

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

**February 18, 2026
10:00 a.m.**

Call to Order

Director Clay Turner

APPROVED

Pledge

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
Douglas Biege, Attorney

Comments From the Public

None

Old Business

RFP – Compost Site Clean-Up

Mr. Turner reminded the Board at the meeting on January 14, 2026, the Board requested a follow-up take place with the two lowest proposals for clean up at the Compost Site; to clarify the product being removed based on the proposals received. Mr. Turner stated Commissioner Holifield, Attorney Biege, Robin Havens, office manager and himself had follow up phone calls with each of the two lowest bidders. Mr. Turner stated there is no difference in what each company will remove, however; Homer Excavating's proposal is at \$365,000.00 and Pavey Excavating proposed \$844,000.00. Mr. Turner then stated it would be his recommendation the Board go with Homer Tree Service. Commissioner Holifield confirmed he was on the phone conference and both companies are willing to remove anything except for concrete, steel and dirt. Attorney Biege also stated both conference were unequivocal. **After Board Discussion, Commissioner Holifield made a motion to award the clean-up contract to Homer Tree Service. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

Resolution to Obtain Loan

Chairman Dermody asked Director Turner when Homer Tree Service would be able to begin work. Mr. Turner stated he will need permission to seek a loan prior to the work commencing and a contract negotiated with Homer Tree Service. Mr. Turner also included that the District now knows how much the loan will be, since the RFP has been awarded. Mr. Turner now only needs permission to go out and seek a loan and terms. Mr. Turner said the Compost Site loan has been paid down to only 3 years left on the loan and his recommendation would be to refinance the current loan and add the Compost Site clean-up to that but not to exceed 8 years of payments. **After Board discussion, Councilman Mollenhauer made a motion to give Mr. Turner permission to seek a loan and schedule a special meeting for review of the information and approval by the Board to move forward. Commissioner Holifield seconded the motion. Voice Vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

County Highway Tipping Discussion

Attorney Biege indicated Commissioner Holifield and himself have been checking into the County Highway unloading at the Community Corrections and Juvenile Services's extra land space, if there is a possibility to re-parcel the land. Attorney Biege stated Community Corrections is ok to proceed but they want a fence installed with a no trespassing sign to make sure contraband can't be hidden in logs and stumps. Attorney Biege further stated he is still waiting to hear back from

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Juvenile Services. Attorney Biege also pointed out that a portion of the area belongs to the FMEC (LaPorte County Fair Board) which he will run the idea and information past them in an upcoming meeting. **After Board discussion, Commissioner Holifield made a motion to temporarily rescind the ban on the County Highway and the City of LaPorte tipping. Councilman Przybylinski seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

Chairman Dermody asked Mr. Turner if he had anything else on the agenda or anything further to discuss. Mr. Turner then stated he was announcing his retirement. He further stated his target date for retirement would be April 3, 2026, which would give the Board approximately six weeks to find a replacement. Mr. Turner stated that in addition to his 20 years with the Solid Waste District, he was on the LaPorte City Council for 11 years, and on the City Council Board of Works for 9 years and County Commissioner for 8 years. Mr. Turner further stated he is excited to spend some extra time with his family now. Chairman Dermody then asked how the role of rehiring a Director should be handled. Attorney Biege stated that the Board should be involved in replacing the Director, as HR is very small at the District. Mr. Turner indicated that Office Manager, Robin Havens, would be a strong candidate as a replacement, having working closely with himself, and her familiarity with the Controller's position, including payroll and other essential aspects of the Controller's role. Attorney Biege indicated that the Board should consider going outside the District for interviews in addition to the glowing recommendation for Ms. Havens. Attorney Biege recommended a committee for interviews, 3 members of the District Board and 2 members of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The District Board decided the 3 candidates will be Commissioner Holifield, Councilman Przybylinski and Councilman Mollenhauer. The Board also set a deadline for applications/resumes on Friday, February 27, 2026. The Board further requested all applications and resumes go to Attorney Biege when received. **After recommendation by Attorney Biege, Commissioner Holifield motioned to appoint Ms. Havens Interim Director, if the hiring committee hasn't hired a Director before Mr. Turner leaves on April 3, 2026. Councilman Mollenhauer seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved. The Board further discussed the advertisement process and Councilman Przybylinski made a motion to advertise the position via Indeed.com. Councilman Mollenhauer seconded the motion. Voice vote taken. All in favor. Motion approved.**

Adjournment

10:27 AM