

**Solid Waste District of La Porte County
District Board Meeting**

**January 14, 2026
1:30 p.m.**

Call to Order

Director Clay Turner

Pledge

APPROVED

Roll Call District Board

Mayor Dermody
Councilman Przybylinski
Commissioner Haney
Commissioner Holifield

Absent

Commissioner Gramarossa
Mayor Nelson Deutch
Councilman Mollenhauer

Others Present

Clay Turner, Executive Director
Robin Havens, Office Manager
Cathy Seitz, Controller
Douglas Biege, Attorney
Joe Biernacki, Highstreet Insurance
David Dronith, Duneland
Bill Hank, Duneland
Sarah Webber, Coops
Chris Havens, Soil & Water, CAC
Mike Pavey, Pavey Excavating

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – January 14, 2026

Councilman Przybylinski made a motion to elect Mayor Dermody as Chairperson. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved. Councilman Przybylinski made a motion to nominate Commissioner Holifield Vice Chairman. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

MINUTES DISTRICT BOARD – December 10, 2025

Councilman Przybylinski made a motion to approve the December 10, 2025 District Board minutes as presented. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

CLAIMS – January 2026

Commissioner Holifield made a motion to approve the January 2026 claims. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

Commissioner Holifield indicated that the District get in touch with Angie Davis regarding payment for QCC because he thought the County already issued a check for payment of the duct work cleaning to QCC. Mr. Turner stated he wanted it in the minutes to reflect that the check had already been cut to QCC on the claims docket. Mr. Turner would like the Board to know that the name may be changed on the claim docket to read LaPorte County instead of QCC if that is the case. Mr. Turner further inquired if the checks should be cut to the private businesses and mailed or if the Board would prefer phone calls made and the checks be picked up at the Solid Waste District office. Commissioner Holifield stated he would like the checks to be picked up at the Solid Waste District office unless they call the office and say they want the checks mailed. **Commissioner Haney made a motion to approve the Year End 2025 claims, as presented. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

YEAR END CLAIMS – December 31, 2025

Commissioner Haney made a motion to approve the December 31, 2025 year end claims. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

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FINANCIAL REPORT – Balances through December 31, 2025

Commissioner Holifield made a motion to approve the Financial reports through December 31, 2025. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved. ,

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Insurance Update

Mr. Turner indicated that he provided the insurance payout information in the packet, for the fire. He also pointed out that Joe Biernacki of Highstreet Insurance was invited to the meeting to provide any additional information the Board may need regarding the payout for the fire at the Compost Site. Mr. Biernacki explained that there are limits to fire department fees which are very common at a \$10,000.00 cap. Mr. Biernacki went on to explain that the portable toilets and the cleaning of the ducts at Community Corrections and the Juvenile Detention Facility are the property of the Solid Waste District so they cannot be covered under the District's insurance. Mr. Biernacki stated that the County could always file with their insurance and subrogate it back to the District's insurance policy. Mr. Turner explained to Mr. Biernacki that the Board wants to know why the insurance is not paying to help clean up from the fire at Compost Site. Mr. Biernacki asked Mr. Turner to provide him with the approved clean-up proposal after the District Board meeting and he will take that to the insurance company directly.

Flyer Update

Mr. Turner informed the Board that an update was done to the Compost Site Flyer and a few concerns were raised. Mr. Turner pointed out that the flyer reads no tree stumps from residents or municipalities but the municipalities are still bringing them in. Mr. Turner further explained that he does not want the municipalities to be surprised but the District will be reaching out to both the County and City of LaPorte to let them know they can no longer bring stumps in. Commissioner Holifield stated that would be fine as long as they know in advance. Mr. Turner confirmed with Commissioner Holifield that they can bring in anything up to 32" around. Mr. Turner further explained that it cannot be processed and the District was stockpiling the green debris but that can no longer be done as the District does not want to run into a similar problem with a fire down the road. Mr. Turner also explained that the District has raised the tipping fee for landscapers in the area to \$15.00 per yard instead of \$7.00 per yard. Mayor Dermody asked what the goal was for the Compost Site when it was initially created. Mr. Turner stated it was specifically created for residential purposes only. **After Board discussion, Commissioner Holifield made a motion that only residential customers be allowed to drop off yard waste at the Compost Site. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

Additional Appropriation

Mr. Turner explained that the budget would be approximately \$200,000.00 short, due to the fire payout and the check received from the insurance has to go into the general fund, it cannot go into any of the line items already budgeted. Mr. Turner further explained that the District might have to go into the general fund and put more money in to cover the additional expenses which were not budgeted. After Attorney Biege recommended permission to authorize the process of advertisement and moving forward with the request of the County Council, should it be necessary, **Commissioner Haney made a motion to approve proceeding with additional appropriation procedures if necessary. Commissioner Holifield seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

OLD BUSINESS

Protest Letter

Mr. Turner explained that the District received a protest letter from Homer Tree but he is unsure why they would send a protest letter for something they have not been or have been awarded yet. Commissioner Holifield stated he believes Homer Tree is protesting against the potential awarding to Davey Tree, however; their bid was incomplete. **Commissioner Holifield made a motion to accept the letter into record. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

RFP Compost Site

Mr. Turner explained that out of five of the proposals received by the District, only three met the requirements of the RFP. He further stated that Davey Tree Service was incomplete and Duneland was incomplete so they will be excluded. Mr. Turner went on to say E&L Paving will not be considered as they were the highest bidder, which brings it down to the two

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lowest bidders, Home Tree Service at \$365,00.00 and Pavey Excavating at \$844,000.00, both complete proposals. **After Board discussion, Commissioner Holifield motioned to evaluate each of Homer Tree and Pavey Excavating bids to see if they are in comparison to each other. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

CAC Appointments

Mr. Turner informed the Board there are currently four CAC Board members up for re-appointment, Jodi Dusek, Amber Seiler, Samantha Joll, and Jim Micheals. Mr. Turner stated three of the four members would like to be re-appointed but the District did not hear back from Jim Micheals, and as of this date Mr. Micheals will not be reconsidered, leaving a vacant seat on the CAC. Commissioner Haney stated the County Commissioners had one person interested, Mr. Robert Garrelts. Commissioner Holifield agreed, stating Mr. Garrelts is the only one he can think of. **Commissioner Haney made a motion to re-instate the 3 CAC Board members that responded and appoint Robert Garrelts in the vacant position. Commissioner Holifield seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.