

MINUTES OF
JOINT HARVEY COUNTY / CITY OF NEWTON MEETING

December 12, 2006

A joint meeting between Harvey County and the City of Newton was held on December 12, 2006. Those attending from Harvey County were Commissioners Ron Krehbiel, Chip Westfall, and Marge Roberson; Administrator Craig Simons, Solid Waste Superintendent Roy Patton, Special Projects Director John Waltner, and County Clerk Joyce Truskett. Those attending from the City of Newton were Commissioners Kim Harris, Grant Scott, Matt Treaster, and Willis Heck; City Manager Jim Heinecke, City Engineer Suzanne Loomis, City Attorney Bob Myers, City Clerk Ron Ahsmuhs, Deputy Clerk Denise Duerksen, and Public Information Officer Erin McDaniel. Harvey County Chairman Roberson and Newton City Vice Mayor Willis Heck called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Craig Simons gave an update on the County's waste-to-energy project which began in 2003. At that time Harvey County contacted Quality Recycling in North Carolina regarding a waste incinerating plant they had for sale. The incinerator consisted of a rotating burner which would burn trash and convert it to steam. The plant had operated in Cincinnati from 1984 to 1986 and was then installed at the North American Rayon Plant in Elizabethton, Tennessee. The Rayon Plant closed in 1992 and the incinerator has been idle since that time. The County was studying the possibility of locating a waste-to-energy plant at the Harvey County Transfer Station. The Harvey County Commission went to Elizabethton in May of 2004 to look at the system. In December of 2004, Harvey County authorized a bond issue up to \$4,000,000 for the purchase of a waste-to-energy plant. After receiving an unfavorable report from an engineering firm hired to study the system, the County made the decision to drop the project upon their recommendation which stated the technology had not been proven. Following the recommendation of an engineering firm that was hired to study the system, the County decided not to purchase the plant because the incinerating system was not a proven technology. In 2005, the Commission sent letters requesting bids for either a gasification or incineration waste-to-energy plant. They received 4 proposals, 2 for each type. None of the proposals were economically feasible. In June of 2006 Quality Recycling contacted Harvey County with a new proposal to locate a new waste-to-energy plant at the Harvey County Transfer Station. There would be no cost for the plant itself if it could be used as a demonstration plant. There would be costs involved in providing a building to house the plant, and staff to run it. The County is currently working on a legal agreement with Quality Recycling, but there continues to be many issues that will have to be resolved, and could take up to 21 months for the proposed plant to come to reality. The plant would have to be permitted by both the KDHE and the EPA. Engineers have again looked at the proposal and agreed that it looks attractive. Harvey County would have to pay for pre-processing equipment to separate metals and glass from the trash to be burned. The unit would also generate ash which would have to be tested and disposed of. Mr. Simons also cited some comparisons of the environmental effects of waste-to-energy versus landfilling. WTE does have some emissions which would have to be monitored according to EPA requirements. Landfills give off methane and other volatile gases, which are very damaging in regards to global warming. WTE gives off carbon dioxide, which is less damaging. Water contamination is much higher from a landfill.

Suzanne Loomis gave a power point presentation elaborating on the problems with the City run waste collection system. The disposal trucks the City is using are not suitable to accommodate the recycling program that the City of Newton has. The City is now recycling 40 percent of the waste stream. Ms. Loomis proposed a single stream recycling system that places all recyclables including paper, glass, plastic, and metal in one stream which would be compacted at the time of pick-up.

John Stutzman, owner of Stutzman Refuse Disposal, informed the group that it is very difficult to sort co-mingled recyclables. Glass contaminates the paper and then the paper becomes hard to market.

Commissioner Roberson questioned the City regarding their commitment to recycling. The City responded that they are still committed. Harvey County maintains that co-mingled recyclables would be very difficult to sort and very costly using the present recycling facility at the Harvey County Transfer Station.

Craig Simons reported that the Chamber of Commerce has contacted him regarding the corridor development on the south side of Newton. The Planning and Zoning Department has received several inquiries about new housing developments. A sewer interceptor project is underway that will extend the service area south of 36th Street. The City will consider a contract with Tom Phillips & Associates to evaluate development sites along the south corridor at their upcoming Commission meeting.

A joint County/City meeting will be held in 60 days to discuss these issues again.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

BOARD OF HARVEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chairman

ATTEST:

Member

County Clerk

Member