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OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEWS
RELEASE**

WASTE ENERGY A HOT TOPIC FOR COMMISSIONERS

As part of a continuing effort to provide information on alternate energy to local government, the Washington County Board of County Commissioners heard two presentations on converting waste to energy in its October 14th meeting.

Representatives of Pure Earth Energy Resources, Inc. (PEER) and Waste Management Recycle America (WM) showed how waste streams can be used to offset burning of carbon-based fuels to generate electric power and how the the latest in recycling technology can benefit citizens.

PEER's proposed Wasteto Energy Project would use replacements for conventional fossil fuels that are derived from post industrial and post consumer by-products.

Robert Kershner, of Kershner Environmental Technologies, and Herbert Case of PEER described a system that would process biosolids from sludge recovered from the wastewater management system

So-called "New Carbon" Biomass Fuels are products of balanced ecosystems and can replace "Old Carbon" fuel sources like coal and oil. Biosolids are organic materials with a 6,000 – 8,000 BTU/lb ratio when dried

PEER is looking at developing a drying facility at Resh Landfill using greenhouse-like buildings and robotic equipment to dewater and dry the solids to meet EPA Class A Bio-Solids specifications. Similar materials are available at home improvement centers and sold as organic fertilizers under various brand names.

Sources of heat for the drying process could include solar energy, or waste methane gas from landfill processes. Last week, the Commissioners heard a proposal to capture methane gas from Resh landfill for use in generating electric power. A portion of the gas would be flared. That flared gas could be used as a heat source for the PEER process.

The process could benefit the County by reducing the amount of sewage treated at the Conococheague Wastewater Treatment Plant, and generating revenue from sale of the biosolids produced.

The Commissioners reached consensus to move ahead and allow PEER to determine if the plan would be viable.

The Board also agreed to further pursue the possibility of curbside recycling across the County, following a presentation by Waste Management Recycle America (WM).

Commissioners were shown WM programs by David Taylor, District Manager for the company, including the most recently completed recycling plant in Elkridge, Maryland.

The proposal included provision of large, rolling bins to households for what is called "Single Stream" recycling. All recyclable materials could be placed in the same bins, with sorting of bottles, cans and paper products performed at the WM plant.

Benefits would include greater participation in recycling programs, time savings for consumers, extension of landfill life, and a possible revenue stream for the County.

WM operates recycling facilities in Elkridge, Westminster, and Capitol Heights in Maryland, as well as Burke and Fairfax in Virginia.

In other actions on October 14th the Commissioners adopted supplemental findings of fact in a rezoning by the H.B. Mellott estate, stating that an existing asphalt plant would not be moved from its present location.

A text amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan delineating Priority Preservation Areas for agricultural easements was approved.

A request from Human Resources to advertise a Motor Equipment Operator I position in the Highways Department was approved.

The Board approved the list of requests to be presented to the coming session of the Maryland Legislature to include a revision regarding the Sheriff's salary and authority, particularly regarding special deputy sheriffs. Public Works is seeking an update to the Code of Local Public Laws to reflect current organization and practices of the Division of Public Works; resubmitted from last session. The Clerk of the Circuit Court requested a revision to add Washington County to the list of jurisdictions in which the Clerk may negotiate the amount of his commission on the transfer tax so that the County will see increased revenues. The Mental Health Advisory Committee seeks to allow the County Commissioners to designate the Mental Health Authority, Inc, the core service agency for Washington County, as the state-mandated mental health advisory committee. The final request, from the appointed Salary Study Commission would allow adjustments to various salaries set by statute.

The Board approved Funk and Bolton, P.A., Attorneys at Law of Baltimore, Maryland as Bond Counsel for the County, in the amount of \$87,700.00 plus out-of-pocket expenses.

Approval was given for a bid for building materials for pole buildings at the Division of Environmental Management, to United Construction Enterprises, LLC, of Mercersburg, Pennsylvania in the amount of \$109,267.42.

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