

Low bid for trash burner pleases county

By Tim Richard
staff writer

A bid to build a resource recovery facility came in \$27 million lower than expected, Oakland County officials said.

"Congratulations. You were a little lucky," consultant Larry Fox told the planning and building committee of the county Board of Commissioners.

"We assumed a cost of \$150 million for a 1,500-ton-per-day facility at \$100 per ton," said Fox, a lawyer with the county's consulting firm of Bishop, Cook, Purcell & Reynolds.

Low bidder was Westinghouse Energy Corp. at \$123,316.

THE PLANNING and building committee Tuesday recommended the full board give Westinghouse the contract and forwarded it to the finance committee, which meets today.

The vote was 5-2. Opposed were Commissioners Mark Chester, R-Troy, who feared air quality standards weren't high enough, and James Ferrens, D-Pontiac, who raised the spectre of the plant being located in his city.

Favoring it were chairman Anne Hobart, R-White Lake, and commissioners Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills, Larry Crake, R-Waterford, Ruth Johnson, R-Holly, and Lillian Jaffe Oaks, D-Southfield.

Financing plans also moved forward in the county board's general government committee last week.

ALL BIDS came in below estimates. American Energy bid \$141 million and Ogden Martin \$145,519.

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Consultant Larry Fox credited the competitive bidding process for the lower-than-expected prices. Firms seem eager to get Oakland's business because there will be other projects in the \$850 million to \$1 billion program.

"For the first time in this industry, all vendors submitted the exact same contract," he said. "We wanted the ability to make an apples-to-apples comparison. These are 100 percent comparable."

Fox multiplied \$100,000 times the daily capacity, 1,500 tons, to arrive at the \$150 million construction cost estimate.

"The price is a very good one. That is a hard number, good for one year with no overruns," he said.

The county will be responsible for obtaining state environmental permits.

VENDORS SEEM eager to get Oakland's business because there will be other projects in the \$850 million to \$1 billion program, he said.

Westinghouse, with people and an operation in the area, would be in a good position to bid on subsequent plants, Fox said, although bidding would still be competitive.

Asked about environmental problems at the Detroit Incinerator, Fox said, "The vendor for Detroit, Combustion Engineering, did not submit data to show it had proven technology. We asked for proven technology."

"We're satisfied with the number of bids," he said.

There were 10 responses to the requests for proposals (RFQ) and five qualified bidders.

WESTINGHOUSE PROPOSED to build the project in 29 months — opening some time in 1991.

Its operating and maintenance costs were pegged at just below \$5 million — another pleasing sign. Consultants estimated \$6 million to run the facility, Fox said.

It was the latest step in the 10-year process of eliminating Oakland's need for landfills to store trash. The county plan is required under a 1978 state law.

THE PLANT will have three burning units that will produce steam to generate electricity. It will have equipment to recover metals, according to Fox's project description.

Its most visible feature will be a 230-foot concrete stack. But the buildings will be largely hidden by overgreens and other trees.

The plant will have a weighing station, tipping area, storage pit, two overhead cranes, feedwater system, boilers, compactors and fly ash removal conveyors.

The plant will have a residue of unburnable ash, which will have to be placed in a landfill. Last week a

25-member landfill site selection committee began work by listening to a series of technical presentations from the consultants.

A POLITICAL roadblock to financing the solid waste program

was removed last week when drain commissioner George W. Kuhn dropped his opposition to a bond sale plan.

The county board's general government committee, in a special

meeting Thursday, endorsed 5-1 the draft of a legislative bill to grant the county executive bond sale authority. The enabling bill also would allow Oakland, as an executive-led county, to set up a separate solid waste department.

Oakland: Let us pick prison site

Oakland officials are asking the state Department of Corrections to let the county pick the site of a new regional prison.

The county board gave 23-2 approval to the resolution offered by freshman commissioner Ruth Johnson, R-Holly.

"We (Oakland) have been singled out," said Johnson.

She charged the state-set criteria, governing roads and access to public services, didn't apply to Oakland.

She also charged that Senate Bill 16, which permits local referendums on prison sites, excluded Oakland. That bill has passed the Senate and

is in a House committee.

FOR FOUR YEARS, the county board has argued over what role to take in the prison site selection process.

County Executive Daniel T. Murphy and many Republicans say a site next to the County Service Center in Pontiac best meets state criteria.

Officials in Pontiac, Holly and other areas being examined for sites all say NIMBY — "not in my back yard."

"This resolution is marvelous politics but terrible government," said commissioner Dennis Aaron, D-Oak

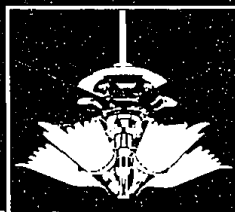
Park. He and Larry Pernick, D-Southfield, cast the two dissenting votes.

"To date, nobody wants a prison. This says we will take a prison if we can find a local entity that wants it. The local units all say they don't want it. This is nonsense."

THE BOARD's resolution asks that "specific criteria be applied to all locations" considered as prison sites.

It asks that the criteria be "mandatory and not discretionary" with the Corrections Department.

And it asks that "a local authority have final site selection approval."

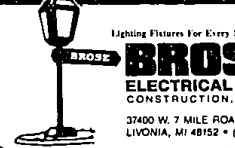
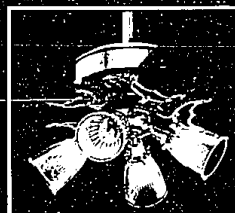
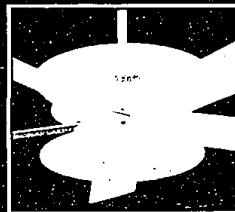


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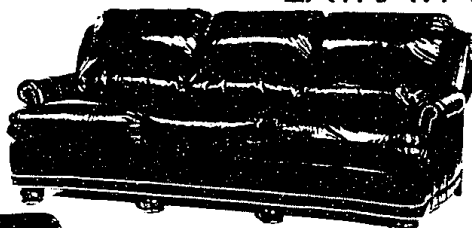
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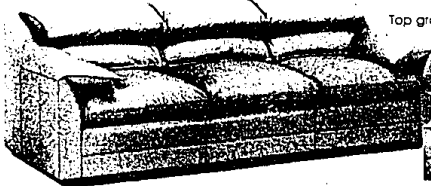
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