

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

OCTOBER 20, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reams at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Reams, Debbie Groat, Dan Fogt

OTHERS PRESENT: John Morehart, Jillian Froment, Valerie Klingman, John Mitchell, Ryan Horns (Journal Tribune)

AGENDA:

1) Trash Options

Ms. Froment explained that the City had a multi-year trash contract which expires this year. Had a choice of two one-year renewals. There is a clause in the contract which allows for a fuel surcharge. That cost came in at 23% increase in pricing. City went out for bid on the street in order see if there were other providers or options to bring down the cost. Four companies bid and the current provider was the lowest bidder. It was agreed that the current process/options are confusing for the citizens. Trash billing is the number one complaint that is received by the Utility Department and Public Service Department. There are a lot of questions regarding extra charges. The contractor audits the trash as they pick it up. Due to the disputes, City has a crew member auditing the trash auditors in order to justify the count.

Goals – To ensure efficient and convenient trash collection for citizens; to minimize impact of increase in contractor prices; to decrease negative experiences related to trash collection; to continue recycling efforts; to reduce costs associated with oversight of program by staff.

Started with 30 different options. Messers. Morehart, Green and Mitchell reviewed all options and came up with six different options.

Option 1 – If everyone is happy with current pricing structure, leave it alone and add 23%.

Option 2 – On average, bulk pick-up averages 72 cents per household. City is pro-rating that over the prices. Maintain current price structure with a 23% price adjustment plus \$.55 - \$1.52 month.

Option 3 – New flat rate for all citizens that includes unlimited trash/bulk pick-up/recycling. This option would be the least confusing, least administrative, cleanest method. \$20.09/month.

Option 4 – Same as Option 3, but provide a discounted rate for senior citizens (65 or older) households. \$21.00/month OR \$15.00/month for seniors.

Option 5 - Bag based fee that includes a base charge and requires purchase of special marked bags. Includes unlimited bulk pick-up. \$14.40/month plus \$1.48 per bag of trash. Ms. Froment pointed out that the minute you use four bags in a month, you are at the flat rate price.

Option 6 - Provide a choice of paying a Flat Rate for unlimited trash/bulk pick-up (Option 3), OR a Bag based fee that includes a base charge and requires purchase of special marked bags (Option 5). \$10.00/month plus \$1.48 per bag OR \$21.38/month Flat Rate.

Ms. Froment said a survey was put on the website in order to receive citizen input. Administration wants to know what people think of the current trash system and what people expect with their trash service.

Ms. Groat said the difference between unlimited trash and bulk should be specifically spelled out, such as no refrigerators, paint, etc.

Survey asked for their #1 and #2 choice of options, instead of ranking them in order of preference.

To date, over 300 on-line surveys have been completed and over 50 people have called in and taken the survey over the phone or have stopped in to complete the survey.

Mr. Mitchell said the key to all of this is to educate the people that there are choices and that there have been issues when dealing with complaints and staff time. Also wanted to notify people that even if we stay with the same system, there would be a 23% increase.

Ms. Groat said it is always good to be proactive and let citizens know that City is investigating options that best serve the residents.

Mr. Fogt asked if the trash audits would be eliminated. Response was, only Option 3 and 4 would eliminate the audits by City staff. Mr. Fogt commented that that is a waste of time and money. Mr. Morehart said the audits ensure that the current program is adhered to and make sure that City fairly bills the residents that put extra items out. Mr. Reams asked if the City could rely on the trash company to do a better job. Mr. Morehart said City has relied on them in the past, and it hasn't always worked. They intend to do the job, but not as well as City would like. They are basically in the business of getting through their routes as quickly as possible. They've tried to work with the City in the past, but they're not going to do as good a job as the City staff.

City staff spends from approximately four hours a day auditing trash. The worker is doing auditing while doing the yard waste collection. There is some overlap, but it takes longer doing both jobs. All data is then taken back to the Utility Department where all data is then entered into the computer, which takes about one week of Mr. Green's time. Auditing is basically a way of enforcing the program.

Mr. Fogt asked about changing the age in Option 4, from 65 to 62 for the senior citizen rate. Ms. Froment said the age could be changed but it would probably cost a little more.

Mr. Reams said he likes the rate structure where people who use more, pay more and those who use less, pay less. It addresses the single or senior household that's not making very much trash; they're paying a lower rate. It doesn't discriminate against someone who is 20 or 45 and living on their own or 70 and living on their own. Neither is making much trash, so they're paying less.

In the end, only one option will be offered. Finance Committee will review survey results next week, and then a recommendation will be made to Council.

2) Stormwater Utility Funding

In discussions between the Mayor and Ms. Froment, they felt due to economic times now and the anticipated increase in trash, raising the monthly rate for stormwater is probably something that would be hard for the citizens to handle right now. Therefore, an ordinance is being proposed to renew the existing rates

which are due to expire December 31, 2008. This proposal will be presented at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Reams agreed this is the way to go so as not to rush through this prior to expiration of the rate.

There is no expiration date for the proposed renewal rate. It is effective January 1, 2009 and will remain at that rate until Council changes it.

3) Project Updates

Sanitary Projects –

Water Reclamation Facility on schedule. Completion is due at the end of the year. Will be going on line around the first of the year.

Crosses Road Pump Station – On schedule. Will go on line the first of January.

A ceremony will be held once the facility is up and running.

The existing plant will be decommissioned and removed. That project is in the 2009 budget. Project estimated to cost \$2M.

Trunk Interceptor is ahead of schedule. Should finish mid-November, 1-1/2 months ahead of schedule. Project is going very well.

Water Projects – Reservoir – contract #1 is finished. That was for the initial piping. Contract #2 is also finished. Both have some punch-list items that are being cleaned up. Street repair is needed on Raymond Road. Getting with the County to make sure that is taken care of correctly. Contract #3 is actually the reservoir. That company is 80-85% complete and ahead of schedule.

Kirk Bros. Pump Station for the Mill Creek Dam – On schedule. They are 50-55% complete, looking to be finished by the first of the year if everything goes as expected.

Paving Projects --

Collins should be finished next week.

State Route 4 at the school should be finished this week. There is a drive-way issue on SR 4 for the farm field, but will not keep the road from being opened.

A company will be putting Reclamite on the streets that were paved this year, plus a couple streets from last year. This is a product that extends the life of pavement. During the process of heating asphalt and making asphalt, it burns out some of the properties. This product rejuvenates asphalt and puts some of those properties back into it. This will mainly be done on residential streets that don't get a lot of traffic. It helps hold the fines in, keeping it from getting pot marked and controls the random cracking. This will be put on all the alleys, all streets that were paved this year and Park Avenue & Park Drive, where there are a lot of trees and moisture. This helps dispel the moisture out of the pavement. Futura will not be done, because it gets a lot of truck traffic.

Mr. Reams asked if Weaver Road was going to be treated. Mr. Mitchell will check on that.

Mr. Fogt asked if a new water line was going in along Collins under the sidewalk. Mr. Fogt had asked previously about the problems with utilities. Everything was fine at that time. Company used a pile-drive hammer instead of using an excavator and caused two water leaks in the process. Then as they removed the concrete and driving on top of the water line, it caused a couple more water leaks. The City got concerned with building a brand new road, so they relocated the water lines. They put in all the crossovers and necessary tie-ins. After they're finished, will go up the north side and put in the new water line and replace all the sidewalks. There will be sidewalks the full length on Collins. Mr. Mitchell noted sidewalks are being put in on Hickory, all the way up to Collins from the school. Also, because 70% of storm sewer was found to be in bad shape, new storm sewer was put in, so the new sidewalk is on top of new storm sewer.

Storm sewer laterals are going to be promoted and sold to residents who have issues with water in the back yard with no where to go or basements with sump pumps that are dumping it out in a side yard and causing problems for themselves or their neighbors. City will be extending storm sewer mains and putting laterals in the right-of-way, then the residents can tie into it.

Ms. Groat asked the cost to the resident to tie into the laterals. Mr. Mitchell said the cost would range anywhere from \$500 to \$1,500, depending on what all they do and how much they tie in. It's possible that some residents may be able to do the work themselves.

Traffic Study – Ms. Klingman reported that six or seven studies are done. A meeting was held last week to review the studies. Working to finalize so a recommendation can be made. The 36/4/Milford Study was just received and is still being reviewed. Still waiting on data to finalize the north Marysville traffic study, up by Cooks Pointe. Work on-going with MS on the Thoroughfare Plan.

Storm Water Study – Discussion held earlier on Stormwater Utility Funding.

Meeting adjourned.