

SWAC Meeting Minutes (Draft)

27 March 2013

Attending: Counselors Keith Nyhan (Chair), Liz Blanchard, Jan McClure and Michael Dellalaccono. Mike Russell and Melanie Doiron.

Staff: General Services Director, Chip Chesley, and Deputy City Manager-Finance, Brian LeBrun, and Karon Devoid (Scribe)

Absent: Greg Banks, Arthur Aznive and Terry Clarkson.

The meeting started promptly at 4:30. Chair, Keith Nyhan said with six members in attendance, we had a quorum.

1. Curbside single stream launch: Chip started with passing out flyers to the group and announcing the curbside single stream will officially start on April 1, 2013. His confidence level that this will work is at 120%. There are no changes to the contract price. It's stated 75% of homes get curbside. Can't think of any other community that provides single stream to every door. Both Melanie and Chip will check some of the communities that may have it to verify this is a true statement.

Keith wanted to know when the contract ends, which is in 2014. Going forward, he want to make sure the contract won't change. Chip feels all the larger communities will go single stream very soon. It was acknowledged Bestway can go forward with single stream without extra cost. Jan inquired/affirmed the program won't cost the City.

After reviewing the press release, Keith wanted to add in the second paragraph that Bestway Disposal is able to "officially" extend single stream....and Jan wanted to change "every" to "all" Concord resident(s) in the first sentence in the third paragraph. The rest of the committee reviewed the press release and agreed to the contents.

It was noted that 60% of the bag's cost is collection and about 40% is collection. Jan said she was hoping to reduce the cost.

A flyer regarding single stream will be added to all water bills, and placed on the city's website. Committee would like the graphic flyer also added to the press release, as not all residents have city water.

Mike made a motion to make recycling single stream, and the committee unanimously agreed.

2. Solid Waste RFP - COOP : Chip stated the Solid Waste RFP is fairly comprehensive. The RFP is in its final review and will be released to the public within 2-3 weeks, possibly sooner. The RFP is put out for 30 days, and may grow to 45 days with questions. The COOP is completing negotiations with Wheelabrator.

Keith reiterated the solid waste and recycling are different contracts. Brian confirmed that is true, and is working to lining up the contracts together. Also reminded the committee that Old Turnpike Road (Transfer Station) is yet another contract. So, we have the option to go with one company, for a better price. We either stay with the COOP or move away. The RFP is going to ask for a ten (10) year contract with two (5) year extensions. Melanie thought we maybe should only go with a five (5) year extension. Brian explained the company would need time to recoup their investment cost and factor in recovery cost, so ten years would make more sense than five years. Chip agreed with the ten year time frame. He said facilities in the North Country are looking for trash. The RFP is pretty much an open canvas. Our five day collection program may go to four days.

Brian noted the companies negotiating with Wheelabrator may or may not be in the best interest for the city. Left the RFP wide open and room enough for flexibility. It's all about keeping the customers happy and at the right cost.

Keith would like to scrutinize the bids once they come back before a bid is awarded.

Liz asked if we are out of the COOP, and Keith said there's a possibility to get money back from the COOP. Brian is pushing for one and a half years of that money. He said he's trying to keep COOP in tack. It's a narrow range, and we're close to getting that figure. The city and COOP have re-worked the numbers and the numbers are much closer now. It would be in our best interest. A big piece of money owed to Concord. It's been a cooperative discussion with the COOP. Liz commented the City of Concord is their biggest entity.

Brian says it addressed a lot of outstanding issues in the last 25 years.

3. Fees – bags & condominiums: Chip reminded the committee that bag sales and condominiums fees do not completely recover current solid waste costs. Keith is not looking to increase the bags at this time. Opinion may not be the right time to do this. Merchants do not want to carry bags. They take up shelf room and they do not get compensated anything for carrying them, other than to get people into the store and hopefully buy other things.

At some point, maybe allow them to charge a convenient fee. Recognizing the economy, maybe sell the bags at City Hall and the COMF without any additional costs. Calls have been received by the councilors the bags are of poor quality.

Mike feels there will be confusion with vendors charging extra to residents. Jan would like to keep it simple, yet, Keith disagreed. Chip said complaints from small stores are they have to buy a case, and then sell to get their money back. A possible solution would be to give the small merchants a free case to start, that would take care of inventory issues. They would sell the bags and then have the cash to buy another case

Mike would like to table the increase of bags this year. Wait until next year to raise the cost of bags, possibly to \$1.50. Chip said costs are unique to bags; small bag is half what the big bag costs; should be 2/3 the cost.

Liz felt like residents will have a fit, but, Keith reminded her it's been five years without an increase to the bags; everything else goes up in cost.

Brian spoke of the solid waste reserve fund – when that goes away, we will need to increase the cost of bags. Timing needs to be understood.

Keith said no one tells vendors what to charge. We know what we pay for bags. Allow merchants to sell what they want to charge. Melanie felt the added charge was no different than using an ATM machine that's not associated with your own bank.

Brian felt it would greatly inconvenience people to only allow just City Hall and the COMF to sell bags without a convenience fee, and would put impact on our staff. Chip said he doesn't think the City Clerk's office sells that many bags. Lots of discussion on what we should allow for a mark-up on the bags.

Keith said there's no problem right now, but, what happens when vendors refuse to sell bags? Jan feels we're already subsidizing a lot.

Mike is in favor of putting the price on the package for what the City of Concord is selling it at, then the vendor would add their price on top, such as a "suggested price".

Chip suggested another option of paying merchants a certain fee for the number of bags sold in a given year.

Keith states some vendors are buying from City Hall and then break apart to sell individually. Ward 6 has a lot of people who can't afford to buy a sleeve of bags.

Mike is in favor of a convenience fee straight across. Keith says no more than \$10.50.

Jan suggested waiting for RFP to come back first. Need to be responsive and we're working on it.

Keith said it's been two years of putting off vendors. Should we ask merchants what they feel about a convenience fee? Reach out to small vendors, but, be careful what we ask. Merchants will all want to increase the cost of the bags.

Jan suggested we contact other communities that sell bags and see what they've done.

Mike says to table it for now.

Keith asked Chip to contact other communities and also merchants and why they are not carrying the bags. Check with the first box free and then get reimbursed by selling.

Mike was curious what the average mark-up is for the merchants. Brian said it's not much, possibly 20%-30%, but not sure. So, Mike offered to google for more information.

Keith suggested we have another meeting to discuss the RFP and the survey to merchants.

Solid Waste budget has been sensitive the past two years.

Liz wanted to know what the cost would be to the City to get back into the solid waste & recycling business.

Brian stated capital investment and wage & benefits would be very high. Market is still volatile. Liz felt the automated collections cans wouldn't increase staff.

Meeting finished with the acceptance of last minutes taken August 29, 2012. Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.