

# Watch those figures!

## Bonds expected to finance county solid waste plan

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

County Commissioner John G. Pappageorge gets nervous when his colleagues start talking dollars — particularly when it comes to Oakland's solid waste program.

"It's important that we're all using the same figures," Pappageorge, a Troy Republican, said last week during a meeting of the finance committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Pappageorge became insistent — almost huffy — after Commissioner Hubert Price Jr. used "\$750 million to \$1 billion" in connection with the county's proposed solid waste program.

Price, a Democrat from Pontiac, is generally considered tight-fisted with tax dollars.

But Pappageorge thought Price was being less than scrupulous when he said the solid waste program may cost "up to \$1 billion."

Up to now, officials have said it would cost about \$470 million.

PAPPAGEORGE WAS CURIOUS about Price using the higher figure and demanded to know why their figures are different.

"I get very nervous when you use

figures like that," said Pappageorge, a retired army colonel who is now director of business planning and analysis for the land systems division of the General Dynamics facility in Sterling Heights.

Price said he was just using figures sometimes used by the county's solid waste consultants.

The \$470 million price tag does not include inflation, something that could boost the ultimate price.

In response to Pappageorge's insistence, the financial analyst for the solid waste system, David P. Quigley, put together a cost analysis data.

That data, and information provided by Quigley during an interview earlier this week, provides a detailed financial outline of the county's solid waste program.

**MAJOR COMPONENTS include:**  
• The waste-to-energy incinerator in Auburn Hills, \$310 million, expected to be operational in April, 1993.

• The MRF (materials recovery facility, or recycling plant), also in Auburn Hills, \$30 million, expected to be operational in July, 1991.

• Compost facilities — relatively

small parcels of land at yet-to-be-selected locations — \$5 million, expected to be functional this August.

• Landfill, \$50 million, needed in August, 1992.

Plans to build a county landfill

have been put on hold, according to Roger Smith, director of the solid waste program. Officials are exploring an alternative, namely putting the incinerator ash — and waste that can not be recycled — into private

landfill.

County tax money will not finance the project, Quigley said.

About \$350 million is expected to be made available by the sale of bonds this summer, he said.

## Recycling czars in demand

Southwest Oakland County is close to getting a "trash czar" of its own. The number of candidates for job of director of RRRASOC — Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County — has been narrowed to three, according to chairman Robert Deadman, who is also city manager of Farmington.

Oakland County has a trash czar, Roger Smith, who was hired last year. He had been the city of Southfield's public services director.

The southwest Oakland recycling authority, included as a component in the county's overall waste removal plan, includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi, Southfield, South Lyon, Walled Lake and Wixom.

It received more than 60 applica-

tions when it started advertising nationally for a director to oversee the RRRASOC waste management program.

The job title is not "trash czar," but the person selected for the position will oversee the handling of municipal waste for about 260,000 residents.

Deadman, spokesman for the search committee that has been screening the applicants, said the job will pay between \$45,000 and \$60,000, depending on the applicant's qualifications and cost of living considerations.

THE RECYCLING group hopes to hire its new director within the next two months, he said.

RRRASOC's program includes an MRF, or materials recovery facility, a transfer station — where small route trucks can dump their loads into bigger vehicles for transport to the county incinerator — and a drop off point for batteries, paint, fertilizers and other hazardous household waste.

The program is expected to cost nearly \$30 million.

The authority is expected to select the site for its MRF and transfer station late next month, according to Thomas Biase, director of public services for Farmington Hills and deputy treasurer of RRRASOC.

Four sites — two in Novi, one in Wixom and one in Southfield — are under consideration, he said.

## Vote possible on bond sale

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

Officials are concerned that a vote on how to finance the county's solid waste program will be mistakenly viewed as a referendum on the program itself — and voted down.

"The solid waste program must go forward," said James M. Brennan, Oakland County director of program evaluation. "We have a mandate from the state. The only question is how it will be financed."

Brennan gave his assessment Wednesday as officials weighed a request from County Executive Daniel T. Murphy who earlier this week asked for a special election. If necessary, so residents could vote on whether Oakland County should pledge its full faith and credit to guarantee \$350 million in bonds to finance the proposed solid waste program.

The request was a surprise to some commissioners who believed Murphy had agreed, at least tacitly, to pledge only a limited amount of the county's taxing authority to guarantee the bonds which are scheduled to be offered for sale this summer.

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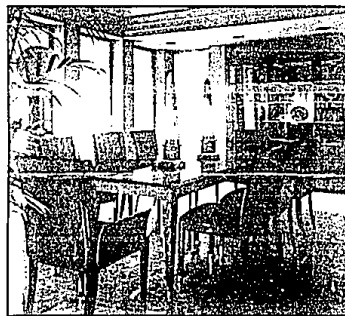
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