

# DRAFT

**WORK SESSION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF EL MIRAGE  
EL MIRAGE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
10000 N. EL MIRAGE ROAD  
5:00 PM -TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020**

**Minutes**

**1. ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Alexis Hermosillo; Vice Mayor Roy Delgado; Councilmember Monica Dorcey; Councilmember Anita Norton; Councilmember Kallimayor Richards; Councilmember David Shapera; Councilmember Donna Winston

**2. CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was held online and publicly with limited access; called to order at 5:00 pm.**

**3. WORK SESSION PRESENTATION**

**1. Presentation on current status of citywide trash and recycling programs. (Public Works) Citywide Sanitation Services Update**

Public Works Director Nick Russo reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on Citywide Sanitation that identified the current status of the trash and recycle programs and options for moving forward. He reviewed a sanitation rate comparison with other West valley cities. Mr. Russo provided an overview of the sanitation fund operations for fiscal year 2021. Mr. Russo stated the City was in receipt of a notice of intent to increase costs for sanitation services from Parks and Sons which provided two options, 1) suspend recycling program and convert to trash pickup for an increase of \$1.25 monthly and an annual increase of \$153,000 to the sanitation fund, or 2) continue recycling program as is with a monthly increase of \$3.95 and an annual cost to the sanitation fund of \$484,000. He noted that surrounding cities who have suspended their recycling programs are Goodyear and Surprise while Cities continuing to recycle include Tolleson, Peoria, Avondale, and Buckeye.

Mr. Russo reviewed a number of recycle program opportunities and noted this work study was to present Council with status, variables, and facts as they are known today and request direction on how to proceed with planning over the next year in preparation for the next fiscal year's budget. Mr. Russo stated pending policy direction the recommendation is to implement a process for fiscal year 2021. The current fund balance is \$1.1 million, which allows the fund to absorb the cost increase, the City can then evaluate costs (ongoing rate study) and provide options during fiscal year 2022 budget process. Suggested ideas for moving forward included educating residents through program outreach utilizing social media, website, bill inserts, etc., gathering public input with an E-Town hall discussion, creating a Council action item to amend the current Parks & Sons contract to include cost increase and a rate study to discuss and receive direction on rate adjustment.

The Mayor and Council had a wide range of questions and there was a great deal of discussion on this matter. Topics covered during this discussion included the cost increase per container for an opt-in/opt-out option, understanding the County's pickup requirements and the cost savings by having one pickup of two containers per week rather than two pickups of one container per week, whether some residents who wanted to recycle could continue to do so or was this an all or nothing proposal, if program continues as is until next year would Parks & Sons take a cost hit, an explanation on why

recycling costs have dramatically increased in recent years, nearly unattainable contamination percentage rate requirements in order to be considered recyclable, options for disposing of recyclable material and associated costs, potential recycle drop off locations, and when was the last rate increase to residents.

City Manager Dyches explained replacement of a blue bin with a green bin would be at a rough cost of \$100 each to the City versus a \$3.95 monthly recycling fee. City Manager Dyches asked if Mayor and Council wanted to continue with the recycling program and increase the price, or utilize the blue container for regular garbage and eliminate the recycling program. Finance Director Robert Nilles stated Parks and Sons provided the City with a notice of a proposed increase. He stated the City has a current agreement with Parks and Sons that limits them to a three percent increase per year with an option to opt out of providing trash service for the City (not recommended due to low rates). Mr. Nilles explained an amendment to the current agreement with Parks and Sons would allow the City to absorb the cost as an organization (one million dollar fund balance). Upon completion of the ongoing rate study, a future rate analysis would be presented to Council.

Direction to staff was to continue to research this complex matter relative to possible recycling disposing alternatives, continue for now with the program as is, amend the current contract with Parks and Sons, conduct the rate study as planned, and develop and conduct a comprehensive resident marketing and education program to gather input and clearly explain the complexities in providing this service for the most economic rate available. Some specific Council requests were to place informational stickers on the recycle bins relative to reducing contamination and in addition to explaining costs to residents, be sure to include 1) pointing out to residents that recycling is not happening nationwide, 2) addressing the difficulties surrounding recycling, and 3) explaining that just like other municipalities options are limited. Staff was also directed to check U.S. companies that may be able to take on the City's recycling materials. Timely resident town hall meetings should be held prior to the end of FY 21 to thoroughly review this service.

4. **ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 pm.**

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Alexis A. Hermosillo, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sharon Antes, City Clerk

I hereby certify the aforementioned minutes are a true and accurate record of the El Mirage City Council Work Session held on Tuesday, \_\_\_\_\_ and a quorum was present.

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Sharon Antes, City Clerk