

Oakland incinerator plan leaps committee hurdles

By Teri Benson
staff writer

Two committees of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Tuesday approved an intergovernmental agreement to pay for trash disposal for 46 separate communities.

The action was considered an important first step toward implementing a countywide solid waste management plan using incinerators and landfills. The broad plan was approved in 1983 by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

The matter will be brought before the full county board next Thursday. From there, the contract will be distributed to the local units. It will be implemented when enough communities sign up to make it feasible.

George Schutte, the county's solid waste supervisor, said four of Oakland's largest communities — Rochester Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Township and Waterford Township, for instance — could provide enough trash (600 tons daily) to get started.

"It's a framework, and the details will be worked out among the local communities, the county board and the executive," said county bond counselor Terry Donnelly.

"It sets up a Municipal Solid Waste Board with members from each community and the county board of commissioners to make decisions to manage and implement this system."

The contract was approved by the

commissioners' building and planning committee and finance committee. It would implement an energy-conversion plan of incinerators that would burn trash and generate electricity.

This would reduce the county's exclusive dependence on landfills, Schutte said.

According to the plan, two incinerators would be opened in Oakland County — one in Wixom to serve the Ford plant and an industrial subdivision there, the second in Pontiac at the County Service Center.

ALTHOUGH IT was approved 9-1 by the building and planning committee and unanimously by the finance committee, the plan drew heated discussion when commissioners were asked to approve a payment formula for planning charges incurred since county planners started on it three years ago.

Five alternative payment schedules were presented by an ad hoc committee of local government and county representatives after six months of work. The group recommended splitting the \$1.4 million expense between the locals (\$711,700) and the county (\$687,700).

Some commissioners argued the cost would be a hardship for small communities where fiscal problems are constant. Others argued that, because they didn't have input in how the planning was done, they shouldn't pay for it.

But building and planning Chairperson Anne Hobart, R-Waterford, countered that the costs will only be incurred when communities join the sys-

tem and then payments can be made over time.

Supporting the plan, Commissioner Alexander Perinoff, D-Southfield, said: "We've always run into some problems because of costs with people saying they didn't have any input. There are going to be some bugs, but this is a tremendous start."

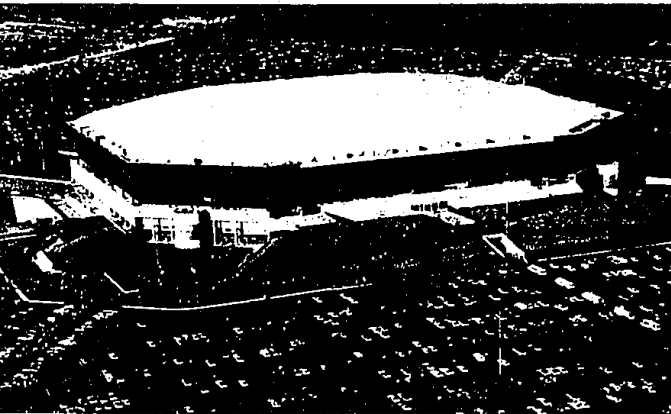
THE PROPOSED agreement was drafted by an ad hoc committee, led by Hobart, and made up of county commissioners and local representatives. They spent six months on the project, revising an earlier version that was rejected by local community leaders during public hearings one year ago.

Schutte said that plan was criticized because it failed to give local communities enough participation in the process.

"They (local communities) were recognized in the earlier version but only in an advisory nature, not in a direct line of participation with the county commission, executive and staff as we have now."

"The new version allows all action to pass through them (via the Municipal Solid Waste Board) on the way to the commission."

Currently, Oakland communities handle their trash disposal in a variety of ways. Pontiac, for instance, maintains a landfill. And 14 communities in southeast Oakland County deliver the bulk of their garbage to an incinerator authority based in Madison Heights.



Oakland County generates enough trash in a year to fill 15 stadiums the size of the 80,000-seat Pontiac Silverdome, County Executive Daniel T. Murphy said when he proposed the solid waste plan in 1981.

AMC 2nd quarter loss grows

American Motors Corp. this week reported a net loss of \$70.4 million for the second quarter of 1985 and a net loss of \$99.4 million for the first six months.

Combined worldwide automotive

and Jeep vehicle sales in the quarter were 87,564 units, up more than 9 percent from this year's first-quarter volume. AMC reported from its Southfield headquarters.

Leading to the increased second-

quarter loss were higher marketing costs, a write-off of tooling for the subcompact model that was dropped, and termination costs in connection with the 25 percent reduction in controllable expenses in May and June.

The net loss of \$70.4 million on sales of \$961 million compares with a net profit of \$4.7 million on sales of \$1,062 million for the same period a year ago.

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