MINUTES **October 16, 1996**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in regular session in its offices in the Administration Building, Belvidere, NJ on Wednesday, October 16, 1996 at 7:09 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Susan Dickey and upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Susan Dickey and Freeholder Ann Stone. Freeholder Kenneth Miller was absent at roll call.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Director Dickey.

Director Dickey read the following statement: "ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR/GAZETTE, BLAIRSTOWN PRESS, THE NEWS, STAR-LEDGER AND THE EXPRESS-TIMES AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE".

Members of the NJ Department of Health who attended the meeting to answer questions regarding the impact of the incinerator and the landfill on the health of Warren County residents were Elin Gursky, Senior Assistant Commissioner, Epidemiology and Public Health Laboratories, JoAnn Held, Chief of Air Quality, DEP, Jim Bloomingstock, Health and Senior Services and Dr. Steve Markus.

Ms. Held reviewed the stack information regarding cadmium emissions from the incinerator. She advised the public that maps will be made available (disbursion plat maps) that show that emissions occur but nothing serious; some east of the facility and south on the ridge. The incinerator is monitored carefully.

Dave McNulty asked if these people are familiar with dioxin and they responded yes. He asked if they are familiar with what the government has determined are dangerous levels of dioxins in the human body and Dr. Markus said that no danger point has been established in the human body. Mr. McNulty did not agree and quoted from an EPA report of 1994. Steve Kravanick said that this report was dismissed as inaccurate.

Ms. Gursky said that they would be happy to look into this and come back again with their findings. They will evaluate all appropriate data and make recommendations if necessary.

Mr. McNulty asked if they find dangerous levels of pollutants, would they call for a closing of the incinerator. Ms. Gursky said she is telling them that they will review and make appropriate recommendations.

Mr. McNulty said that DEP is now in court for not enforcing its own regulations regarding the incinerator. How can they expect the public to trust this agency?

Ms. Gursky said that if they go above the limits, they will have to look at it further.

Mr. McNulty said that he would like to see more extensive monitoring done for other particulates. These people were sent up here to defend the incinerator - he accused the state and the board of freeholders of a cover-up to protect the incinerator.

Ms. Gursky said that there has been no conversation between the Board of Freeholders and the state, there is no cover-up.

Freeholder Miller arrived at 7:20 p.m.

Margo Rinehart mentioned that tests are based on adults 30 to 40 years old, not based on children who are already ill.

Ms. Gursky said that the state doesn't look at background exposure, they look for the incremental risks.

Margo Rinehart asked if they look at asthma, brain disorders, kidney illnesses, etc. and Ms. Held said they look at sulphur dioxide and other respiratory ailments.

Most of the pollutants are one in a million. The exposure is much smaller than in the kidneys, etc. Regarding asthma, no calculation can be done right now.

Margo said that regarding lead, there will be almost a ton of lead released every year and they should be aware of that. Finding this in children's blood is not good. The permit modification is only allowing more pollutants to come out of the incinerator. The state says it is o.k. but it is not. These people do not care about the people or they would shut the incinerator down.

Anna Marie Caldara said that they come up here and treat people with disdain, the people from Trenton know less than the people in the audience who are here tonight.

Elin Gursky said they will be back with the facts.

Ms. Caldara asked why the people who live here have cancer now when they did not have it in 1985.

Ms. Held said that many levels of testing have been done at the facility, stack testing, soil testing, testing on eels because they are bottom feeders, fruit, etc. Dr. Markus said that testing is done on fish and milk because of their fatty tissue content. Mother's milk has also been tested.

Ms. Caldara read some statistics regarding cancer deaths in Warren County:
1979 456.9 1988 517.1 1989 495.2 1990 516.3 1991 543.

She also said that in 1992, DEP tested the waters of the Pequest Fish Hatchery and it tested high for mercury content; there were elevated levels of mercury.

Ms. Gursky said when they come back they will have more current cancer stats.

Ms. Caldara said that if data collection takes six months, how many more will die? Ms. Gursky said that the northeast does show high rates of cancer but it is not known why.

Mr. McNulty said that 84% of all dioxins are put out by an incinerator. Why does it take months and years to put two and two together. Testing done two years ago show that dioxin emissions were highest from the incinerator.

Ms. Held said that when they did this assessment it was based on old waste incinerators; they tip the balance. We need to compare the Warren County incinerator to that study.

Bart Carhart asked what is being done in New Jersey to address dioxins. Certain things will limit the danger of dioxins. Aggressive battery recycling that is being done has helped.

Ms. Held said that low levels of dioxins were found in eels. They are tested because they are bottom dwellers and contain fatty tissue.

Debbie Gunther said she is concerned about the incinerator. She is not comfortable with the facts she is hearing; she is a registered nurse who works for the state. She asked

what the projection is for the future. She also wondered why cars at the facility were covered and Mr. Carhart said that they were doing some spray painting and it was done to protect the cars.

Mrs. Dickey said that the state has proposed that the counties charge the municipalities a garbage fee that each town would pay. The bond payoff is $50 million for the incinerator and $45 million for the landfill. We do not own the facility, we only lease them the land.

Dinah Rush said we need to look at both sides of the story. Some of this information is not updated. Why are these people in the audience more qualified than everyone else? We need to listen to all options and need to be aware of the situation.

Steve Kravanick asked if a second test was done and was told yearly testing has been done since 1988.

Elin Gursky said they will come back with a presentation when they have more cancer data. The casualty rate is improbable. They will try to get as much information for the public as she can get.

Mr. McNulty questioned the agreement and said our county counsel should research it as his lawyer said that the county can not be liable to pay the bonds. Mr. Houck explained the process but Mr. McNulty said that his lawyers said that if a contract is signed that is illegal, the contract is void. Mr. Houck again explained but Mr. McNulty didn't agree.

Jim Bloomingstock said that regarding the cadmium levels in the blood streams of the children living at the incinerator site, he has talked to the Popinkos and all available lab information will be submitted to DEP for evaluation to make sure that they are all looking at the same facts. There are many factors in cancer; the food supply, smoking, fertilizers, sludge, dietary habits; they all can have a high cadmium content. The testing methods are very critical, even the containers used can alter the results of blood testing.

John Joyce, Chairman of PCFA, said maybe we should stop driving cars as they are the biggest source of pollution.

Steve Kravanick asked why Dave Wallace hasn't read the service agreement. He should do a legal analysis of this agreement. The time to act on a political level is now.

Ann Stone said that she attended a meeting at the college with the legislators and she made it very clear that we are going to fight the state's proposal. It is no appropriate for us to be penalized in this instance.

RESOLUTION 598-96

On motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Miller, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held October 16, 1996.

RESOLUTION TO PAY BILLS

BE AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Master Voucher Certificate for Certification for Payment No. 96-27 dated October 16, 1996 in the amount of $1,168,870.53 including

bills and investments, is approved subject to the review of the vouchers by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

96-27	259,094.00
Payroll 10/10	909,776.53
Total	1,168,870.53

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren on the date above mentioned.

s/Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk

ROLL CALL: Mr. Miller: yes Mrs. Stone: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

Freeholders Miller and Stone had no comments.

Freeholder Dickey said that regarding Dr. DeSanctis's letter to the county asking Mr. Houck to research some financial issues, she has asked Mr. Houck for an accounting of the college money for the last two years.

At the final public comment portion of the agenda, a woman affiliated with Asbury Natural Village Farm spoke to the board regarding some violations they have received from our health department regarding their methods of leaf mulching and composting. They feel the violations are unwarranted. In 1994 they received an exemption letter from DEP.

County Counsel David Wallace advised the board that since there is a case pending in this matter, the board should make no comments at this time.

The board thanked Ms. Gursky, Ms. Held, Dr. Markus and Jim Bloomingstock for coming tonight and Mrs. Stone asked that they look into the high rate of cancer in the state and see what they can come up with by way of an explanation. The board said that they appreciate all the efforts they made to carry on a dialogue with the people who came tonight.

Mr. Dinger said they have to compare Warren County's cancer statistics to counties like Northampton County, Monroe County and the Lehigh Valley area.

On motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Dickey, and there being no further official business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

ATTESTED TO:

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk