

NEWS RELEASE

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Search for solid waste solutions featured in 'Murfreesboro Storytellers'

City, county leaders considering options as Middle Point closure approaches

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 3, 2017

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – Middle Point landfill is expected to reach capacity in no more than 8 years. At that time, taxpayers will lose free use of the landfill – worth at least \$4 million annually – and the county will lose about \$900,000 a year paid by other counties that use Middle Point.

The Rutherford County Solid Waste Advisory/Steering Council is looking for potential solutions that will best serve Rutherford County. Two members of the Advisory Council are featured in the March episode of "Murfreesboro Storytellers" on CityTV.

Murfreesboro Mayor Shane McFarland and Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess discuss a range of solid waste issues in "Storytellers" hosted by John Hood. Watch the episode on YouTube at https://youtu.be/z7ja8pyF2eY or on CityTV beginning March 6.

The "Storytellers" interview features the following comments from the Mayors:

- Change Ahead: "We've sort of gotten ourselves spoiled here in that we haven't had to pay anything to put our residential waste into the landfill," said Mayor Burgess. "So its been a very, very good process for the City and County and everyone in our County with respect to what it actually costs. That's going to change drastically as we move forward."
- <u>Urgency:</u> "It's not like we can wait for another five or six years to put a plan in place because it takes so long to get these plans put together," said Mayor McFarland. "When we met with the consultants there was no, 'You've done this in the nick of time, you've got plenty of time to work on this plan.' It was, 'We've got to get moving right now!'
- Recycling: "We can all recycle a lot more than we are doing," said Mayor Burgess. "Now that's only a small piece of the total percentage of volume that's going in [the landfill] but this whole process it's going to take a lot more discipline on the part of every one of us and our families to minimize what's going in, especially when we have to start paying for somebody else to ship it or process it."
- New Residents: "Since I moved here in 1992 the population in Murfreesboro has quadrupled," said Mayor McFarland. "The people who have moved in have an expectation . . . they need to recycle because they've dealt with solid waste issues in other communities. The good thing is I

- don't think we're trying to re-invent the wheel. There's solutions out there and that will put us in a good spot to fix those."
- <u>Cost:</u> "If we have to ship this [solid waste] somewhere else or we have to invest millions of dollars in some sort of technology that gasifies this or creates useable products," said Mayor Burgess, "It's going to be a major increase in the responsibilities of our citizens then we have to find a way to minimize that."
- <u>Technology:</u> "We just went to Lebanon and toured a gasification plant that takes waste from the municipal sewage plant and disposes part of that through a gasification process," said Mayor Burgess. "It's working very nicely again you have to put a series of things together to be able to handle the kind of volume we're talking about here."
- <u>User Fee:</u> "Solid waste is going to have to be seen as almost a service like your electric bill or your water bill and those things that when you use it you pay for it," said Mayor McFarland. "We've not done that to this extent. Hopefully, moving forward the plan that we're working on is going to have some incentives for recycling and those who do use less waste they're rewarded for making those choices."

The Advisory council, which has met twice and will gather again in April, is discussing a range of options from keeping a landfill in-county, to regional solutions, to recycling, to transfer stations, and reducing trash at its source. GBB Solid Waste Management Consultants, TriAd Environmental Consultants, and Cooley Public Strategies make up the consulting group commissioned to study the Middle Point situation. Contact Dave Cooley, Cooley Public Strategies, 615-742-8112, for information on the consulting team.

For more information on The Solid Waste Advisory/Steering Council and to engage in the solid waste issues, visit Renewal Rutherford at RenewalRutherford.com or follow the issues on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/RenewalRutherford/ and Twitter at https://twitter.com/@RenewRutherford/

This month's "Storytellers" was recorded in the Murfreesboro City Council Chambers at 111 West Vine Street in Murfreesboro. "Murfreesboro Storytellers" is produced by award-winning video producer Michael Nevills.

"Storytellers" can also be seen on CityTV Sunday, 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Monday, 7:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m. and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. You can watch "Storytellers" on CityTV (located on Comcast Xfinity Channel 3 and AT&T Uverse channel 99), on Roku, or simply view the program online by visiting www.murfreesborotn.gov/storytellers.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photo attached: 'Storytellers' host John Hood interviews Murfreesboro Mayor Shane McFarland and Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess on the search for a solid waste solution in Rutherford County.

1. John Hood, Mayor Shane McFarland, Mayor Ernest Burgess .jpeg.