



City of Glendale
Citizens Utility Advisory Commission
Oasis Water Campus
7070 W. Northern Avenue
September 1, 2021
6:00 P.M.
DRAFT MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Berryhill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Robin Berryhill, Vice Chair David McGrew, Commissioner Larry Flatau, Commissioner Amber Ford, Commissioner Jon Froke, and Commissioner Ron Short

Absent: None

Also Present: Michelle Woytenko, Director, Field Operations; Charles Thomas, Administrator, Field Operations; Amy Moreno, Superintendent, Solid Waste; Kim Mackert, Budget Administrator, Field Operations; Megan Sheldon, Deputy Director, Environmental Resources-Water Services; Candace Schulte, Management Assistant, Water Services; Stacy Mawhiney, Management Assistant, Field Operations

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Ford, second by Commissioner Flatau, to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2021 Citizens Utility Advisory Commission Meeting as written. Motion carried 6 – 0.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Michele Woytenko, Director of Field Operations, provided a report.

- Introductions were made of the following new employees and their roles in the department: Mr. Thomas, Ms. Moreno, Ms. Mackert, and Ms. Mawhiney.
- Crack sealing and slurry sealing at the Landfill was recently completed. Photos were shown.
- A brand-new trash compactor was received at the Landfill.
- Mr. Joe Ramos, an employee with the City, recently retired after serving the City for nearly 40 years. Over his career, he received many awards, including Top Operator in the state and Top Operator in the country.
- The operators participated in safety training with APS, SRP, and ADOT on Tuesday, September 1st and with DPS today, September 2nd.

6. SOLID WASTE COLLECTIONS/LANDFILL RATE DISCUSSION

a. Solid Waste Collections Rate Discussion

Mr. Thomas gave a presentation on the Solid Waste Collections Rate, which included information on the following:

Residential Rate History

- Residential Rate History
 - January 1, 2005: Adjusted for \$14.50 to \$14.90
 - July 1, 2008: Adjusted for \$14.90 to \$16.30
 - A proposed increase to \$17.55 in Fiscal Year 2021 was not adopted
 - October 24, 2017: Rate adjustment approved as follows:
 - January 2018: Increased from \$16.30 to \$19.05
 - January 2019: Increased from \$19.05 to \$21.80
 - 2017 Key Outreach Results from the public were provided.

Residential Services Provided

- Weekly refuse collection (95-gallon container)
- Weekly recycling collection (95-gallon container)
- Repair and replacement of damaged containers
- Monthly bulk trash collection
- Residential street sweeping (increasing to follow bulk trash schedule)
- Litter Patrol Services (maintain main arterial routes to Landfill and illegal dumping)
- Illegal Dumping Mitigation Team

Survey Results

- In late 2020, a residential survey was conducted, and 7,267 surveys were received. This represents 13% of households.
- 83% indicated that recycle is ‘Very Important’ or ‘Important’
- 91% were willing to pay for more recycling
- 96% rated their services at either ‘Very Good’ or ‘Good’

Residential Services Provided Compared to Other Valley Cities

- A chart was provided indicating the base monthly rate and additional container rate for the following cities: Phoenix (\$33.80 and \$16.90), Tempe (\$29.57 and \$18.28), Mesa (\$29.34 and \$13.85), Glendale (\$21.80 and \$6.67), Scottsdale (\$21.51 and \$10.60), and Avondale (\$20.00 and \$12.00). Phoenix’s rate includes quarterly bulk trash. Mesa charges an additional fee for bulk trash.
- Glendale’s monthly rate of \$21.80 per house includes basic services, monthly bulk trash, monthly street sweeping, litter patrol services and the illegal dumping team. Other cities do not include street sweeping, litter patrol services, and the illegal dumping team.

Innovations and Efficiencies

- Technology identified to continually improve operations
 - Route Enhancements
 - Public Facing Web Tools
 - Recycling sorting game
 - Recycle wizard
 - Interactive Bulk Pickup Status Viewer
- Maintain equipment replace schedule

Residential Rate Objectives

- Keep the rates fair and reasonable
- Provide revenue stability

- Meet financial targets
- Maintain efficient fleet

FY20 Cost Per Residential Services

- Refuse: \$10.30
- Recycle: \$5.93
- Bulk Trash: \$5.92
- Sweeping: \$1.62

Major Cost Factors

- Salaries and Benefits
- Landfill Tonnage/Cost
- Equipment Maintenance
- Equipment Replacement (refuse trucks)
- Insurance / Indirect Costs

COVID19 Impact

- Demand for Service: Increased due to home remodeling and people working from home
- Cost of Supplies: Increased
- Impact to Staff
 - The Solid Waste employees maintained the same levels of services even before the COVID19 vaccine was available and were commended for their dedication.
- Bulk Trash Tonnage Trends – January through July of the following years:
 - 2018: 11,031 tons of bulk trash
 - 2019: 12,067 tons of bulk trash
 - 2020: 14,423 tons of bulk trash
 - 2021: 13,115 tons of bulk trash

Summary

- Citizens are pleased with the services.
- Solid Waste costs are consistently trending upward.
- Innovations and Efficiencies assist in keeping operating costs as low as possible.
- Options for reduced services or increased rates can be considered.
- Staff can explore a 65-gallon container option at the current rate. If a 65-gallon container is overflowing, the resident could change to a 95-gallon container at an increased rate.

Ms. Woytenko noted that the Solid Waste staff did not stop its services even though one of the staff members passed away due to COVID-19 and some staff members requested a transfer due to COVID-19 concerns. Ms. Woytenko commended staff for their dedication to the residents despite the personal loss of the staff member.

Commission Flatau requested more specific details of the increases on the major cost factors presented and a comparison of costs. Ms. Woytenko relayed that staff could prepare this information and noted it would most likely be ready for the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Flatau also requested more details on maintenance costs. Commissioner Flatau did not think that people would be happy with an increase, especially those on fixed incomes, unless justifications were made to the residents.

Ms. Woytenko inquired if there was Commission consensus to support a justified rate increase or other options to avoid a rate increase. She commented on the possibility of using a smaller garbage container. Ms. Woytenko asked if there was Commission consensus to support the option of a 65-gallon container.

Vice Chair McGrew commented on the current situation of inflation, a dropping economy, and increasing labor costs. He saw the need for an increase but expressed concern about implementing one at this time. He relayed that in his own business, the cost of goods sold has been increasing. He inquired about the status and competitiveness of the City's Solid Waste commercial program. He asked if there was room to increase commercial rates to avoid an increase to the residential program. Ms. Woytenko stated that she did not have the figures at hand, however, surmised that the City has not lost commercial business during COVID-19. She indicated that staff would research Vice Chair McGrew's suggestion.

Commissioner Ford inquired if there would be a need for a rate increase again in 2023 if there was a rate increase in 2022. Ms. Woytenko replied that she would have to research the inquiry. Commissioner Ford commented that she would like to see a more piecemeal approach over time for rate increases.

Commissioner Ford asked how other valley cities paid for their street sweeping. Ms. Woytenko stated that she follows up on the inquiry. Ms. Woytenko stated that before 2008, street sweeping in Glendale was paid from the General Fund or Streets and Transportation, however, was since moved into the Solid Waste department. Commissioner Ford suggested considering transferring this cost back to the Streets department or the General Fund.

Commissioner Ford inquired about the impact of illegal dumping on the cost increases. Ms. Woytenko noted there has been an increase in debris from the homeless and illegal dumping and stated that the department has been collecting this increased trash and debris.

Commissioner Flatau asked if staff had projections of the number of households that would change to a 65-gallon container. Ms. Woytenko will follow up on the inquiry.

Commissioner Ford asked if the increases to insurance and indirect costs, of nearly 50%, were due to inflation and asked for clarification of indirect costs. Mr. Thomas replied that some of the increase was due to inflation and direct costs included IT support, technology, benefits, liability insurance, and worker's compensation insurance.

Commissioner Froke requested clarification of staff's question on consensus.

Ms. Woytenko stated that staff was requesting consideration of consensus on if the bulk trash schedule should be changed from monthly to quarterly and if an evaluation of every other week recycling should be conducted.

Commissioner Froke commented that bulk trash was a great service and although he did not use it much himself, he did see his neighbors using it. He supported evaluation of every other week recycling.

Chair Berryhill opposed a change to quarterly bulk trash pick-up. She stated that she has seen the impact of quarterly pick up in Phoenix and noted that there was a lot of dumping in the unlocked alleyways in Glendale. She recalled that the presentation indicated the amount of bulk trash was

increasing and therefore, pick-up should not be decreased. Chair Berryhill supported evaluation of every other week recycling.

Commissioner Short was in favor of keeping the current bulk trash schedule and opposed changing to a quarterly basis. He stated that a change to quarterly could increase the illegal dumping. He supported consideration of every other week recycling.

Commissioner Froke suggested consideration of every other month for bulk trash pick-up. He stated he fully supported the bulk trash service.

Chair Berryhill stressed the need for keeping the current monthly bulk trash pick-up and cited an example of a large broken tree limb or other items that could not be put in a container. She relayed that the moratorium on tenant evictions will be lifted soon and there may be more tenant belongings put out and scattered outside. Chair Berryhill suggested keeping the monthly schedule to see how impact of the lift on the moratorium develops.

Commissioner Flatau recalled that a survey of the public was conducted regarding recycling and asked about conducting a survey on bulk trash if it was within reasonable cost. Vice Chair McGrew inquired about the cost to survey residents and if the cost came out of the department's Budget. Ms. Woytenko relayed that the recycling survey was done in-house, and it took at tremendous amount of staff time. Ms. Schulte reported that postcards were sent to all residents and the cost was \$24,000 for the postcards and mailing only. Commissioner Flatau stressed that staff should only consider a survey if it was at a reasonable cost.

Vice Chair McGrew stated that if bulk trash was moved from monthly to every other month, it would appear that the amount to pick up would be doubled, thereby resulting in the same amount of work or cost. Ms. Woytenko said that she did not expect the amount of bulk trash to be cut in half, rather that residents might not wait for a later pick up and take the items to the Landfill or hire a contractor to cut a tree limb.

Commissioner Ford asked if there was a way to identify residents who put out more bulk trash than others. Ms. Woytenko was not aware of this technology at this time.

Ms. Woytenko reported that the City of Mesa does not conduct regular bulk trash pick-up, rather a resident is allowed to call for a pick-up a certain number of times per year and is charged a fee for additional pick-ups. Commissioner Ford suggested further research of Mesa's process for consideration.

Vice Chair McGrew stated that looking at an opt-in for bulk trash might be an interesting concept.

Commissioner Ford stated that she did not support a change to the currently bulk trash schedule at this time and supported further evaluation of recycling, as it consistently needed to be re-evaluated.

Vice Chair McGrew inquired if staff could identify how many residents use the bulk trash service in any given month. Ms. Woytenko replied that the operators could provide anecdotal information at this time, not factual. Ms. Woytenko surmised this could be possible in the future with technology. Vice Chair McGrew commented that he only used the bulk trash pick-up once in three years, however, did see his neighbors using it.

Ms. Woytenko summarized consensus at this time as follows:

- There was Commission consensus as far as not supporting the changing of bulk trash pick-up to quarterly pick-up at this time. The Commission has requested staff report back to the Commission with costs, tonnage, and estimates for every other month pick-up option.
- There was Commission consensus for staff to report back to the Commission with estimated costs and savings for every other week recycling pick-up.

All Commissioners concurred with this consensus synopsis. No opposition was voiced.

Vice Chair McGrew requested information on a budgetary net gain or loss for recycling for the past five or ten years. Ms. Woytenko reported that in 2015-2016, the recycling market tanked and there really was no market for recyclables. Ms. Woytenko stated that currently, the City was almost at the breakeven point based on current commodity prices, however, this was for the processing cost only and did not include the cost of collection.

Chair Berryhill asked if residents would have to pay a fee to use the Landfill if bulk trash were changed to every other month. Ms. Woytenko explained that currently, residents were allowed to bring up to one ton of trash to the Landfill once a month at no charge.

Commissioner Short stated that in his neighborhood, the garbage collection and bulk trash pick-up are critical to keeping the neighborhood as clean as possible. He relayed that the City did not have a litter ordinance and Council was considering an ordinance at their workshop on September 14th.

7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Ford thanked staff for the presentation.

Commissioner Flatau asked staff to take his previous comment regarding a survey as a suggestion and not a direction, as suggestions should only be done if feasible and staff was capable.

Commissioner Ford inquired if public surveys could be done on a regular basis so staff could see trends and could cut back on services that were not utilized. She suggested five to ten pointed questions. Commissioner Short suggested posting a survey on the City's website. Commissioner Ford agreed and noted that many businesses regularly send surveys to customers.

Chair Berryhill thanked staff for the presentations, for listening to the Commissioner's comments and suggestions, and for working hard for the residents. Chair Berryhill suggested possibly posting the options for bulk trash and recycling that staff is considering in the City's water bill.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Berryhill announced the following:

- October 6, 2021:
 1. Chair and Vice Chair Recommendations
 2. Water Supply Update
 3. Balanced Scorecard Review
- November 3, 2021: 1. Water Services & Field Operations Financial Updates
- December 1, 2021: No meeting

Ms. Woytenko asked if the Commission would agree to add a follow up presentation on the Solid Waste rates to the future agenda items and stated the topic would be properly agendized. No opposition was voiced.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting regular meeting of the Citizens Utility Advisory Commission will be held on October 6, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Oasis Water Campus, 7070 W. Northern Avenue, Glendale, Arizona, 85303.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Vice Chair McGrew, second by Commissioner Short, to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. Motion carried 6 – 0.