



Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

May 12th, 2021

The Monthly Meeting of the Zero Waste Advisory Commission convened through Video Conference on Wednesday, May 12th, 2021, due to COVID-19 Disaster Declaration for all Texas Counties. The following are the meeting highlights. For detailed information please visit: <https://austintx.new.swagit.com/videos/120800>

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Acuna called the Commission Meeting to order at 6:02 pm

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

Board Members not in Attendance: Lisa Barden and Janis Bookout (Membership pending)

Staff in attendance via WebEx: Ken Snipes, Tammie Williamson, Richard McHale, Amy Slagle, Gena McKinley, Andy Dawson, Donald Hardee, Dwight Scales, Jason McCombs, Brent Paige, Mike Lewis, Natalie Betts, Young Park, Blanche Quarterman, Victoria Rieger, Amy Schillerstrom, and Selene Castillo

Chair Acuna opened with comments,

1. **APPROVAL of the April 14th, 2021 Special Called Meeting Minutes**

Chair Acuna entertained a motion to approve the April 14th, 2021 Meeting minutes. Commissioner Melissa Rothrock made the first motion for approval of the minutes. A second motion was provided by Commissioner Ian Steyaert

Item passed Unanimously

2. NEW BUSINESS

2a Discussion and Action –: Truck and Hauling Services RCA-Victoria Rieger and Amy Slagle

Division Manager Victoria Rieger presented to the ZWAC council seeking approval for the Truck and Hauling Services RCA which is a multi-department item. Victoria stated this specific RCA will be going to council on May 20th. If you have any questions, we have staff here available on the line to answer any questions, but this is a three-year contract for Truck and Hauling Services to be used by public works, watershed, and Austin Resource Recovery. Commissioner Ian Steyaert asked so is this supplemental support for construction? It seems that it's kind of overflow from what we've done in the past is the first question. The second is, how does it fall in line with previous budgets? In other words, is this kind of as expected in terms of the rate of increase or is it the same as it has been in the past? Division Manager Amy Slagle responded we utilize the hauling services contract to help move our organic material during our heavy season. Over the last seven to eight weeks we experienced about a 60% increase in our compost materials from the winter storm. We were experiencing severe delays on our collection routes and it was taking us around seven and a half to eight days to collect the five-day cycle. We utilized the holland contract to help get that material to organics by gosh, and keep our trucks or return our truck to the route quicker versus calling the dumpsite or to the disposal site. Victoria added your second question, Ian was regarding the budget. Amy correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe this is the first time that ARR has utilized truck hauling services. The amounts that were authorized for the current budget in the RCA that you see are the first amount. Currently, we don't have a historical not to provide you. Amy responded, this is the first time we've ever utilized that contract and it was done out of absolute necessity, so this is an out-of-budget expense at this point. Commissioner Ian Steyaert replied, yeah, but it's, and this was specifically, it sounds like for the winter storm cleanup and the flood is anticipated that this will end, this need will continue for the next several years. It seems like a three-year contract, right? Amy replied, this is a city contract and ARR wants to have the flexibility to tap into that contract should we need to thank you. Commissioner Amanda Masino replied, so, are the departments providing funding? Are we the only ones who are going to tap into this service right now? it's public works, ARR in Watershed, I think you said? Victoria replied that correct. Commissioner Masino replied, so are those the only departments who would be using the hall? Victoria replied that's correct if there is a need further down the road and a department decides that they need this service at that time, they can get with their particular buyer and if there is room on the contract, for example, or doesn't use any of the authority on the contract and it's year two of the contract and if another department needs it. There is room to add that for the department, but at this point it's just the three departments listed Commissioner Masino replied, are the amounts here reflective of how often you anticipate each department needing that service? I see it as you know, it's a lot less for Watershed, for example, in terms of what they're contributing compared to ARR. Victoria replied so it's important to note the amounts you see aren't an actual outflow of money it's really just a credit line so we could potentially spend up to this amount. I can't speak for the other departments and their specific amounts, but the amount that we estimate potentially could be used in the coming contract term is what you say stated there. Commissioner Masino replied, so can you just give me an example, could you clarify what would be a use for ARR versus use for Watershed of this service? Amy replied an example could be compost material or brush storm debris comes to mind as probably the most likely items. so, right. Commissioner Masino replied the storm debris would be you all? or would it be watershed, or would it be kind of a mix of whose budget is going to pay for that portion of the contract? Amy replied if ARR is utilizing it for our services it would come out of our credit line, so to speak and then watershed would utilize their funding does that help answer the question? Commissioner Masino replied, think I'm asking it incorrectly so there's storm debris if it's in the street, it takes ARR is responsible for it? If it's in a stream then Watershed is responsible for the hauling cost, is that how that would work, or I guess I'm trying to understand their contribution in this or their use of this service compared to ARR?

Amy replied, I don't know specifically what watershed would use it for but in the event they we're hauling storm debris from a watershed, then it would go to their line, not ARR as line, so to speak. Director Ken Snipes replied, so basically what ends up happening is the contract allows us to expedite the type of service that we would need kind of at that moment so that we're not waiting until we have an emergency, or we need to try to create a contract, which takes a, you know period, right? This creates the contract upfront, and if we need to use it, we've designated the amount of authority that we could use up to and that has been approved that's basically how that works. So, any of the departments up to the authority that they designated would be able to use that contract. Chair Gerry Acuna replied, when you guys put these out there, these bids, do you specify the type of truck that is necessary that is needed? is that an end Dump Belly Dump, or a rear Dump? Victoria replied, yeah, the specifications are pretty detailed that's one of them, one of the docents, the solicitation docents that does get posted and communicated to the vendor community or specific depending on what the department's needs are those are listed on the bid sheet, if you look at this one in particular, there, I believe are various truck sizes. Amy could probably speak more to that, but yes, the answer is yes, the specifications are listed in pretty, pretty detail. Chair Acuna replied when I think of the number of trucks, the types of vehicles, I'm wondering the fiscal note here, states that you went through the SMB, our department to see if there were any minority opportunities out there and I guess I'm kind of confused that none were identified or maybe perhaps none answered the solicitation, which is probably a better way of putting that but, I'm curious that does go out on the street and it does, it goes through the SMB, our folks, and they submit that. Victoria replied, so, they do evaluate also as stations before they hit the street for any potential, SMB are goals that they determined this one, in particular, I'm not sure what the results of that but I can certainly get that information to you. Commissioner Masino replied, by name, it looked like there may have been some respondents that should have fit that category. Chair Acuna replied Ken again is this a contract that is in dire need of acceptance and or the decision, is that correct? Ken Snipes replied, yes it is and it allows us to be proactive and not upon ourselves in a situation where we're essentially creating a contract when we need it, as opposed to before so that we have it because there's usually a delay It could be a couple of weeks sometimes before we can actually get those things done or longer but, that's basically what that's about, but it is a fair point about the solicitation process, of course, we don't, we don't own that process, but it is. Victoria replied, well I just want to add when these Solicitations are posted any vendor that is registered under the commodity code. so in this case, any vendor that's registered as providing truck hauling services, and I'm sure there's plenty in Austin and who is also registered to do business with the city will automatically get a notification that there is a solicitation out there and they have every opportunity to respond to that solicitation. So, I would imagine some of those vendors do qualify as some vendors. That statement on the RCA just pertains to the goal determination process. That it's not to say that no minority-owned businesses received notification. does that help allay some concerns there? Commissioner Masino replied, there, there, it does look like there was a lower bid. So, I'm also wondering why the lowest cost, was not the one awarded, Victoria replied we will investigate that Amanda. Commissioner White replied, well, we're bringing that up I did just wonder I'm not seeing in here, like how many trucks and sorry if you've already said that and I missed it. it was, that was rating? How many trucks are going to be available? Amy replied, commissioner White, why it's really just based on whatever the department's need is, that they may have a, a greater amount, watershed may have a greater need or a public course degrade or need, and then Austin resource recovery it just depends on the job that they're being asked to help with, Commissioner White replied, sure I mean, the company doesn't have infinite sharks, so there must be some maxim number that they're making available right? Ken Snipes replied, I think in this case, it would be more about these are typically smaller jobs that, you know, high impact, we need them now type of deal. so they're no longer duration activities like storm response so it's more about, the amount of material that's on the ground, and for example, they may run a smaller number of trucks as many times as needed to get that material picked up. Commissioner White replied, so we're talking about like, I mean, is that a, not at all specified in the contract because it seems like it's would be kind of important. Commissioner Masino replied, I see ours, we have a listing of ours in the docents, so these quotes have their 6,300 hours of work, right if you add up that line. Commissioner Steyaert replied, so I think what I'm hearing here is That this is a solicitation, it basically is allowing these city departments to be able to use as needed when

needed at these rates, the various trucks that they might need based on the situation at hand and so that will be determined based on whatever event occurs. Commissioner White replied, yes, I understand that. and it doesn't answer my question. Victoria replied, guess your question commissioner white is, is how many trucks are in the fleet of this of the respondent? That typically I'd have to do some digging. I don't have that answer in front of me, but it is possible that that information was submitted to the city. it, it's not something that's typically really evident. I'd have to go digging through some docs to see if we can determine, what the size of their fleet was Commissioner Masino replied, I think so I have a second question, I guess, about the responses, if we could get his information so the Lewis Clark is slightly more expensive this they're at 489, 276. and then, but there was another respondent Melendez trucking that is at 468, even. So my question is, why did, why not go with the lower bid on this? there's a slight difference in their equipment if you, if you look at the line items, so they seem to have a smaller capacity for this super truck and a larger capacity for this quad truck, but, it would be helpful to know why we didn't go with the city, didn't go with the lower bid here? Ken Snipes replied I can check and get that information back to you as quickly as we can like I said, this is a little different because multiple city departments are submitting their requirements and that sort of thing so, this is not a contract that's unique to us. so, we would have to dig into that to see what the requirements might've been from the other departments as well. Chair Acuna replied, and a kind of a clarifying question here on the, on the timing of this, just going to the water wastewater commission also, or watershed folks, or is it strictly innate or ARR? Ken Snipes replied, well, I don't know, I would imagine it would a Victoria do you know if this would go before their commission as well? Victoria replied I don't know it's not currently listed as going to either of those commissions, so I don't know the answer to that question. Chair Acuna replied, and we are the lead group on this, correct? Victoria replied I mean, we would execute the contract or what each one of the departments sign off on this so we are not the lead department, our, our portion may be the smallest portion I'd have to look at, but I would imagine public works is the lead department. Chair Acuna replied, so I guess I'm trying to clarify what happens if for some reason we table this item it does the other departments watershed or public works, I should say, would they, continue with this? Victoria replied, I could imagine it likely still will go and depending on, you know, the critical nature or critical need of the, of this particular contract, I believe the current contract expires, I think it's October so they, they may have time. I'm not, serving if this will hold them up or not. Commissioner Steyaert replied, did we resolve this, is there still a question about the review by the minority-owned women-owned business procurement program? it seemed like that was boilerplate at this point, but maybe I misunderstood something. Chair Acuna replied I think it was boilerplate in that it is reviewed and, as a Victoria stated that I can attest that these do go out, they go out to most, most people who are, who are literally part of the SMB are and who meet the criteria that are necessary they, they all do go out to do those contractors now responding to those. that's a different story altogether and I'm assuming that with the nature of this contract that perhaps one or two probably did submit some type of a response, but nonetheless, I have no, no idea and, and again, I just want to make sure that in the future that we cover all of these opportunities for participation by the minority SMB, our folks. I mean, it sounds as though we've done a good job in the past of at least making the public aware that this opportunity is there and speak up to a minority community we can help them be a part of this. Commissioner white replied I don't remember, did similarity say whether any of the three respondents fell into that category? Commissioner Masino responded well, the lower cost one is listed online as being minority and women, a woman-owned, so I don't know if that means they're listed with the city, perhaps they're not, but it would be very helpful to get clarification on whether they are or not. Commissioner White replied yeah, I would share that request and I guess just to touch back on what I was asking about you know, the reason that I was asking about the number of trucks that are expected to be available is I'm wondering if any analysis has been done to examine whether or not contracting is preferable to buying some number of trucks and operating them with city employees and maybe the answer is no, I'm just wanting to know if, you know if that has been examined and my concern is around, you know, worker standards and benefits and things like that that apply to city employees and also, you know, environmental kind of standards around vehicles and maintenance and all of that. so there are real benefits to having things done in-house and, you know, if there is a really strong fiscal reason and we're also applying oversight to the contractors then, okay but I, I guess I'm, that's the nature of my question. Deputy Director Richard McHale replied, just to address your question, for ARR our needs are seasonal, so it really didn't always make sense

for us to buy the additional equipment and staff to have them on call. so for us, it was a better deal to that, a contract to do it and as far as the number of trucks, typically in situations like this contractors, if they don't have enough trucks usually work together if they have big projects and to bring on new trucks, I think in our case, I think at the most we would ever need if we were running some sort of transfer operation would be five or six trucks at any one time just to move material. so that's how, you know, we see it for us. it's not a good reason for us to go ahead and purchase trucks and have those because there's obviously a cost to that, a capital cost to that and we also have to pay ongoing maintenance and actually, you know, we have to have a place to park it and that's been a real challenge for ARR at our service center is we're running out of space and we don't have parking. As we continue to move forward towards the northeast service center and look for a little relief there, we're trying to, as much as we can just, look for things that we're not needing on a full-time basis, have that contract. Commissioner White replied that's helpful. , and I guess since you mentioned at the end that it sounds like this might be something that we see more coming up I'll, you know, I guess to say that, I'm curious as to what, if any stipulations or requirements are put in the solicitations around, you know, I mean anything to do with, you know, a living wage, sick time and also, you know, maintenance of the vehicles you know, and, and, and as they become available, are we going to be, you know, looking for, you know, electric vehicles or lower emissions vehicles, that kind of thing you know, I don't necessarily have a problem with, with what you said in theory, but I think it only, we only maintain our standards and if we then apply them in these contracts. Richard replied, Agreed, and perhaps a Victoria can talk to the living wage requirement, I believe, and I'll defer to her, but I believe there is a living wage requirement for any contract work done for the city. Commissioner White replied, I thought that was true, but I don't like to assume that's right. Victoria followed up with and I also want to just address a couple of other questions that you all had about the minority enterprises. Apparently the, of the three respondents two of the ones that were not awarded were, minority-owned enterprises, and one of those, and the lender does believe that's going to pronounce it. they were deemed non-responsive so, the award went to the lore of the remaining two. Chair Acuna replied, just another comment kind of commenting on Richard's statement there. The city has been good about asking that living wages being included and basically kind of the same type of employment opportunities be included with subcontractors to ARR. I know I've seen that in some of the solicitations that I've had an opportunity to review, but a department's been good at then. Commissioner White replied, what about sick time? Richard replied I don't know about the sick time. I would have to defer to Victoria on that. I don't believe that was our requirement in, I guess, most city contracts, but I don't know for sure. Victoria replied I must get more information on it, but I don't believe that's that is a requirement you can make note of that and get back to you. Commissioner Kathy Gattuso replied, I think this might be a good agenda item, so we can discuss this, what is on the solicitation, and some things we would recommend in the future.

**Chair Gerard Acuna entertained a motion to approve the Truck and Hauling Services (RCA)
Commissioner Amanda Masino the first motion for approval of the RCA. A second motion was provided
by Commissioner Cathy Gattuso**

Recommend unanimously by the Zero Waste Advisory Commission on a 7-0 vote

2b Discussion and Action – Revisit Homelessness Challenges

Director Ken Snipes, ARR Director spoke on the current Homelessness Challenges, just a quick update on what's been going on with homelessness. we were asked to come back and kind of share some of the things that we're seeing or experiencing right now. as we were pulling this together next slide please, of course, prop b passed during that time. It went into effect as of yesterday and of course, Prop B prohibits camping in the city and around the UT area. it also prohibits, sitting in a line, in public. So, one of the things that the city is working to do is identify, places where that may be possible and so there's that work is really beginning in earnest. their team's been pulled together, to kind of, to kind of focus on, on that. What has Austin Resource Recovery been doing and what have we been up to? so one of the things that we do is we convene a weekly city-wide meeting and then that meeting, basically, every department has a representative there, we discuss activities that are going on. we provide updates across the spectrum of all the activities that various departments are performing we also can be in a second meeting a little less frequently we don't do that one weekly, right now I think we're in an every other week cadence. and in that meeting, we call it our planning meeting. there are fewer departments there, that represent the makeup of that group. it includes, for example, the major project, departments that are performing work, ARR, public works, pard, law, et Cetera and, we discussed in those meetings, things that are either, problems right now, or things that we're seeing. and we also discuss updates there as well. problems that we're addressing right now might include, fires. there's been quite a bit of concern about, fires and encampments. we're seeing those more and more concern has been raised about, you know, as people start to move around, does that increase the fire risk out into the community in our wooded areas. and so, we're working on some of those issues and trying to do what we can to be responsive in those spaces. another thing that we have been working on is, or where we were working on as the violet cart, excuse me, the, bike, keep safe program. We transitioned that program over. you may remember, the downtown Austin community court, as of yesterday, we just learned that that program now has 170 people using it. so, it has been very beneficial. They've expanded it. they have the capacity now to support 300 people in that space. so, it's been a beneficial program, and it was better suited to sit with an organization like the downtown Austin community court. also, another program. that we've been working on is the violet cart, excuse me, the bike cart program. Of course, that was a program that you remember we took over from Watershed protection when we took that program over, there were approximately four sites in use and, we've since expanded that to 48 sites, the sites roughly mirror, the locations that, public works services through their cleaning contracts. our folks are out servicing those, daily. we, there are some sites that we serve as frequently as three times per day and that's just based on the sheer number of people at the site. and that would be the only way to keep up with the material that is generated in those, in those areas. another thing that we're doing is we've recently created a, cleaning team, an encampment cleaning team it is a small team. is nowhere near on the order of the size of the program that public works managers in, in terms of just the sheer number of people that they bring to bear, for those cleanup activities. this is about six people. ideally, they will go in and clean up around those violet bag locations, in and around those areas and we will also have the capability to do some light cleaning in of the areas that public works does not service through your contract. As we know that now, h, camping is banned in the city. we're getting a lot of questions about, mitigation strategies as people start to move around. so over the next few weeks, what we plan to do over the next 90 days is we'll have a weekly assessment of all of the work that's happening on the homeless front to determine where people are moving, and how we meet, you know, the needs, wherever they happen to be. so, if people transition from one under passed to another, we're looking to be agile and flexible in the services that we provide in those locations. and, we're still waiting to see if that means that people will eventually move into the wooded areas or the brushy area. That concludes this presentation. Chair Acuna replied sounds like a challenge. it's not going to get any easier, to say the least. in fact, it's going to complicate itself soon. and again, I don't even know where to begin. I mean having hung out down there just with some of the groups and understanding the challenges that are faced.

I mean, I can't imagine the six-person team it's going to be difficult to be able to gain the trust of, these homeless encampments to allow them to go in there and to, into, to clean up and united care discusses. and

it's a, it's a difficult, difficult process. and I don't envy them at all. I thank you guys for taking the stuff. and more importantly, is this going to require some additional funding, some additional equipment, some additional support. and at this point, if I'm not mistaken, it's ARR it's Pard. and my goodness, who am I missing here of the works of Watershed. thank you. correct.so public works. I mean, we all kind of play with the same type of budget here.is there going to be additional funding that may come down, from city hall to help support this? Ken Snipes replied, well, you know, we're, we're still playing that by ear. we're trying to get a better understanding of, what the cleanup work is going to look like. what I anticipate, well, what I can tell you is that it is much more expensive to clean up in wooded areas than it is under the overpasses. and so, we have equipment coming for our team. we're not fully stocked up on the equipment yet. and so it was really hard for us to determine exactly what the workload was going to be because you know, promptly, we'll probably change some things in terms of you know, people moving around and where we may see debris but, the plan right now, as I said, we'll assess weekly to, to see where we need to pivot and to try to be as agile as possible, so that we don't have situations where we have large numbers of people that are location without adequate support. Chair Acuna replied there was a piece of homeless news, a homeless publication. I think it's called the challenger. and it seems to be the publication that obviously is given to the homeless community. it's written for them, provides information on services opportunities. and I'm wondering if it's something that perhaps, you know, ARR public works, card we should all participate in or with to help provide thoughts, ideas, support that might help with these cleanups. as you stated, when they go into the woods, that's going to be a difficult challenge to go and, and, and help housekeep. it's going to be very difficult, not to mention semi-dangerous. I mean, until we start funding mental health, I think it's going to be a very difficult proposition to send anyone into the woods to help with these cleanup events. nonetheless, that's, that's my 2 cents guys Commissioner White replied, yeah, first just thank you. and I appreciate it, but y'all have been, you know, trying to do up until now. I'm very disappointed that property passed and, you know, the additional challenge that it's going to cause for, you know, for everybody experiencing homelessness and everybody trying to lend assistance, that is really disappointing, I know that there is some contemplation of designating campion areas, and I realize that's kind of a policy decision that will be made by the council, but do you have any insight to, you know, is that something that's likely is still under consideration? Ken Replied it isn't a consideration, no insight yet, just because it's so new., but I would imagine over the next, few weeks or so more information will come out on that in terms of what the plans are. so, again, no, major breaking news on that front just yet. Ken Replied in closing, I just want to say, I want to thank staff, who have stepped up and worked in this space. they've been, you know, amazing in terms of, pivoting and flexing to do whatever the need is and, you know, and still managing to get there their regular work, their day-to-day core work. so, this has been something that, you know, it, wasn't on our work plan, not very long ago, the year before last or so. and, we've been able to assess this work and it's just through the sheer talent of the folks in the department that we've been able to do that. Commissioner Masino replied, you mentioned the fires and I was wondering if you had information about, like materials involved in those fires, or is this typically propane stoves getting out of control? is it just wood fires, other debris being burned, just I'm thinking about this from a hazardous waste perspective and the impact on, you know, the workers who are going to be interfacing with the cleanups. Ken Replied, you know, as part of those meetings, I mentioned earlier at a fire department participates in those and, and, you know, not speaking for them, but I think they would say all of the above. so the fires, they're allowed to have warming fires and cooking fires. , I do know that they plan to get out more to talk to them about basic fire safety, how far your fire should be from your tent or flammables or, you know, other, you know, things that they use to cook, should be from those places. so, we, we hear about all those things, whether they're started through, you know, some sort of propane, situation or candles intents and things like that on a regular basis. so, I don't think there's any one thing that they would zero in on. but it's some, you know, it runs the gamut.

2c Discussion and Action – C & D Meeting Report Review

Citizens communication was provided by Jacoby Jeffery's (Texasenvironment.org) I really appreciate you taking the time I will keep this super, super brief because I trust that this committee is going to do great work., I did want to highlight one, well, two things that were kind of surprising to me., thing, number one is the RCI certification allows for burning, for fuel recycled, the quote-unquote recyclable materials and considers that diversion. and, it allows for alternative daily cover at landfills for the c and d waste, and it calls that recycling. and so I just wanted to bring that to the commission's attention. , I, again, don't want to belabor the point cause you and Amanda and Cathy heard a lot about this last, during the last meeting. , but that it runs in direct conflict with the zero waste plan, which, explicitly states that burning that incinerating for fuel is not considered diversion., yet the c and d portion of the sandy recycling ordinance allows that certification, to stand in for, any other, oversight that the city of Austin might provide when considering the diversion rate of a certified recycler. , and then finally, the commission will also remember, and I don't, I don't recall the exact date, but sometime in, I believe November 2019, you all passed a resolution, explicitly opposing the expansion of the landfill near Bergstrom, and a lot of the C and D waste is going there. and we're very confident, that what's happening is that it's not being handled in a way that we, as a city would consider environmentally sound. , and so I just wanted to bring that to the attention of the commission. like I said, we'll do the work in the subcommittee. , but, but those sort of things that in preparation for that meeting were actually really surprising and I'll end with this. , I think it would be best if we focus on doing it right, rather than just getting the percentage up. , if we're only diverting 50%, but it's actually being handled in an environmentally sound way. , I think we're better with that than 75% being handled in such a way that we're, harming communities where the wood is burned in a biomass incinerator, and of course, polluting the climate as well in the process., and so just wanting to kind of help guide that, that discussion hopefully, towards, towards the most, the highest and best use, which is, you know, what, we've, what we've always stood for. , you know, as a, as a city and what this, the great commission has always stood for in conducting its business. so, I'll leave it at that, and I'll watch y'all on tv unless you have any questions. Commissioner White replied know, just, thanks for bringing those issues to our attention. just curious about the burning, and if you have any information about the waste being burned currently, or if that's not available, I mean, I, I have direct, confirmation from one of the companies that are doing it? Jeffery Jacoby replied, so yeah, I mean, they're, they're, they're selling it off to biomass incinerators, and they're doing so under, you know, what I would call a perfectly reasonable, assertion that that's, that's where they can send it. and I'm not going to tell anyone how to do their business. I just want to make sure that we're very clear that sending off, particularly sending off the wood waste to be burned in biomass, the incinerator is not recycling and it's not a diversion, and shouldn't be considered amongst the diversion rates that we consider acceptable as a city., so yes, I, I have confirmation directly. Commissioner White replied, do you know where that facility is? Jeffrey Jacoby replied I do. I don't want to call anyone out, but, they're an amazingly cool facility and I was disappointed when I heard their testimony at the C & D subcommittee., it's recon with the robots.

Commissioner and C & D committee chair Ian Steyaert presented a report review about the New C & D Committee: The attendees were the commissioners Gattuso and Masino and me citizen communication. there were four speakers. I'm sure you've heard that there were two speakers from a local recycling business who is certified, talking about some of their key points, including the fact that they think that everyone, they're the only ones who are certified and they think everyone needs to be, they talked about the wood as fuel, talked about the need for additional enforcement, and there was also a representative from, industry organization and the nonprofit you heard from Mr. Jacoby, just recently presenting some alternate views about whether this, burning is a good idea, pragmatic, necessary, et cetera. so, there's clearly going to be a discussion about that. and there were questions from, particularly commissioner Gattuso about just getting more information from staff about the viability and necessity for doing that and how it fits into our overall plan., as you already started here, we approved the minutes from the last meeting in 2017., they seemed appropriate.

it seems like not that much has moved in the last four years in some ways. so that was interesting to see the same topics discussed back then as now. so, we're looking forward to making some headway there soon and got staffing from, Ms. Castillo about the bylaws to help lay some groundwork for our commission, and then talked about, Ms. Nelson talked about the ordinance in general. so, we're going to go through if it's all right, I'm going to fly through some of these slides just to lay some of the groundwork that I wasn't aware of. and, hopefully, it's not flying to the rest of the group here, but we'll do it quickly. this, this available on the site., there's an audio recording as well as all the materials, of course, on the ZWAC site. so, let's go ahead and do the next line. so just some background information. I'm not going to read these slides. that's unnecessary. let's go to the next line. interesting to see that it's 20% of the total waste stream is c and d. however, as you look at some of these things, we can be interactive here, what do metals concrete, asphalt, brick, and porcelain have in common? yes, they're heavy. so, if being done right, and we don't get a lot of trash, this is actually a very significant percentage of the weight of the total waste stream, much greater than the 20% that's shown here in terms of volume. so that was interesting to me. next slide. a lot of this stuff needs to be hand sorted. there was a discussion about this. it, it's tough to do some of the mechanical sorting b, and there is, although there's a desire maybe to do soil separation. in other words, at the sites that can be tricky, particularly licensors who are not supposed to be using these waste receptacles sometimes go in and decide that it's a nice inexpensive way to dump their stuff. and it gets mixed in, as well as challenges at the worksites themselves. let's keep going next slide. excellent. there are links. next slide. this is the requirements for which projects should be following this ordinance has to do with the size, the type of project and the necessity, how much to divert or dispose of based on the size of the, or yeah, based on those, 50 needs to be diverted or greater or disposing of less than 2.5 pounds per square foot. and there are some waivers available. yeah., as was previously discussed, the RCI is the current certification, as well as the city registered evaluator. however, that position is, I believe not filled at this time. so there, there may be some opportunities there next and next. this isn't required to be registered to us. so, some of the key findings from the environmental impact study, there, it doesn't change affordability, so that's good news. however, we'll look a little bit here on the data in just a second here because of the low reporting rates. so essentially insufficient data, low reporting rates., since it's, self-reporting in many cases here, we are seeing some numbers, whether we consider those numbers to be good or not, at this point is a little, uncertain. and there's a supposition that the people who decide to self-report are probably on the higher end of the quality and, diversion rates. so, we may be even fooling ourselves if we believe these numbers to be, emblematic of the overall state of, c and d here in Austin. , that said, you know, we're talking about potentially not allowing the wood to be burned, which if that were the case, they already apparently struggle to compete due to limited processing. so that's something we need to consider if we're to make changes that make it more difficult as well. so, all things we're going to have to start to consider and get more information on next. these are the last several years' submission rate of hovering in the low teens, the dirt diversion rates look pretty good here. as you can see, there were several waivers requested and a good number of those were approved, but it's not the low submission rate that makes some of these numbers a bit suspect next. so low submission rates, we talked about lack of enforcement options. there are discussions about, within ARR with staff is working on coming up with additional methods of enforcement and, potentially I believe there's a higher potential on the way maybe staff can, respond with that or, give us an update on that., and the, the markets it's tough to, to accept these type of materials, a lot of contamination as mentioned previously next. so based on that, and by the way, I do want to give staff credit and all those slides that were the city of Austin colors, you know, the blue and, and gold and yellow there were, were all created by staff, Hud, Jennifer in particular. , so these are all future agenda items. I think I've mentioned all of them essentially., and they are as would be expected based on the issues we saw. and so, plenty is going on. we're trying to get a meeting set up for June, start to accelerate, kind of have the meetings a little bit more frequently than is necessitated by the ordinance. , we will not be able to do a video of those meetings that we'll have to just be audio recordings

3a. Staff Briefings

1. Winter Storm Uri Debris Removal Update-Mike Lewis

Mike Lewis Litter Abatement Assistant Division Manager speaks: Good evening commissioners, this is a brief update on Winter Storm Uri collection efforts. As we know the week of February 19th we suspended all of collections due to the storm. As you can see the comparisons from the previous years for brush and organics, we increased almost 80% and composting increased almost 60%. As we returned for collections, we received assistance from Pard, and Watershed to help remove the debris. Based on the heat map displayed you can see that a majority of the calls came from northwest Austin and west of 3t. We also contracted with DRC Grid Removal and Tetra Texh to collect debris. We've calculated approximately 1700 Tons of debris removed to date.

Commissioner Jonathan Barona asks I have a question about the debris map, does this map only show where people were asking for help. I know that they're more heavily "treed," on that side of town, but I'm just curious if you had any insight on that distribution?

Amy Slagle Litter Abatement Division Manager responds: The reason for that is because the debris was concentrated in the Northwest quadrant of Austin. About 20% of our call volume was from one brush route and they had close to 1000 calls. It was severely impacted in district 10 and district 6 in terms of debris removal. The contractors, ARR team, Pard, and Public Works teams spent most of the time in this area.

2. Circular Plastics Initiatives-Progress Updates-Natalie Betts

I'm Natalie Betts on the circular economy program manager and here to share with you some updates on several different plastics initiatives that we're working on and share some progress updates. So, I'll talk through some international national, and state-level efforts that we are working on, to kind of bring together stakeholders across the plastics value chain. But before I do that, I want to just kind of level set on where we are today. So, as you all likely know, we have curbside recycling for all rigid plastics. We also have drop-off recycling for plastic film foam at our recycling and reuse drop-offs our litter, abatement, and streets sweeping Cruz, Keith, tons of debris off our streets and our sidewalks, that also prevents plastic from getting into our waterways through our universal recycling ordinance. We have, we are providing, recycling access for plastic waste, at businesses, for employees, and tenants. We also have the Austin reuse directory, which provides residents with information on where they can donate reusable plastic items and all kinds of other reusable items. Every year we host something called the reverse pitch competition, which has launched several businesses that make, new materials, new products out of, by-product materials that are coming from other businesses in Austin. And recently several of those businesses that have launched have focused on post-industrial plastic waste and making those into new products like, planters and, other, small items that can be purchased here in Austin that are locally made. The watershed protection department is also starting a study on quantifying the volume and the sources of trash in our creeks. And, as I'll describe in more detail, we've also signed on to, to, commitments, the new plastics economy, global commitment, and the US plastics. Yeah. So, you can go to the next slide. The new plan six economies, global commitment is an effort from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the UN environment program.

It's really an effort to unite stakeholders across the globe on a vision for a circular economy for plastics. And this is if you can go to the yard in Mexico, if the new plastics economy global commitment is motivated in large part by the problem of plastics in the ocean, of course, Austin is not a coastal community, but we know that the plastic that ends up in the ocean starts from land. So, a recent study in Science found that up to 34 million metric tons of plastic waste enter our aquatic ecosystems every year, and the significant majority of that comes from land-based sources. So we here in Austin have a big responsibility for that as well as does, all land-based communities. , next slide, the Ellen MacArthur foundation has also predicted that by 2050, if we stay on our current trajectory, there could be more plastic than fish in the ocean. And that plastics share of global oil consumption and the carbon budget would grow significantly. So that's kind of the motivation for this

commitment. And, of course, it really aligns with our zero waste goals. And so, in 2018 with the commitment was launched, the city of Austin joined on as a signatory and you can go to the next slide, but we just, re-upped our commitment to this, initiative. And we reassigned a new signatory pack that adds even more ambitious actions. , so not just, saying that we agree with this vision and we're working towards it, but we're setting and track and we'll be tracking, quantitative measurable goals for our plastic waste work under six different areas and outlined them here. So you also have a summary of this in your notes, in the director's report, but, the first item is that once the US Plastics Pact, which I'll describe in more detail in a moment releases their list of problematic and unnecessary plastics, we will be developing city policy to limit restrict or prohibit city purchases of those materials in a first enrolling out an education initiative to make sure our workforce is aware of that policy. We'll also be encouraging businesses to adopt reuse models, and we're still exploring different ways that we might do that, like through pilots or consulting support or incentive programs by 2025. We also are committing to launch a circular economy research and development initiative likely in partnership with local universities to support innovation across the circular economy but including in circular packaging. And then, as you might know, we are working on a citywide waste aversion study this year, and that will also tell us a capture rate for plastics. So how much of the recyclable and compostable plastic is being recycled and composted and put into those streams? So, we'll know by next year, what our current capture rate is to give us a baseline. And then from that baseline, we'll be able to set what our target to hit by 2025 should be. And on the next slide, two more areas.

So, we will also be looking at what the city purchases and looking at what we buy that has virgin plastic material in it and setting a target for replacing those materials with at least 30% post-consumer recycled content. And to support us in this effort and to an additional accountability step, we'll be joining the government recycling demand champions program. This is a program from the association of plastic recyclers and the northeast recycling council, to support governments that are looking to purchase recycled post-consumer specifically recycled content plastic, for any plastic items that they buy. And then we'll also be doing some education initiatives for both children, as well as for adults and our general resident, public. So, one thing we're doing is adding a plastics pollution module into our generation zero program that we operate in partnership with t Boston. Beautiful. And then also we will be doing, a specific effort focused on plastic film recycling because we know that's, a material that ends up in the trash and ends up as litter all too often. And we do have a recycling option for that, at the drop-off center. And so, we want to make sure people know about that. And for both of those, we'll be measuring the impact of those education initiatives and how effective they are next slide. So that's the global commitment and those steps that we're taking. And so, there's a lot to come there in terms of, new data that we'll be collecting in new ways. We'll be tracking our work, on this issue and reporting that up to the global, commitment. We are also joined as the US Plastics Pact, a national effort. So, several different packs across the globe are, taking the global commitment and kind of bringing it down to the country level. So, the UK has a patch, Canada, chile, south Africa, all have plastics packed at the country level. And the US started one in 2020, and, ARR is joined as a founding activator. And, the plastics pact has set for ambitious targets to reach by again at 2025 key year. , you have a list of those in your director's report, but the first one is around the elimination of problematic or unnecessary plastics. The second is, ensuring that all plastic packaging is a hundred percent reusable, recyclable or compostable. The third is about, effectively recycling or composting, at least 50% of plastic packaging. And then finally on recycled content or responsibly sourced bio-based content., the goal is to ensure that that reaches 30% of plastic packaging by that 2025 timeline. So, I'm era joined this and signed onto those targets and to support working for those targets collaboratively, as a founding activator, we also are, inaugural advisory council members. So, we represent the local government on the advisory council for this initiative. And we're also in a couple of different working groups, working to make it all happen. And the main thing that is kind of happening under this plastic pack work right now is the development of a roadmap. So, we have these ambitious targets, how are we going to get there? the roadmap will outline things like key activities, roles, responsibilities, timelines, and, that will be available later this year. And of course, we'll share it with the commission at that time as soon as it's available to us. So, in addition to these big-picture global and national efforts, we also recognized a need for a statewide convening. So, bringing it down to the statewide level and partnered with the state of Texas alliance for recycling to host the Texas plastics summit just last week, this was a two-hour virtual workshop, and we

brought together over 40 stakeholders. It included retailers, Murph's reclaimers manufacturers, educational institutions, and the focus of the event were to identify long and short-term collaborative actions that that group of stakeholders could take to reduce plastic waste in. And, at the beginning of the event, we had speakers who shared these kinds of status quo and current trends on plastic waste, as well as businesses sharing what they had done in their operations to reduce plastic waste. And then we broke into smaller breakout groups to discuss, you know, what's the, what does success look like? , we had, several different themes for the breakouts, like plastics in the waterways, reuse models, and the groups were kind of asked to identify what does success means in this area? And then how could they individually contribute to it and where might they need support and help, and like what the collaborative short term action could be, so if you go to the next slide, we, there was a lot of great ideas that come out of the summit and, really just fantastic group of stakeholders coming together, really willing to pitch in. , there was more than is here on, I can fit on a slide, but kind of, some highlights of ideas that came out of the group, of things that we could do collaboratively over the next year or so, to move towards success by 2025, one was on youth-focused education campaign on plastic waste. There was also the idea of freezing an action group, for businesses who want to eliminate problematic packages so that they could share successes, lessons learned that kind of thing with one another, a lot of interest in just collecting and accessibly sharing information. So, case studies, data, standardized messaging, finding ways to bring all that together and share it in a way that's easy for people to find and use. And then also lastly, interest in, sharing, effort on public awareness campaigns on lots of topics, contamination, consumption, habits, literally statements, that kind of thing. So, what we're doing with this information on the next side, is we have taken these ideas, kind of summarizes what the groups came up with. And we are currently serving the people who participated says identify what's rising to the top as most important to focus on. , and then we will be working with the star to come up with our implementation plan or how we will work on those priority items. , when in our survey we also ask stakeholders how they want to participate. So, it will be again, not just, the city and start working on this, but lots of people will have a chance to be involved. And then the state is also going to host a follow-up event in November, so that we have kind of that marker and time six months out to see where we've been, where do we need to go next? And that is all I have for you. And so, if I'll take any questions if you have any, thank you. Commissioner Gattuso replied I'm just wondering it was so much to take in and there are so many questions and so much actually love to learn from all this and maybe I'd be a better commissioner for it. I'm wondering if at some point not to take you away from a lot of your work, but to almost have a workshop for us or the ones the commissioners wanted to just to really dive into more of these issues and some of the recommended recommendations you get from all this, some of the things that rose to the top, but I could just see, as you were talking about these different topics, how that would feed into us working on the EIC or the c and d and just all kinds of things. Chair Acuna replied, I think certainly, you know, being aware of for issues, but I think there would possibly be the role for pushers who are interested in the implementation groups that come out of this, the survey that we do with the state. Natalie Betts replied I'm also happy to connect with you offline and dive in deeper on this. Chair Acuna replied I had, I would, I would like to second Kathy's, request for, I think it would be great to have a working group to, you know, interact with, with y'all on a more meaningful level than we can here in our brief time. so, I don't think we're posted to be able to do something like that tonight but would love to get that on our agenda for next month. I care a lot about this issue, so, I would like to be a part of that. a specific question, you mentioned, a goal that was around, percentage of bio-based plastics and just wanted clarification. Are you talking about bio-based plastics, but that are not compostable? So, I think that that is a goal around what, what content is produced for new plastic packaging. But that doesn't mean that would let me back up. It doesn't mean that they're not compostable because that still exists in tandem with the goal of a hundred percent recyclable reusable or compostable. So, any responsible, responsibly sourced file-based packaging that comes out would also have to be either recyclable, compostable, or reusable to meet the pacs goals, right? Yeah. I guess I'm just flagging that as maybe something that, I would suggest we, I would like to dig into a little bit, you know, not sure about the benefits of the bio-based, but non-compounded compostable, you did add responsibly sourced. So, what the definition is any way I don't, we don't have a bunch of time here, but just flagging that as, a topic that I'm interested in beginning to more. Thank you, commissioner. Hi folks. Commissioner Gattuso replied, Thank you, Natalie, for the presentation, very informative. And I do, I would love to be a part of this subcommittee if there was a subcommittee and we're working group, but nonetheless, thank you, Natalie, and wonderful presentation. One, one quick note to add,

and I know we're being against our time window here, but a lot of the work Natalie mentioned is happening at the state, the national, and the international level. And I think that's important because a lot of the work that we need to happen so that we can move the bar here has to occur in some of those other levels. And so, a lot of our focus will be on that type of space going forward. And you'll hear more about that and see more of the work that we're doing in those spaces, soon and beyond. And that's very encouraging. I mean, thinking outside the box, borrowing its proven technology and proven opportunities.

Chair Acuna replied, and now we all leave this out there. Partying thought, I mean, with, our public policy division, state vision, how does that affect what we're trying to accomplish here? I mean, just that's one of those comebacks, come back to us after, you know, considering the challenges that we're going to be facing within some of the legislation that's pending today at the capitol. But and I think there's, there was a lot of action items that were identified that can happen independently of policy. A lot of it was about sharing information. A lot of it that's already out there, but it's just hard for people, to access it and to have a space to talk about issues with peers., so I think that's where we can likely be most effective in the short term. Thank you. I had, Commissioner White replied, I would, I would like to second Kathy's, request for, I think it would be great to have a working group to, you know, interact with, with y'all on a more meaningful level than we can here in our brief time., so I don't think we're posted to be able to do something like that tonight, but, would love to get that on our agenda for next month., I care a lot about this issue, so I would like to be a part of that., a specific question, you mentioned, a goal that was around, percentage of bio-based plastics, and just wanted clarification. Are you talking about bio-based plastics, but that are not compostable? So, I think that that is a goal around what, what content is produced for new plastic packaging. But that doesn't mean that would let me back up. It doesn't mean that they're not compostable because that still exists in tandem with the goal of a hundred percent recyclable reusable or compostable. So any responsible, responsibly sourced file-based packaging that comes out would also have to be either recyclable, compostable, or reusable to meet the pacs goals, right? Yeah. I guess I'm just flagging that as maybe something that, I would suggest we, I would like to dig into a little bit, you know, not sure about the benefits of the bio-based, but non-compounded compostable, you did add responsibly sourced. So what the definition is any way I don't, we don't have a bunch of time here, but just flagging that as, a topic that I'm interested in beginning to more. Chair Acuna replied thank you, Natalie, for the presentation, very informative. And I do, I would love to be a part of this subcommittee if there was a subcommittee and we're working group, but nonetheless, thank you, Natalie, and wonderful presentation. One, one quick note to add, and I know we're pushing against our time window here, but a lot of the work Natalie mentioned is happening at the state, the national, and the international level. And I think that's important because a lot of the work that we need to happen so that we can move the bar here has to occur in some of those other levels. And so a lot of our focus will be in that type of space going forward. And you'll hear more about that and see more of the work that we're doing in those spaces, soon and beyond. And that's very encouraging. I mean, thinking outside the box, borrowing its proven technology and proven opportunities absolutely. Thank you. And with that, I think we will have to table the last two topics for, our next meeting because, we are effectively out of time, so incorrectly. Commissioner White replied like I know, I know we're not going to get into presentation or discussion, but if I could just ask one quick question on the multifamily composting, and it's just that, can we still, I, I see that more have dropped off the list. And so, the question is, can we still try to recruit or is it closed now? I have been trying, but I will keep trying if it's not too late. Jason, McCombs replied, I can answer that. Yes, we are still actively recruiting. When we're still in the process of it, we've got through august to get more people involved. So yes, we need your help. I think you've seen people coming on and off that list. Yes, we'll take your comments commissioners, you know, future agenda items somebody mentioned the SMB, our question. I mean, can we, utilize some time, on discussing opportunities in the future? I should say opportunities for, minority businesses, enterprises. Have we got them involved in, in, ARR business anyway?

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion and Action: Multi-family Organic Collection Pilot Rollout Progress Update
2. Future Solicitation items and Recommendations
3. Boards and Commission website use
4. Small Minority Business Future opportunities and involvement

Chair Acuna: I'll entertain a motion for Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm

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