



## **Annual Internal Review**

**This report covers the time period of 7/1/2015 to 6/30/2016**

(This report is due in the first quarter of each calendar year for the previous year.)

### **Zero Waste Advisory Commission** **(Official Name of Board or Commission)**

**The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:**

The commission is empowered to review and analyze the policies and resources relating to material discard management in the city, and to advise the city council on materials management policies and resources. The commission shall provide assistance to the city council to ensure its residents that the City provides both an economical and environmentally safe system of waste reduction, resource recovery and disposal. The commission may provide assistance to the city council to protect the public health and quality of the environment through efficient collection, recycling, composting, and disposal of municipal solid waste.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**  
*(Reference all reports, recommendations, letters or resolutions presented to the City Council on mission-specific issues. If some of the elements of the mission statement were not acted on by the board in the past year, the report should explain why no action was taken.)*

#### **August**

**Elected Commission Officers** – Commissioner Acuna was approved on a 6-2 vote to serve as Chair of the Commission. Commissioner Gattuso was unanimously approved to serve as Vice Chair of the Commission.

**Approved 2015/16 Committees** – A document detailing current committees was reviewed and the Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee and Construction & Demolition Committee were discussed by the Commission. The Committees were retained although edits to the descriptions of their goals were proposed for approval in the bylaws. A description of the Universal Recycling Ordinance Committee language was updated to read as follows: “Goal: The Commission will continue to hold meetings with stakeholders as they develop recommendations to Council to fully implement the Universal Recycling Ordinance throughout the city including city facilities and public spaces.” Chair Acuna made a motion to approve this change, there was no objection and it was approved unanimously.

Chair Gerry Acuna made a motion to dissolve the Organics Working Group and proposed formation of an Organics Management Committee. There was no objection and the Commission unanimously approved the motion. The Commission proposed the following language for the Goal of the Organics Management

Committee: “The Commission will collaborate with staff by making recommendations to the Austin Resource Recovery Director to develop policies for food waste prevention and recovery consistent with the Zero Waste Master Plan.” Chair Acuna made a motion to approve the proposed descriptive language for the Organics Management Committee as noted, there was no objection and it was approved on a 6-2 vote.

**Updated Bylaws:** The Commissioners reviewed a document detailing universal changes to the bylaws developed by the City Clerk for the transition to an eleven member body. Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to approve adoption of the universal changes, Vice Chair Gattuso second. The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission. After unanimously approving the universal changes, the Commission discussed multiple details of the bylaws. Chair made a motion to approve further detailed amendments to the bylaws of the Commission as documented by ARR staff as advised and read from the dais by the Commission at this meeting. There was no objection and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the further proposed amendments to the bylaws.

## October

**Approved Construction & Demolition Materials Recycling Ordinance:** approved proposed amendments to Chapter 15-6 and Chapter 25-11 of the City Code and ARR Administrative Rules regarding the recycling and reuse of materials generated by building and demolition projects.

Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to recommend that the requirements for studies be kept in the ordinance language regarding 15-6, with a beginning diversion rate of 50%, and that a 75% diversion rate requirement for October 1st 2020 be included as well as a 95% diversion rate to begin on October 1, 2030 with both increasing diversion rates contingent on the supporting results of economic impact and diversion market studies. Commissioner White seconded the motion and withdrew her previous motion to reconsider Commissioner Ochoa’s motion. The motion passed on a 7-1-1-1 vote (Commissioner Joyce opposed, Commissioner Jiampietro abstaining, Commissioner Acuna Recused, Commissioner Valera absent).

**Approved Heavy/Light Duty Vehicle and Equipment Purchase -** The Commission discussed items entailed in the purchase. Commissioner Guidry made a motion to recommend the item, Commissioner Joyce second, and the commission unanimously approved the recommendation 10-0.

**Approved Proposal for Efficiency and Cost of Service Audit -** Chair Acuna discussed a proposal of implementing a cost of service audit of Austin Resource Recovery and noted a previous audit that he participated in as a member of the commission in years prior.

The Commission discussed the item, and Commissioner Blaine made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Gattuso, advising ARR staff to conduct an internal audit to be followed by an independent audit conducted after receiving approval from the City Purchasing department. Staff agreed to report back at the January, 2016 ZWAC meeting with a report of the internal audit and to also report back at November, 2015 ZWAC meeting on the results of the process for obtaining a third part audit. The motion passed on a 9-0-1 vote with Commissioner Ochoa-Gonzalez abstaining on grounds that she didn’t think that a budget audit would be appropriate to impact a waste diversion rate.

## November

**Opposed Extension of Austin Energy Class 2 Waste Contract –** Staff presented background on the item and noted that staff was about 6 months behind on the projected schedule for consolidation, and City

Council had previously noted that if an extension was required, it would need to come before ZWAC and City Council, as it would not be an automatic extension.

Commissioners discussed material oversight, bidding process and timeline, changes to existing agreement, delays and how to expedite the process, contract consolidation and exit clauses. Commissioners discussed diversion opportunities and hauling, collection and storage of poles, chemicals on the poles, and special waste clause in contract. The Commissioners, staff, and members of the public discussed bidding processes and options, and legal matters around the contract regarding risk management and liability. ARR staff recommended adopting a 12 month extension with possibility of execution of a replacement contract.

Commissioner Blaine made a motion to oppose approval of the recommendation, Commissioner White second. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Approved Appointment of Members to 2015/16 ZWAC Committees**—The Commission discussed appointments to the committees and Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to accept committee placement as read with exception of Commissioner Blaine now being Commissioner of the Construction and Demolition Ordinance Committee. Commissioner Bones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **Approved Updates to Proposed Efficiency and Cost of Service Audit –**

Staff provided updates and received feedback from the commission on an efficiency and cost of service audit proposed at the October meeting.

Commissioner Blaine made a motion to voice commission support to pursue as vigorously as possible an external audit for strategic and financial purposes and to also consider doing this with regularity until hitting zero waste goals in 2040. Commissioner Bones seconded the motion. Commissioner Bones made a friendly amendment to incorporate a more systematic approach to the audit to use in cooperation with other customs of the URO. There was no objection to the amendment and the Vice Chair declared it adopted in the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Appointed a Member of ZWAC to the Joint Sustainability Committee** per Resolution No. 20150604-048 .

A motion was made by Commissioner White, Commissioner Joyce second to appoint Commissioner Guidry to the Joint Sustainability Committee. Commissioner Blaine made a friendly amendment to appoint Commissioner Bones as alternate in the event that alternate members are allowed. Commissioner White accepted the amendment and the motion passed unanimously

#### **Adopted 2016 Schedule of Meetings**

Commissioner Joyce motioned to adopt the schedule of meetings for 2016, Commissioner Guidry second, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Approved Trash and Recycling Receptacles Agreement for Downtown** Staff presented the item and asked for a favorable recommendation from the Commission. The commission discussed and provided feedback on organics, container placement, cost, contents, signage, and education efforts.

Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to recommend approval of the agreement, seconded by Commissioner White. The motion passed unanimously.

**Proposed Consolidation of all City of Austin Department Waste and/or Diversion Contracts within next 180 days** Staff provided an overview of previous results of consolidation efforts.

Commissioners discussed cost saving measures, asked for more data, what departments can better pair with for higher diversion, flexibility of bidding out based on different needs, how to increase diversion, and opportunities to introduce new diversion modes.

Commissioner Blaine made a motion that ZWAC recommend that Council clarify that our number one priority in looking at these contracts is diversion and that consolidation be used as a tool towards that. Commissioner Masino seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**January**

**Approved Creation of Efficiency and Cost of Service Audit Working Group** – ARR staff provided an update related to the Efficiency and Cost of Service Audit from previous ZWAC meetings. Chair Acuna asked for volunteers for a proposed working group to sit down with staff approximately one day per week as a precursor to an audit, preferably a 3rd party one. Vice Chair Gattuso, Commissioners White, Masino, Bones, and Chair Acuna volunteered. Commissioner Guidry moved to create an audit and cost of service working group, with a second by Commissioner Valera. The motion passed unanimously. Vice Chair Gattuso, Commissioners White, Masino, Bones, and Chair Acuna volunteered.

ARR Director and ARR Finance Manager were assigned as staff contacts. Chair Acuna said the goal of the working group was to create a simple efficiency and cost of service audit and to look at the internal aspects of the department.

Commissioner Blaine made a motion to request that department staff and city management pursue the actions necessary to initiate a 3rd party audit of the Department it within the next year. Commissioner Bones seconded the motion and Chair Acuna made a friendly amendment to add the words “as soon as possible” and that the audit be an independent one. The amendment was accepted by the maker of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**Approved Landfill Maintenance and Gas Collections Contract** - ARR staff presented the item and requested a favorable recommendation from the Commission. Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to approve the recommendation, Commissioner Blaine second. The Commission unanimously voted to approve recommendation of the item.

**Approved Proposed Land Sale: 4711 Winnebago** – ARR staff presented the item and Commissioners and staff discussed self-funding, leasing as an option, letters of interest and industry interest, and cost recovery. ARR Director noted he would communicate to Council that a ZWAC recommendation to sell the property had nothing to do with the proposed [re]Manufacturing Hub, but was strictly a vote to recommend selling the property.

Commissioner Blaine made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed land sale: 4711 Winnebago Lane, Commissioner Guidry second. The motion passed 9-0-1. Commissioner Valera abstained.

**March**

**Approved Council-adopted changes to bylaws**- The Commissioners discussed the ZWAC bylaws recently approved by Council and Commissioner Guidry made a motion to approve the item, Commissioner Hoffman second, and the bylaws were unanimously approved.

**Approved Committee assignments** - The Commission discussed the item Chair Acuna assigned Jose Valera as a member of the Organics Management Committee, and Mr. Valera accepted the appointment to no objection from the commission. Commissioner Gattuso made a motion to approve the assignment, Commissioner Masino second, and the item was unanimously approved.

**Approved Agreement for Purchase of Trash and Recycling Carts** - The Commission reviewed the agreement to replace existing broken carts and to issue new carts to new customers on an as-needed basis. Staff requested a favorable recommendation on the item, and the commissioners discussed the item. Commissioner Gattuso motioned to recommend approval of the item, Commissioner White seconded and the item was unanimously approved.

**Approved Recommendations from Working Group Update on Efficiency and Cost of Service** - Chair Acuna discussed a memo from February 19<sup>th</sup> regarding the ZWAC request for a 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit. Staff summarized the memo regarding requests by a commission working group being duplicative of a process currently being undertaken by Council. Mr. Gedert described the process and forms to use to produce a formal recommendation to Council, which was previously provided in training that all commissioners receive. The motion given at the January meeting was that staff and city management take actions to initiate steps to perform a 3rd party audit, since this was not endorsed by staff, the ZWAC opted to produce a formal document to Council requesting such. A motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman to recommend to a City Council committee that the department pursue an independent 3rd party audit, seconded by Commissioner White. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Guidry developed the text of two recommendations with feedback from the Commission members and delivered it to the staff liaison.

Recommendation: The Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) recommends that Austin City Council seek an independent 3rd party audit of the Austin Resource Recovery department

Rationale: WHEREAS, the Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) unanimously passed a recommendation to seek an independent, 3rd party audit of the Austin Resource Recovery department on January 13, 2016, and;

WHEREAS, A ZWAC working group was formed to review ARR departmental efficiencies, and;

WHEREAS, per ZWAC bylaws, ARR staff time and energy cannot be accessed by the ZWAC working group, and;

WHEREAS, although raw data is available to the public and to ZWAC, staff analysis would most likely be needed to clarify in layman's terms, and;

WHEREAS, although the Austin City Council adopted a formal review process through the untested Office of Performance Management, the ZWAC sees this process as supplemental to the 3rd party, independently contracted audit agreed upon by the Commission, and;

WHEREAS, landfill diversion rates are not improving at the necessary pace to achieve the city's Zero Waste goals on the timeline in the Master Plan, and;

WHEREAS, the city is introducing a new program for residential organics collection and processing, and;

WHEREAS, there is broad concern around new city programs impacting affordability.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) recommends immediate Council approval for an independent, 3rd party audit of the Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) department with an expedited timeline in order to utilize the results for the FY16-17 budget process. It is recommended that the ARR audit process should not only include financial analysis, but gauge personnel satisfaction within the department and shall provide suggestions to increase diversion rates.

Vote: For: 10 – Unanimous; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 1 - Jeff Jampietro

Recommendation: The Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) recommends that Austin City Council prioritize Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) in the performance and budget review by the Office of Performance Management (OPM).

Rationale:

WHEREAS, landfill diversion rates are not improving at the necessary pace to achieve the city's Zero Waste goals on the timeline in the Master Plan, and;

WHEREAS, the city is introducing a new program for residential organics collection and processing, and;

WHEREAS, there is broad concern around new City programs impacting affordability.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) recommends that Austin City Council prioritize Austin Resource Recovery department in the performance and budget review by the Office of Performance Management.

Vote: For: 10 – Unanimous; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 1 - Jeff Jampietro

**Discussed Cost/Benefit Analysis of Public/Private Partnership for Residential Curbside Services -**

Chair Acuna presented a proposal to examine privatization of collections and the Commissioners discussed the item. Commissioner White recommended to the Chair that the entire body first discuss the rationale for similar items more fully in the future before placing them on the agenda.

Chair Acuna accepted the recommendation and made a motion to table the item, Commissioner Hoffman seconded, and the item was tabled on a unanimous vote.

**April**

**Approved Appropriating \$1.2M in the ARR CIP Budget for repairs to the inactive FM812 Landfill facility caused by recent flooding; Amend FY16 ARR Operating Budget; Amend FY16 ARR CIP Budget -**

ARR staff presented the item, provided background information, and requested a favorable recommendation from the Commission. Staff and Commission discussed the item and Co-chair Gattuso moved to recommend the item, Commissioner White seconded, and the motion passed 10-0-0 with Commissioner Valera absent.

**Approved Agreement for the Sale of Scrap Metal Materials Accumulated by Multiple City Departments -** The commission discussed the contract extension process and relevant daily pricing indexes. Staff answered questions on reuse and ways to advertise the scrap metal from the Commission. The commission discussed promotional efforts for reuse, Austin Materials Marketplace, transportation

costs, pricing and market variables, and regulatory compliance scoring involved in the solicitation process.

Commissioner Guidry made a motion to approve recommendation of the item, Commissioner Blaine second. The motion passed on a 9-0-1 vote with Commissioner Jiampietro recused and Commissioner Valera absent.

**Elected 2015/16 Commission Officers** –For a term of 1 year, beginning May 1, ending April 30, Vice Chair Gattuso nominated Chair Acuna for a new term as Chair. Commissioner Guidry seconded. A vote was held and the nomination passed on 8-0-1 vote with Commissioners Hoffman abstained, Commissioner Valera absent. Chair Acuna recused himself from the vote. Commissioner Guidry made a motion to nominate Commissioner Gattuso for Vice Chair, Chair Acuna seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, Vice Chair Gattuso was recused.

**Approved Curbside Services Expansion Preferences** - Staff presented two options and financial impacts regarding preferences for residential customer curbside services. Commissioner Blaine made a motion to approve a draft recommendation and incorporate the additional items added at the meeting. Commissioner White seconded the motion, added some clarifications to the language and the motion passed 7-1-1-2 with Commissioner Joyce opposed, Chair Acuna abstaining, and Commissioners Jiampietro and Valera absent.

Recommendation: WHEREAS the City of Austin has set a goal of reaching Zero Waste by diverting at least 90% of our discards by 2040, and;

Rationale: WHEREAS the City of Austin has set a goal of reaching Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, or sooner if feasible, and;

WHEREAS a majority of Austin’s waste is compostable in a municipal composting program, and;

WHEREAS landfilling organic wastes is a major source of methane emissions, a dangerous greenhouse gas, and;

WHEREAS composting organic wastes creates almost 5 times as many jobs as landfilling the same materials, and;

WHEREAS compost retains more water than other soils, reducing water consumption, and;

WHEREAS the Austin Resource Recovery Department already collects organic yard and tree wastes for composting, and;

WHEREAS the Department can extend curbside composting to Austin residents by simply enhancing this existing program, and;

WHEREAS the Department estimates that the fees necessary for this program will be an average of \$ 4.10 per household per month, phased in over multiple years, and;

WHEREAS three-quarters of residents will be able to fully offset this fee by downsizing their current trash cart, and;

WHEREAS more than 14,000 Austin households have already been receiving comprehensive curbside organics collection for up to three years, and;

WHEREAS the Austin Resource Recovery Department has identified important learned lessons from this pilot program, and;

WHEREAS advocates in the community report having generated thousands of letters, calls, emails, and other communications from residents demanding curbside composting, and;

WHEREAS the Austin City Council will be considering whether to extend curbside composting citywide as part of the 2017 budget process, beginning this month, and;

WHEREAS 46 percent of Austin's residential waste is made up of compostable material,  
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council authorize the necessary expenditures and fees to enhance Austin's organic waste collection program to include all organic and compostable wastes including food wastes and food soiled papers, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council authorize the fastest possible timeline for phasing this service in so that the program will be fully operational by the time we reach the Zero Waste Plan's 2020 75% diversion benchmark, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the Austin Resource Recovery Department to use the existing food waste collection pilot program to test any identified learned lessons as soon as possible, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the Austin Resource Recovery Department to work with the Commission and other stakeholders in developing a roll out plan for this service which will maximize the likelihood of its successful adoption by the public.

Record of the vote: Approved 7-1-1-2 on motion by Commissioner Gattuso motion, Commissioner Hoffman second, Commissioner Joyce opposed, Commissioner Acuna abstained, Commissioners Valera and Jampietro absent.

## May

**Reviewed Austin's 2015 Community Diversion Study** - comprehensive evaluation of community diversion efforts using data from private haulers, landfill and recycling facilities, and businesses, including reuse and donation activities.

**Reviewed ARR Budget Process Update and Departmental/Operational Cost Savings Suggestions**  
Staff presented a slideshow on the item and the Commission asked questions and provided feedback on budget and operational issues.

2. **Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.**  
*(If any of the board's actions were outside the scope of the mission statement, the report should explain the non-compliance issues.)*  
The 2015 actions of the Zero Waste Advisory Commission were in full compliance with the Commission's mission statement.
3. **List the board's goals and objectives for the new ~~calendar~~ year.**  
*(Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)*



- Master Plan Implementation - The Commission will collaborate with staff by making recommendations to the Austin Resource Recovery Director regarding project implementation.
- Master Plan Implementation - Review and improve communication strategies in all areas of Austin to increase and track recycling rates in all ten city council districts and citywide.
- Master Plan Education - ZWAC will receive regular updates on the interlocal agreement between the City of Austin and Travis County regarding expansion to zero waste initiatives, strategies, benefits and costs.
- ~~Master Plan Implementation—The Commission will consider a Styrofoam ban and make recommendations—~~
- Zero Waste Economic Development - ZWAC will ask for reports on efforts to attract companies that reuse resources and participate in economic development associated with zero waste goals.
- Universal Recycling Ordinance - The Commission and its Committee will continue monitor implementation of URO ordinance and rules.
- ~~Producer Responsibility—This ongoing program is a part of the~~ Master Plan Implementation - The Commission's ~~Producer Responsibility working group~~ will collaborate with staff by making recommendations to the Austin Resource Recovery Director regarding collaboration with its regional partners to target non-recyclable, non-compostable materials or hard-to-handle materials across the region.
- Construction and Demolition Recycling - the Commission's C&D Ordinance Committee will monitor and report on the progress of the C&D Ordinance ~~Intent Document~~.
- ~~Food Waste Prevention & Recovery—ZWAC's liaison to Food Shift Austin—an organization focused on the prevention and reuse of waste consistent with the Zero Waste Master Plan will provide updates to ZWAC and ARR staff.~~
- ZWAC will make recommendations regarding ~~STAR ratings~~ process and procedures ~~as regards~~ related to incineration and zero waste goals.
- Organics Management Committee of ZWAC will lead stakeholder input ~~in developing to review and make recommendations regarding initiatives around~~ citywide expansion of organics diversion, collection and composting.
- ZWAC will closely monitor the development and finances of the [re]Manufacturing Hub project.
- ZWAC will work with staff and stakeholders for the contracting of Austin's single stream recycling ~~processing~~ services.