



Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Special Meeting Minutes June 4, 2019

The Zero Waste Advisory Commission convened in a special meeting on June 4, 2019 in the Assembly Room of Kenneth Gardner Service Center at 4108 Todd Ln. in Austin, Texas. The following are the meeting highlights. For detailed information, please visit http://www.austintexas.gov/cityclerk/boards_commissions/meetings/97_1.htm.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Acuna called the Commission Meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Gerry Acuna, Cathy Gattuso, Amanda Masino, Melissa Rothrock, Jonathan Barona, Kaiba White, Joshua Blaine, Ian Steyaert.

Absent are: Kendra Bones, Heather-Nicole Hoffman, Blythe Christopher de Orive.

Staff in attendance: Richard McHale, Ron Romero, Amy Slagle, Gena McKinley, Andy Dawson, Victoria Rieger, Scott Long, Brent Paige, Richard Avila, Lori Scott, Marcus Gonzalez, Armelle Ouedraogo, and Gabriel Gonzalez.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Item 1

Adam Gregory chose to speak. Mr. Gregory explained that the IFB issued on May 27th was for Organics Processing Services with the anti-lobby ordinance associated with it. Mr. Gregory added that in the past there would be a request for information that would come out before the solicitation was posted so that potential policy issues could be identified but that didn't happen with the Organics Processing IFB.

Richard McHale, ARR, responded to Mr. Gregory. Mr. McHale said that typically an IFB is done when the scope of the request is unclear or there is more information needed about the industry or the material that is being processed. Mr. McHale elaborated saying that there was a clear understanding of what was needed so an IFB was not needed.

2. APPROVAL OF APRIL 10, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Chair Acuna entertained a motion. Commissioner Rothrock moved for approval. Seconded by Commissioner Steyaert. Passed unanimously, 8-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

3. NEW BUSINESS

3a. Discussion and Action – Clean Harbors Contract Amendment RCA

Chair Acuna entertained a motion for approval. Commissioner Barona moved for approval. Seconded by Commissioner Gattuso. Passed unanimously, 8-0.

3b. Discussion and Action – Master Plan RCA

Commissioner White asked why the higher cost proposal was selected. Mr. McHale said there was criteria that used to evaluate the proposal; Burns & McDonnell scored higher than the other two firms based on that criteria: 86 out of 100 compared to 45 and 34, respectively, for the other two firms. Commissioner Blaine asked who the last firm was seven years ago, and if they submitted a bid. Mr. McHale said it was HDR and they did not submit a bid.

Chair Acuna entertains a motion. Commissioner Masino moves for approval. Seconded by Commissioner Barona. Passed unanimously on an 8-0 vote.

3c. Discussion and Action – URO Committee Update

This item was deferred until the August ZWAC meeting. Commissioner Gattuso provided an update saying that the City was driving the proposed resolution. The next steps is the City's going to coordinate two stakeholder meetings in July regarding increasing capacity. In August the URO committee will convene and the City Staff is going to provide an update concerning the stakeholder meetings and discussion of a pilot program organic collection at multi-families will be discussed.

3d. Discussion and Action – June 12th Meeting

Chair Acuna entertains a motion to defer the June 12th regular meeting until the July 10th regular meeting. Commissioner Barona moves to defer the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Gattuso. Passed unanimously on an 8-0 vote.

3e. Discussion and Action – ZWAC Attendance

Commissioner Gattuso voiced her concerns regarding ZWAC attendance. Commissioner Gattuso said that since there are only ten meetings a year; every voice is important. Commissioner Gattuso mentioned that it's demoralizing for the Commission when people don't show up. She stated to let Gabriel or Gerry know if you won't be attending the meeting as a courtesy. Commissioner Gattuso also stated that if a Commissioner is absent three meetings in a row than Clerk's office is notified and the Commissioner will be forced to vacate their seat. If four meetings are missed in the year then the Commissioner's seat is automatically vacated and it is reported to the Clerk's office.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

4. STAFF BRIEFINGS

4a. Director's Report: Solicitations Update, Statistical Reports and Performance Measures

Commissioner Masino asked if the data collection and reporting system database was entirely new or if it was going to be built on the same platform. Gena McKinley, ARR, responded that the program is used to house and deliver reports.

4b. Recycling Contracts Comparison Presentation

Presentation by Brent Paige, ARR, and Scott Pasternak, Burns & McDonnell.

Commissioner White asks what Mr. Pasternak's conclusion is. Mr. Pasternak says that his observation is that the contracts are similar but act differently in good times and in bad times. Mr. McHale added that if one of the Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) starts having issues, or decides to shut down, then the other facility would take over.

Adam Gregory signed up to speak. Mr. Gregory said he was open to answer questions regarding the processor's perspective.

Commissioner Masino asked about the contribution to public education. Mr. Gregory said that discussions were held in the past but it was a complicated process that involved numerous legal issues.

Commissioner Rothrock asked what kind of materials are in the residual contamination for both MRFs so there could be education focused on those items. Mr. Gregory said that there are numerous items that are not recyclable that are being recycled: bowling balls, food, kitchen sinks, wood, brush, garden hoses.

Commissioner White asked about processing glass bottles. Mr. Gregory said that glass smashes and it breaks when it gets dumped and compacted and broke when it gets dropped off for processing so it makes it very rare for a whole bottle to survive. Commissioner White asked if processing can remove small items. Mr. Gregory said that it does eventually once magnets and air separation is being utilized.

4d. FY20 Budget Forecast

Presentation by Victoria Rieger, ARR.

Commissioner Steyaert asked if it was realistic that an 85% satisfaction rating was possible. Ms. Rieger said that in the long term, it is possible. Richard McHale, ARR, said that by building more facilities and introducing more programs to North Austin will increase participation thereby increasing the satisfaction rate.

Commissioner Steyaert asked if there were any other factors that have been forecasted (additional facilities or expected changes in value) that were factored in the forecast. Ms. Rieger replied that the Northeast Service Center has not been factored in because it has not been officially approved. Brent Paige, ARR, added the forecast takes into consideration: all revenue and expenditures including recycling processing revenue, all projected customer growth (based on population growth), projected rates, and mandated expenses (wages, health insurance, benefits, etc.).

Commissioner Barona asked what accounts for the 15 Full-time employee (FTE) increase in FY20 and FY21. Mr. McHale stated that the division managers give projections over the next five years so their projections are more like wishes.

Commissioner Barona asked how charging more for larger trash bins effects the contamination rates on recycling bins. Mr. McHale said that has not been looked at but the contamination rates go back to when the recycling contracts were started. Commissioner Barona added that if someone is price sensitive, they are more likely to go to the cheaper bin because the recycling bin is cheaper and they will put trash in the recycling bin.

Commissioner Gattuso asked how it would work by adding a \$25 fine like San Antonio. Mr. McHale doubted it would pay for the personnel but it would assist in the amount of the processing costs that are being paid to the MRFs.

Commissioner Rothrock asked for confirmation that the clean community fee was projected to not increase throughout FY20 to FY24. Ms. Rieger said she was correct; as of this forecast it was not projected to increase, but that could change next year.

Commissioner White commented that it seems the methodology focuses on what is being done today but does not account for other goals. Commissioner White added that the on-call bulk service is increasing diversion but material is still going to the landfill; what could be done to increase diversion? What could be done to reduce contamination in recycling? How does that factor into the five year forecast? Mr. Paige responded by saying that the business planning process assesses the effectiveness of programs by reviewing the program's performance metrics. Mr. Paige added that when Division Managers review their performance metrics and see that they are not in-line with their goals, then the Division Managers use that information as a basis for their budget forecast.

Commissioner White says that an input would include additional staff or additional equipment. Mr. Paige said that those are taken into consideration; Division Managers are required to submit FTE requests over five years based off of projected program expansions and new programs with expenses tied to the FTE.

Chair Acuna said he was concerned about possible rate increases in FY22 and FY21. Chair Acuna asked how projects are going to be funded if a revenue source is being minimized since people are moving into high rises rather than households. Mr. McHale said that the Master Plan update will help with the decisions that are made; the unsustainable model of creating difficult to recycle materials needs to be changed. Commissioner Rothrock commented that there should be more of a focus on education to the residents rather than on how to divert correctly.

4c. On-Call Bulk Collection Report

This item was deferred until the August 14th meeting.

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Landfill Matrix Update, FY20 Budget.

ADJOURNMENT A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Gattuso on a unanimous decision. The meeting was adjourned by Chair Acuna at 8:35 pm to no objection (Unanimous).