

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

**July 16, 2025
1:30 p.m.**

Call to Order

Director Clay Turner

Pledge

Roll Call District Board

Mayor Dermody
Councilman Przybylinski
Councilman Mollenhauer
Commissioner Haney

APPROVED

Absent

Commissioner Gramarossa
Commissioner Holifield
Mayor Nelson Deutch

Others Present

Clay Turner, Executive Director
Robin Havens, Office Manager/HR
Lyn DeGroote, Controller
Lisa Woodson, Recycling Coordinator
Sacha Gee-Burns, Educator
Douglas Biege, Attorney
Chris Havens, LaPorte County Soil & Water/CAC Board Member

MINUTES DISTRICT BOARD – April 9, 2025

Mayor Dermody made a motion to approve the April 9, 2025 District Board minutes as presented. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

CLAIMS – May, June, July 2025

Commissioner Haney made a motion to approve the May, June and July claims as presented. Councilman Mollenhauer seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Balances through June 30, 2025

Mayor Dermody made a motion to approve the financial reports. Councilman Mollenhauer seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Budget Calendar

Mr. Turner presented the Budget Calendar for 2026. On August 7th the 2025 budget will be presented to the DLGF and on August 15th the budget will be presented to the Board for edits or approvals. If approved, the budget will then be submitted to the auditor on August 25th. After that the District will post the required public notifications. On September 10th the budget will be presented to the County Council, and the adoption hearing will be held on October 27th with the County Council. **Commissioner Haney made a motion to accept the 2026 Budget Calendar. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

B. Borden Discussion

Mr. Turner informed the Board of the District's complaints/concerns regarding Borden Waste Away, which is the contracted residential recycling hauler. Mr. Turner explained to the Board that due to the severity of the issues, Councilman Przybylinski was informed and invited to attend the follow-up meeting with Borden Waste Away

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which included Bret Boccabella (District Manager), Derek Woolsey (District Sales Manager) and Johnny Bachman (Inside Sales/Municipality Support). Councilman Przybylinski stated one of the biggest concerns is that Borden Waste Away was sold to Waste Connections, however; is still operating under the Borden Waste Away name. Councilman Przybylinski then encouraged Mr. Turner to explain to the Board what the complaints and concerns are regarding Borden Waste Away. Mr. Turner stated the concerns are Borden is not picking up/emptying residential containers timely, not cleaning up the public access sites, as well as changing their name and most of their employees without notifying the District. Mr. Turner explained after the second meeting, Chairman Przybylinski recommended the District meet with Attorney Biege. Mr. Turner stated Attorney Biege responded with a list of bullet points from the contract which would be relevant in the event that the District decides to cancel the contract. Mr. Turner also explained it had been a month since the last meeting with Borden Waste Away and the District has seen very little improvement. Mr. Turner also explained that only Councilman Przybylinski was asked to attend the meeting because the District would be in violation of the open-door law if four or more Board members attended. Director Turner then asked Recycling Coordinator, Lisa Woodson, to explain to the Board what issues she has been having on a day to day basis with Borden Waste Away. Ms. Woodson explained there is an extreme lack of communication, pointing out that she was never informed about the representatives leaving and didn't find out until the first quarterly letter of the year was sent and within a few months the other account representative left as well. Ms. Woodson went on to explain since no one reached out, she requested to have a meeting with their replacements to get to know them and express some of the concern/issues the District had been having. Ms. Woodson said there have been two incidents which were not communicated, one of which was a school bus and a Borden recycling truck, the Borden recycling truck was going the wrong way down a one-way street and came nose to nose with a school bus, refusing to back up to allow the school bus to pass, at which point the police were called. After reaching out to Borden about the outcome, the District was told it was confidential and could not be discussed. Another incident that took place was a Borden recycling truck was rear-ended on east Highway 2 and Borden never contacted the District about that incident either. Ms. Woodson also explained that missed pick ups are supposed to be addressed within 48 hours, however; some residents have waited a week or more, after being missed on their regular scheduled pick-up day. Mayor Dermody asked Director Turner if it has gotten to the point where the District should look at another alternative. Director Turner stated yes and that is also what Attorney Biege recommended, as well as documenting every issue that arises. Commissioner Haney stated he has received multiple complaints from the Long Beach area, specifically, regarding the recycling trucks cutting corners and driving on residents' lawns. Commissioner Haney further stated these complaints have been ongoing for a year and a half and still have not been resolved. Director Turner asked the Board if they would like the District to continue tracking and updating the Board regarding these issues or if the Board would like to have a special meeting with Borden Waste Away to address these issues. Commissioner Haney then asked Attorney Biege what the consequences would be as far as getting out of the contract. Attorney Biege stated the contract is structured more on fines than anything else, so it will not be easy to get out of the contract. Also, Attorney Biege feels the Board should bring Borden in for a meeting to perhaps better get their attention and start fining them consistently in accordance with the contract. Mayor Dermody asked if the contract could be terminated due to non-performance, however; Attorney Biege stated the District has performance, it's just poor performance. Attorney Biege stated he believes we can get out of the contract but at this time there is not enough evidence to make it happen. Councilman Mollenhauer asked Director Turner when Borden was sold to Waste Connections. Director Turner said he is unsure when the company was sold as the District was just made aware at the May or June meeting with Borden. Councilman Przybylinski interjected that it seems like it has been a while. Councilman Mollenhauer asked if the District has issued any fines to Borden yet. Director Turner stated in the second quarter letter, Borden was fined approximately \$1,400. Councilman Mollenhauer asked if Borden had responded and Director Turner as well as Ms. Woodson both said no. After Board discussion, Councilman Przybylinski and Councilman Mollenhauer felt it would be a good idea to meet with Borden staff at a meeting. Councilman Przybylinski stated he felt it would be too long to wait until the next scheduled Board meeting due to the severity of the issues going on. The Board requested a special meeting be scheduled with Borden on or around the second week of August.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Salary Study 2025/Zoom Meeting

Mr. Turner explained the calculations used on the document in the Board packet were the Indiana Gateway figures provided by the Barnes Dennig salary study. Mr. Turner stated it is very clear that at least three positions are quite under paid while the other 5 are at or above the Indiana Gateway averages provided. Mayor Dermody stated he feels the District should be giving raises based on employee reviews, rather than across the board raises for the entire staff. Councilman Przybylinski agreed. Mayor Dermody asked Director Turner if he felt any of the three

positions were underpaid based on performance. Director Turner stated the Office Manager/HR person is quite underpaid. Further, Director Turner stated a larger increase has been budgeted for this position in 2026. After Board discussion, all four Board members agreed that raises are required to be based on evaluations going forward.

B. Payloader

Mr. Turner explained that he contacted four (4) companies for payloader proposals, which were Ronson Equipment, MacAllister, JCB North America and Sourcewell. Of those four, only two vendors responded, which were Ronson Equipment and MacAllister. Ronson Equipment proposed a 2025 Develon at a cost of \$210,405 with a trade in value of the District's Caterpillar 924 G at \$20,000, making the final price \$190,405. MacAllister proposed a 2025 Caterpillar 926 14A for \$221,900, with a trade in value of the District's Caterpillar 924 G at \$25,000 making the final price \$196,900. Mr. Turner stated the staff at the Compost Site prefer the Caterpillar as they have experience with it and feel it has more pushing power. Councilman Mollenhauer recommended purchasing from Ronson Equipment, as they are a local vendor. Councilman Mollenhauer also requested Mr. Turner reach out to Ronson Equipment to negotiate a better trade in price for the District's Caterpillar 924G. After Board discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Turner negotiate the rate and bring the information back to the next Board meeting, September 10, 2025.

C. Baler

Ms. Gee-Burns presented information about the Trex Grassroots Plastic film/bags Baling Project. Ms. Gee-Burns further informed the Board that Howmet, a local factory, has offered to donate a baler to the District for this project, free of charge. Ms. Gee-Burns explained that she cut out a piece of cardboard in the size of the baler and took it to the Compost Site to see if it would fit. She stated the cabinets along the wall can be shifted to the opposite wall and the baler would fit. She further stated the bales could be stored in the old electronics container that caught fire a few years ago. Ms. Gee-Burns also explained that Trex would pick-up the bales free of charge and pay the District for the baled plastic bags directly, as we wouldn't be purchasing a baler from them. Councilman Przybylinski asked how much the District would get paid for a bale of bags. Ms. Gee-Burns stated it would be \$0.14 per pound. Mr. Turner explained that he doesn't feel there is enough room to maneuver the bales with the forklift when all of the equipment is stored during the winter months. Ms. Gee-Burns stated that a pallet jack could be used to move the bales in and out of the building. Councilman Przybylinski stated he has concerns as well, in regard to the winter months, with inclement weather, moving the bales to and from the building to store them could become extremely difficult. After Board discussion, it was decided that Ms. Gee-Burns do some grant research for an additional building at the Compost Site for the baler to be operated in it's own space. Ms. Gee-Burns added that she is not sure how long Howmet will be willing to hold the baler. Councilman Moellenhauer recommend Ms. Gee-Burns look for a grant for a baler as well.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution for Loan

Mr. Turner explained that the Board would have to approve the Resolution to Obtain Loan, which would allow him to pursue a loan for the payloader purchase, and the loan would not exceed a two-year timeline. **Commissioner Haney made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-01 Resolution To Obtain Loan.** Mayor Dermody interjected that the Resolution does not make mention Mr. Turner would be required to come back to the Board for approval to sign the loan. Commissioner Haney stated procuring the loan would just be applying for the loan. **After Board discussion Commissioner Haney then amended his motion to approve Resolution 2025-01 Resolution to Obtain Loan, with line item 3 changed to Board President Don Przybylinski being authorized to sign the necessary legal instruments to procure the loan. Mayor Dermody seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

B. CD Investment

Mr. Turner explained that due to CD interest rates increasing he would like to start doing some short-term investments, for short periods of time after the District receives it's distributions. Mr. Turner explained that he is asking the Board for permission to solicit proposals from different financial organizations for short term CD's. **Councilman Mollenhauer made a motion to allow Mr. Turner to look into investments of CD's. Commissioner Haney seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

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