

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF BLAINE COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DECEMBER 2011 SESSION
COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ON
BLAINE COUNTY RECYCLING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Fourth Day

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this day at 5:30 p.m. Present were Chairman Angenie McCleary, Vice Chairman Tom Bowman, Commissioner Lawrence Schoen; Blaine County Operations Director Char Nelson, County Planner Kathy Grotto, Recording Secretary Sunny Grant; Wood River Recycling owners Vick and Gina Uberuaga, KECH Radio reporter Sue Bailey; Jeff Anderton; Wiley Ellis; Winn's Compost Patricia Weaver; Wood River High School W.a.t.e.r. Club members Lex Shapiro, Madi Hendrix, and Chase England; Erika Greenberg; Chloe Lichtenberg; Elizabeth Jeffrey; and *Idaho Mountain Express* reporter Kate Wutz.

Chairman McCleary called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Blaine County took over operations of the Blaine County Resource Recovery Center (BCRRC) on October 1, 2010. The Blaine County Recycling Advisory Committee was formed in November, 2011. The Advisory Committee's vision is to provide environmental leadership for the citizens of Blaine County through innovative strategies, public education and fiscal responsibility. The BCC and Recycling Advisory Committee are looking for community input and ideas on recycling in Blaine County.

Several students were present at the meeting. The Recycling Advisory Committee and BCC encouraged them to be active in recycling education and outreach.

Blaine County Operations Director Char Nelson presented a history and overview of the BCRRC. The BCRRC is open sixty hours a week and is next to the Southern Idaho Solid Waste District Transfer Station at Ohio Gulch. Recyclable materials are received, sorted, and baled at the BCRRC. Most recyclables—cardboard, newsprint, mixed paper, magazines, steel/aluminum, and most plastics—are shipped to Boise for sale. The BCRRC also receives phonebooks, computers, hazardous waste, and batteries.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Almost everyone present encouraged single-stream recycling, which would be easier and increase participation in the program. Sorting may be the main reason people do not recycle. Nelson said unsorted recyclables generate less revenue, and also that they tend to be more contaminated. Elizabeth Jeffrey is pleased to have curbside pick-up, but even her family still doesn't know how to sort properly. She asked the County to consider single or dual stream recycling.

Several residents agreed that packaging was a huge problem; and that more Blaine County residents should be concerned with the amount of waste they generate.

Residents asked if more convenient central recycling locations could be established throughout the valley. Schoen said cities would have to be responsible for keeping the locations tidy; and that the recyclables bins are frequently contaminated.

Dual stream recycling, keeping glass separate, might work. If glass is included in single stream recycling, it can break and be hazardous to the hauler, BCRRC staff, and to the baler machinery. Separated out, glass is held in an inert pit at the BCRRC for potential future use.

The BCC is working to increase efficiency and revenue at the BCRRC. The Recycling Center currently operates at a deficit, which is covered by tipping fees at the Ohio Gulch transfer station. Solid waste tipping fee revenue will decrease if recyclables increase. Bowman suggested residents might be willing to pay a fee for the convenience of curbside single stream recycling to cover the decrease in tipping fee revenue.

Larger cities have the critical mass to support recycling. Blaine County would have to ship single stream recyclables to the West Coast for sorting. From sorting locations, many recyclables are shipped overseas for remanufacture. Shipping contributes to more greenhouse gases.

Bowman said the only way to *reduce* the waste stream is to actually reduce the amount of waste and packaging that comes into Blaine County. People have to make different decisions on what they buy. Schoen said even small retail items are overpackaged. He felt the BCC would support an aggressive effort at a bigger level. Some Albertsons stores in the country are moving toward zero waste. Student Lex Shapiro said an effort to ban plastic bags in Hailey had recently failed.

Schoen said the Milner Butte landfill was designed to be safe; and is operated and monitored responsibly. Other counties have expressed interest in using it.

A commercial compost company is conducting a survey to determine if greenwaste composting would be feasible in Blaine County.

McCleary said the BCC wants to make the best decision to support Blaine County residents, most of whom want the best environmental practices they can get.

PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE

ADJOURN

At the hour of 6:45 p.m., the BCC finding no more business before them adjourned.

Attest: _____ Approved _____
JoLynn Drage Angenie McCleary
County Clerk Chairman