up which is the spring and fall.

Ms. Balz stated that about 60 percent of residents have access to this curbside collection of yard trimmings and stated that the City of Cincinnati residents have access, most of the year, to separate yard trimmings pick-up.

Ms. Balz stated that another component of this grant would be trying to get funds to communities like Cincinnati to promote their programs to their residents. Often times, residents do not even know that they are able to compost yard trimmings because funds are strapped in communities and they do not promote their programs.

Ms. Balz stated that the recent waste characterization study included pulling the City of Cincinnati out since it is such a large percentage of the County and 14 percent of what they are landfilling is yard trimmings even though they have curbside access nine months of the year.

Ms. Balz stated that she thinks there still could be an education component where some of these grant funds could be given to communities who have that infrastructure already to try to send a mailer, etc. Ms. Magness stated that the City has not done a mailing and the only way residents know the City offers it is on the recycling calendar, there is information on when yard trimmings season ends. Ms. Balz stated that many communities are in that same situation.

Ms. Balz stated that the City's 14 percent of what residents are landfilling is yard trimmings and the county is only slightly higher than that at almost 17 percent. There are still a lot of yard trimmings going to the landfill although there is great infrastructure for composting in the county with a lot of class IV facilities that compost yard trimmings. It is getting that infrastructure in place so improving collection in communities if the infrastructure is not there and then getting the word out to residents.

Ms. Balz stated that this was the idea behind that. This would be a rather large undertaking and would require staff time and likely not roll out right away. So at the next meeting an update will be given due to the time it would take to implement this correctly, because it would be such a large grant amount.

Ms. Hurley stated that it seemed that of these things, this is something that would be most demanding of staff time and almost sounds like a full time job to manage something like this to get it going.

Ms. Balz stated that she sent an anonymous survey to the communities to see if they would be interested in this kind of grant. About 45 percent said they offer the curbside program and about 55 percent said that they would apply for this grant. Another 25 percent said maybe they would consider applying for it.

Ms. Hurley stated if they would receive the grant, if asked the District would provide the technical support to help them figure out what to do or is it being assumed that they would receive the grant and go from there. Ms. Balz stated that staff would have to provide it. A lot of communities do not have a graphic designer, etc. so staff would have to work with them on that and figure out the best way to reach the communities residents.

Ms. Magness stated that this was not just a grant, it was a partnership. Ms. Balz stated yes.

Ms. Balz stated that she just went over the four suggestions for additional spending and asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Ingram stated that if the Committee votes to move forward on the four additional proposals for the additional spending of the carry-over, this adds to approximately \$580,000 and asked how much the total carry-over was. Mr. Khodadad stated there was roughly \$3.5 million. Mr. Ingram asked if that was in addition to all the regular operating funds for the year. Mr. Khodadad stated yes. Mr. Ingram stated that about 20 percent of those dollars would be utilized for these four items.

Mr. Gedert stated that he liked all four proposals and for the Save the Food campaign, a model to look at is Nashville. They used a NRDC grant and had a waste composition study and utilized some local data, a staff person locally, and worked with local grocery stores.

Mr. Gedert stated that they localized the data and worked on a Save the Food campaign and he thinks localizing the information and working with a local grocery store really made a difference. He feels the Nashville campaign really impacted the information.

Mr. Gedert stated that he had some information at home that would help with the grants program for the Community Yard Trimmings Infrastructure Grant from his past work.

Mr. Gedert stated that as a general comment, he has forty years' experience in government and he cringes at the term "spend down." A suggestion would be to use the term "additional citizen's services."

Ms. Hurley stated that she thought all four proposals were great and important but is confused where it says staff was supporting just Save the Food (in the Manager's Memo under Staff Recommendation) versus all four proposals. Ms. Hurley asked if Ms. Balz meant if the Committee only wanted staff to do one of the proposals, the Save the Food campaign would be what staff would want. Ms. Balz stated the Save the Food would be the top one and the reason being is that it would save staff some time and make that program more impactful.

Ms. Balz stated that she forgot to mention that on a national level, reducing wasted food has become a priority and there is the Winning on Reducing Food Waste federal interagency strategy and one of them is residential or consumer facing promotion.

Ms. Balz stated if the Committee voted to do all four proposals, this was OK and stated that she wanted to highlight that if the Committee only wanted to choose one proposal that would be the one staff would request.

Mr. Riddle asked if there was staffing to accommodate all four proposals. Ms. Balz stated that there is definitely enough for the first three and the last one would not be something that could be rolled out immediately.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that for many, many years it has been talked about needing to educate people and he is wondering if that is a real need; putting aside the Save the Food campaign because this is something that is fairly new. But the other items; the Residential Cardboard Campaign and the Yard Trimmings Grant; there is a lot of information out there and there is a lot of information that continues to be sent out so he would almost say that you could collect great data for the waste characterization in terms of being able to know what is out there but he questions how effective additional education and awareness is really going to be. This has been going on for many, many years and if it is education in terms of people not knowing where to take it, that is one thing but if it is education to tell people that these things are recyclable; he thinks most people know that already. In terms of trying to focus the program, staff may want to think about that and what areas staff wants to focus on.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he has a little bit of concern with funding equipment. He thinks sometimes that is difficult to do in terms of saying is something really worthwhile. If someone wants to buy a chipper; chippers can run up to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Really expensive or smaller scale equipment can be talked about but he thought the District funded something like that many years ago and one of the requirements were that they had to agree to let other communities use it as well.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he did not want to see happen where the grant winds up paying for equipment that the communities otherwise were buying anyway for their normal operation, not to continue to manage their yard waste if they are already composting but to really add to something that is not being done.

Mr. Ingram stated that the last proposal is the highest cost and asked if this was correct. Ms. Balz stated yes. Mr. Ingram stated that he is not going to put words in the mouth of the majority of the Committee but given, Mr. DiPuccio's concerns, that one could be held for further development if need be.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he would still like to see staff move ahead with proposal number four. Mr. Ingram asked Mr. DiPuccio if he just gave some mental notes? Mr. DiPuccio stated yes.

Mr. Rajagopal asked how the message would be delivered to the people. Ms. Balz asked which item he was referring to. Mr. Rajagopal stated the first item, the food. Ms. Balz stated that staff would hire a firm to give staff professional advice. Staff has done quite a bit of advertising in the past such as digital advertising on-line, billboards, etc.

Ms. Balz stated that staff would be leaning on the professionals that would be hired to give the District advice.

Ms. Magness stated that another thought she had was for the continuous organics and waste reduction grant that staff has made so many good improvements and expanded that there is just not enough in the budget now; she thinks there needs to be more money there and thinks that the District will quickly run out of money there.

Ms. Magness stated that she would like staff to come back and ask for more money as soon as that is expended. Ms. Hurley stated that she had the same thoughts. Ms. Magness stated that more money could be added now.

Ms. Magness stated that since staff did not have the request, she thinks it is a little overboard to put extra money in now but it may be an appropriate change that could happen.

Mr. Ingram asked if the Committee was ready to authorize the Additional Citizens Services as shown in Attachment C.

Mr. Rajagopal moved; Mr. Gedert seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**C. Ohio State Bill 50**

Mr. Ingram stated that the Soil and Water District's want some of that tipping fee money. Ms. Balz stated yes. Mr. Ingram stated that this is a stable source of revenue and he can understand why they would ask and also understand why staff is recommending against it.

Ms. Balz stated that this is definitely a Policy Committee decision so regardless of the staff recommendation, she asks the Committee to consider if the District should oppose or remain neutral.

Ms. Balz stated that on February 12, 2019, the Ohio State Senate introduced Ohio Senate Bill 50 which adds a \$.25 increase to the tipping fees and that the additional \$.25 would go to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDS) in the State.

Ms. Balz stated that currently, SWCD's receive \$.25 already so this would be a 100 percent increase. Since the District began, we have had had the lowest fees allowable by state law which is the \$1-\$2-\$1 fee structure and have always had the policy of having the lowest possible fees.

Ms. Balz stated that this has been something that, historically, has always been important to the Policy Committee. This increase will not affect the District's revenue that is brought in but it is an additional indirect fee that residents, businesses, and communities would be paying to landfill.

Ms. Balz stated that she did a quick calculation, which is an estimate, based on previous years tonnage. It is estimated that it would be a \$62,000 increase for communities and residents and \$219,000 increase for businesses in Hamilton County.

Ms. Balz stated that she did reach out to Hamilton County SWCD to get their take on it and what she was told is when the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts got together and proposed this; they are desperate for funding. They have seen a 40 percent cut in their state matches and the state match for the storm water activity was completely taken away.

Ms. Balz stated that there are quite a few County SWCDs that are hurting with Hamilton County being one of them. Originally, Hamilton County SWCD proposed to add a fee to construction and demolition debris (CD&D) landfills tipping fees because that more closely aligns to what they do. Originally, Hamilton County was opposed to adding it to municipal solid waste (MSW) but the Ohio Federation did vote to add it to the MSW.

Ms. Balz stated that the SWCD's, at the end of the month, are going to the State to lobby this.

Ms. Balz stated that this is something that quite a few other solid waste districts are opposing. The District's counterpart, in Franklin County, sent a letter opposing. This is something that the Policy Committee could oppose or remain neutral on.

Ms. Balz stated that on one hand, the District does have a strong partnership with Hamilton County SWCD, which just resulted in the Team Impact Award due to the partnership with them and we do work with them on other programs.

Ms. Balz stated that she explained to Holly Utrata-Holcomb, the Director of Hamilton County SWCD, what we may be planning on doing and that other solid waste districts are opposing this which she totally understood. Ms. Balz stated that she does not think it would harm the District's relationship with Hamilton County SWCD to oppose, but did want to make the Committee aware that the District does have a strong relationship.

Mr. Ingram stated that he did not think it would hurt the relationship one way or the other; it is business.

Ms. Magness stated that she is a little torn because we are cursed by our blessings. We have the cheapest landfill space in the United States which is why the recycling models do not always work here as easily as they do in other areas where landfilling is more expensive.

Ms. Magness stated that she thinks it is just human behavior in a capitalistic society where the more something costs, the less you do of it. There is a benefit to raising the landfilling cost but the second part is that it doesn't go into recycling, which is where she has the problem with it.

Ms. Magness stated that she thinks that the landfilling should increase, but it should go more to diversion projects.

Mr. Gedert stated that when H.B.592 was passed in the late 1980s, soil and water conservation was a partner in passing that bill and that is why they have part of the pie. Their commitment at that time was to promote composting; they were promoting composting in the agricultural community as well as the residential community and wonders if over the years they kept that commitment.

Mr. Gedert stated that in the early years, early 1990s, they developed fact sheets promoting residential composting and how to do backyard composting the right way, but has not seen anything lately.

Ms. Balz stated that Hamilton County SWCD does do vermicomposting programs in schools so they have the worm bin and have partnered with the District on workshops for teachers but has not seen much backyard composting education but that is one way of promoting soil conservation is composting.

Ms. Magness stated that she thinks they are not all that proactive because it is kind of stepping on solid waste districts toes. Mr. Gedert stated that this is out of respect for solid waste districts turf and he would understand that but the idea of allowing them that \$.25 in the original bill was their commitment to promote composting.

Mr. Riddle stated that it seemed to him that across the country since then, there really has not been a great success story to be told about composting. Mr. Gedert agreed. Mr. Riddle stated that he is not sure what they have done with their money but apparently have not spent it wisely and we are still fighting to get composting established since 1987.

Mr. Ingram stated that this institutional knowledge is really important.

Ms. Hurley stated that she shared Ms. Magness' questioning about why keeping landfill costs low is, in itself, such a value. It seems to her like it is counterintuitive. Having it go to SWCDs; she does not understand a lot about what SWCD's do. It seems like apples and oranges are being mixed.

Ms. Hurley stated that she does not know how landfill costs get raised; who decides that and stated that Ms. Balz said it has always been a point of pride that the District's are so low and asked why this was a point of pride.

Mr. Riddle asked if Ms. Magness was suggesting that it was better for the community to pay higher disposal rates. Ms. Magness stated that she was saying that when things cost more, when there is an economic cost, people will do other stuff. If it is cheaper to landfill that the economics of recycling do not always work like when landfilling is more expensive. So, it does have the ability to change behavior.

Mr. Riddle stated that it has to be understood that one of the functions of being a recycling partner is that there has to be a profit in recycling or it does not work anywhere. If there is a government subsidy then you can have all of the recycling you want as long as the community continues to pay for it. It is not like Seattle where there are some other limitations but to suggest that our disposal rate is low and it is discouraging other things is probably some merit to it. He thinks the community would rather have a lower disposal rate and maybe pay a little bit more for recycling or yard waste separation.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thinks when you look at soil and water conservation and he is not familiar with what they do and not familiar with how much emphasis they place in solid waste management, but just assume it is a worthwhile endeavor that they obviously need the funding. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thinks what the Committee is struggling with is should that funding source be through these particular fees and he thinks he is hearing people say probably not.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that it was an avenue but maybe not the appropriate avenue and then finally, what Mr. Riddle just said is what he tells a lot of his clients is that a system can be set up to manage your solid waste any way you want, but how much are you willing to pay to do that?

Mr. DiPuccio stated that was kind of a side comment but that is kind of how he sees Senate Bill 50 in terms of what we have to deal with here today.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Committee is either going to vote to support the additional \$.25 coming out of MSW tipping fee stream or the Committee is going to vote to oppose it which means that the Committee opposed Senate Bill 50. Ms. Magness stated or the Committee could be neutral. Mr. Ingram stated that the Committee could also be neutral but prefers the Committee takes action.

Mr. Ingram stated that whoever puts the motion first, he would certainly entertain a second. Mr. Ingram stated that he wanted to give a little background because he knows a little about SWCDs. They are an independent government office, not directly under the Board of County Commissioners, they have their own board. They have been around for about 50 years, they are predominately in agricultural areas, their job is to conserve soils and protect resources that we all so much depend on called soil for agriculture activity.

Mr. Ingram stated that SWCD's are also concerned about water quality, but it is predominately soil erosion and so forth. That is why, he thinks, their Executive Director, who Ms. Balz has already talked with, knows that they do some work in CD&D waste because they do have the enforceability of the earth moving regulations in the county. He thinks they get some funding from the Commissioners directly but does not know what that amount is and they get so much state dollars and they have other permits that they get some fees.

Mr. Ingram stated that they do not have the presence here as they would in Auglaize or Darke County because Hamilton County is not an agricultural community anymore. SWCDs are involved with urbanizing areas, new developments, assuring that soil does not run randomly without some check and balance riding the streams because we know the number one pollutant of all streams is sediment and causes the most damage and whatever it is carrying with it.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if this letter would come from the District or the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Balz stated that she would imagine it would come from the District, which is how Franklin County's letter was written.

Mr. Rajagopal stated that he believes for the future of the future generation, you need to conserve the land, creeks, etc.

Mr. Riddle stated that Rumpke is collecting an additional \$.25 on trash that is in Hamilton County now. Rumpke is having, of course, competitive issues with trash across the river and do not pay the fees that we pay. When we add that \$.25 on top of the fees that we will be collecting here; that waste going across the river and not paying that \$.25, creates a competitive disadvantage.

Mr. Riddle stated that from a funding standpoint, you might see more volume going across the river to get away from that additional \$.25 than what we have today.

A brief discussion on the impact of an additional fee ensued.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Committee could remain neutral, but given that there seems to be somewhat of an impact, there is a staff recommendation that will be up to the Policy Committee to decide what we want to do about Senate Bill 50. Mr. Rajagopal stated or we could table the motion and do more research. Mr. Ingram said if this is tabled, it will be a done deal by the time the next meeting in July.

Mr. Ingram stated that he presumes the waste industry is going to oppose the bill. Mr. Riddle stated that he has not heard but would think so. Mr. Ingram stated that this says something too. Of course, they are looking at it from a different standpoint.

Mr. Ingram stated that he liked SWCD's and so he is not going to sway the Committee one way or another but he does think that it is too bad that the Federations did not target CD& D because that is probably a better place for them to be and personally, he would vote for that in that case but in this situation, he is not sure.

Mr. Ingram asked if someone would put forth a motion. Ms. Hurley stated that she moved that the Committee send a letter objecting to Senate Bill 50. Mr. Ingram asked if there was a second to Ms. Hurley's motion to oppose. Mr. Ingram seconded.

Mr. Ingram asked if there was anything the Committee wanted to talk about further or amend a motion. Mr. Gedert stated that he was conflicted but would probably vote for the motion if the letter included the suggestion that there are alternative places for their funding. Mr. Ingram asked if Mr. Gedert was saying that we propose that they look at the CD&D tipping fees. Mr. Gedert stated yes.

Mr. Ingram asked if there was anybody else. Ms. Hurley stated that she would support that this as an addition to the motion. Mr. Ingram stated that the Committee had to vote on the amendment first before the motion is voted on and asked if there were any more amendments.

Ms. Magness asked if it would be possible to ask them to up their game on composting education. Mr. Ingram stated that we could add that, but what Mr. Gedert brought to the table was the institutional knowledge. Mr. Gedert stated that he did not mind if they seek alternative funding was included in the letter but would not want to get into specifying where we think they should get that funding or suggest to the SWCD that they should sort of change their mission.

Mr. Rajagopal asked how much of an impact actually did Mr. Riddle see that would be going across the river. Mr. Riddle stated that it was hard to say and predict. There are projects and it is mostly project work. Mr. Rajagopal asked if he was talking about a huge impact. Mr. Riddle stated that if it was a waste project or industry that is moving a big stockpile of contaminated material, it could be substantial.

Mr. Ingram stated that he was going to take the amendment first. Mr. Ingram stated that the amendment was to specify that they looked at CD&D waste. There was a motion for the amendment and Ms. Hurley seconded Mr. Gedert's amendment. Mr. Ingram stated that all in favor of the amendment to add language that go to CD&D industry for your revenues signify by saying "Aye." All were in favor except Mr. DiPuccio who voted "Nay."

Mr. Ingram stated that the "Ayes" have it and now we are going to go to the original motion of opposing Senate Bill 50, but specify in the letter that we send for them to consider seeking CD&D tipping fees as an alternative source of funding. Mr. Ingram asked if the Committee was ready to vote.

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Mr. Ingram stated that all in favor of the original motion signify by saying "Aye." All were in favor. Mr. Ingram stated that all opposed say "Nay." No one said Nay and the Ayes have it for opposing Senate Bill 50.

Mr. Ingram suggested letting the County Administrator know and perhaps he could let the County Lobbyist know that the Committee is against it so at least the Hamilton County delegation knows where the Committee stands.

Mr. Ingram stated that there is no disrespect intended by the Policy Committee to the Hamilton County SWCD that we certainly value.

**D. 2019 – 2020 Student Representative**

Mr. Ingram stated that Ms. Sauer is starting a new chapter in life and the Committee wishes her well.

Mr. Ingram stated that there was a recommendation for a new student representative, Alexandra Born. Ms. Balz gave a brief background about Ms. Born.

Ms. Balz stated that the District received four excellent applications.

Mr. Ingram stated that the motion is to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that Ms. Alexandra Born is appointed as the Student Representative to the Policy Committee for the 2019 – 2020 time period.

Mr. Rajagopal moved approval. Ms. Magness seconded. All were in favor the motion was approved.

**5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Beyond 34 Project**

Mr. Ingram asked what Beyond 34 was. Ms. Magness stated that 34% was the national average for recycling.

Ms. Balz stated that the District is going to represent Hamilton County in this project, Beyond 34, but the U.S. Chamber is going to bring this project to Cincinnati. It has already been done in Orlando and the District is going to partner with the City of Cincinnati with the Cincinnati Chamber and a few other organizations.

Ms. Balz stated that Beyond 34 is just a way of trying to increase the diversion rate and staff is not sure what is going to come out of it but we are going to partner on behalf of Hamilton County.

**B. Environmental Enforcement Program Update**

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment D showed a graph of complaints received and investigated from June 2018 – April 2019.

Mr. Peak stated that things were going great and it was spring cleaning for many. Mr. Peak stated that he finished or completed with sentencing on his first tire caper. Both were given two years' probation, \$500 fines, court costs, and each one had to write an apology letter through their attorney to the community in which the dumping was happening.

Mr. Peak summarized other cases he was involved with. Mr. Ingram thanked Mr. Peak, Ms. Chin, and Mr. DeJonckheere for their work.

A brief discussion ensued about the program and Mr. Ingram suggested that this be publicized to the community at large that this is happening. Ms. Magness stated that this would let rehabbers know.

Mr. Ingram asked if the fines being assessed were coming back to the District. Ms. Chin stated that this could be requested. Mr. Ingram stated that the District does not need to take the whole 100 percent but the District should get at least half of it. Ms. Chin stated she would request it.

Mr. Gedert briefly spoke about littering and borderline dumping where he lives and asked where he could get an anti-littering sign and who can be called to report this. Ms. Chin asked Mr. Gedert a few questions and stated that they could go to [www.reportdumping.org](http://www.reportdumping.org) or call 946-7788.

**C. Recycling Contamination Project with City of Cincinnati**

Ms. Balz stated that at the request of the Committee an update will be given on the grant that the District received for the Recycling Partnership in the City of Cincinnati to conduct anti-contamination outreach. So far, all parties are entering into written agreements and there will be more to report later in the year.

**D. Small Scale Community Composting Operator Training**

Ms. Balz stated that the District is seeing more interest in small-scale community composting which would be like a community garden having a compost site. The District is trying to be proactive on that and staff is going to contract with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. They have what they call a Neighborhood Soil Rebuilders program in Washington, DC and will bring their training here.

Ms. Balz stated that the District is partnering with the Civic Garden Center to make sure that these community compost operators know what they are doing and there is no nuisances created.

**E. 2019 Performance Measures – First Quarter**

Ms. Balz stated that staff has already helped 69 facilities with the Let's Stop Waste Program. Ninety-eight classroom programs have already been conducted reaching over 4,000 people.

**6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Hurley stated that she read that a compost bin sale would be happening later this year and asked when information would be available. Ms. Balz stated that was going to happen in August with the contracts being finalized now so staff cannot promote that date until this is completed but expect to start promoting in late June. This will be a one day sale and more information will be available once the contracting phase is finished.

Ms. Magness asked about the cost and bin selection. Ms. Balz stated that they are similar to the Earth Machine and if the resident gets education on backyard composting, the cost will be \$35 and if they do not, the cost will be \$45. The District is subsidizing as an incentive for resident to get the education.

**7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Ingram stated that there are probably well over 1,000 registered sanitarians in the State of Ohio. Mr. Ingram explained what this consisted of. Hamilton County Public Health has the Outstanding Sanitarian from the State of Ohio and he was recognized for his work in the field of waste management enforcement and oversight of CD&D facilities, Chuck DeJonckheere.

Everyone applauded for Mr. DeJonckheere.

Mr. Ingram stated that this was very well done and that he was proud of him.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Health Department is 100 years old as of September 26, 2019 by the Ohio General Assembly and discussed a little history.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments at this time.

**9. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

The next Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste Policy Committee meeting will be held on Thursday July 18, 2019. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. at Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services located at 250 William Howard Taft Road - First Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Ingram adjourned the meeting at 2:59 p.m.