

## **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

**June 2, 2009**

**3:20 P.M.**

Councilman Rico, Chairman, called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order, with Councilmen Benson, Scott, Berz, Gilbert, Ladd, Robinson, and Murphy present. Councilman McGary joined the meeting later. City Attorney Michael McMahan and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Richard Beeland, Dan Johnson, Larry Zehnder, Paul Page, Mark Keil, Gary Hilbert, Dennis Malone, Justin Holland, Jerry Stewart, Chief Parker, Chief Cooper, Lee Norris, Greg Haynes, Beverly Johnson, Daisy Madison and Barry Bennett. Mayor Littlefield joined the meeting later.

### **RECYCLING PRESENTATION**

Mr. Norris stated that there was a Press Conference held this morning at 10:00 a.m.—that Justin Holland and Amanda Glass were present to go over this program. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Holland.

Mr. Holland thanked everyone for allowing him to speak, stating that recycling has changed significantly in the past three years; that in 2006, residential curbside pickup was low and 44% or almost one-half of all curbside recyclables were considered residue or garbage. This was prior to RecycleRight and in 2006, we changed to monthly curbside pickup and added three additional convenience centers and recycling increased and curbside residue dropped to 24%. At the end of 2008, the residue had dropped to 13% and now the residue is down to 11%, and we are continuing to see a decline due to education and convenience centers, which both contributed to a combined success. He noted that the three convenience centers accept alternative materials and in 2008 they began accepting fluorescent light bulbs. In December of 2008, the City opened a Recycling Center at Brainerd, and we continue to see success in the centers. He showed a graph that showed the recycling increase.

He went on to say that currently curbside pickup is once a month for four service areas; that collection crews drive every street in each area searching for recyclables; that we need to replace five trucks. Beginning September 7<sup>th</sup>, we will go to bi-monthly curbside pickup, which will be every other week with 26 collections each year. Residents will need to join curbside collection through either RecycleRight.org or by calling 643-JOIN; that the reason people need to join is because collection trucks will only be routed to participating households.

Mr. Holland went on to say that the new trucks will be much lighter—15,000 pounds lighter and will be much more efficient and much cleaner. At this point he turned the meeting over to Amanda, who is with Waterhouse Public Relations.

Amanda talked about RecycleRight, stating that as Mr. Holland said, in 2006 prior to education, about one-half of curbside recyclables were going to the landfill; that once education was implemented, this dropped to one-half of one-half and then to 24%; that due to continuing education last year, it got lower than 24% and dropped to 13% and then to 11% and was getting lower. She went over the Education Objectives for 2008, which were continuing to educate recycling participants on the importance of recycling the right way; by continuing this education the amount of residue is going down. She mentioned the opening days for the centers went from five days to seven days and statistics show the centers have increased steadily each month. She stated that they continued to encourage curbside recycling and also the convenience centers. She stated that they would educate the public on the pick-up days; that they had made the public aware that the centers were accepting fluorescent bulbs.

As for education last year, Amanda related that they went to Hamilton Place Mall, Chattanooga Zoo, Chattanooga Market, Community events and Chattanooga schools; that they advertised on four billboards and multiple radio spots and press releases about capabilities; that they received 105 media stories and continued to be valuable to the community; that when the City first changed to monthly pick-ups, people were told that they needed to sign up, and they received 270 e-mails; that by 2008, there were only 58 e-mails because people knew the answers. She mentioned promotions such as coloring sheets, T-shirts, stickers and bumper stickers; that there was a mail-out to all Chattanooga residents with dates and also a RecycleRight Newsletter. She mentioned that they held a Press Conference to launch the Brainerd Road Convenience Center so that people could remember the day or month.

Amanda continued with the presentations to schools, stating that they worked with Orange Grove Center to establish the RecycleRight program and made a presentation at Hixson High School to get all the students on board; they also did presentations at Montessori School, St. Jude, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Chattanooga State, Aleph Bet Children's Center and Belvoir Christian Academy. She stated that the kids are the ones we are going to have to tell because they tell their parents and the children are our future leaders, and we need to instill recycling in them.

She stated that they would raise awareness of why people need to join with t-shirts, etc and also yard signs; that they will encourage participation in recycling, noting that because of education, residue had dropped to one-half, and we want to keep residue going down; that people will need to know the hours and the new pick-up schedule.

Mr. Holland took over the presentation again at this time. He stated that their current collection routes for garbage is four collection days each week—Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, with nothing on Wednesday; that they have approximately 60,000 weekly customers each week and collection days are unbalanced due to the growth, and we have not adjusted the routes. He stated that this was the opportune time to adjust routes; that beginning in August, 18,000 customers will be affected by the change, and they will have around 12,000 collections each day; that in July they would change the service day and notices will be received by mail; that the largest area will be covered by adding Wednesday, which will become the collection day and will include Hixson, Highway 58, and Jersey Pike. He showed a map with the changes in color and the new service areas.

The last service he talked about was Curbside Brush Collection—currently this is once a month, which is not balanced; they have to drive every street and search for brush, and brush can only be set out seven days prior to the scheduled collection week. Only one 96 cubic foot pile per month is allowable; that beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, we will have a call-in request that is similar to Trash Flash. This will be Brush on Demand service. Residents call 311 for brush collection after placing brush at the curbside and crews will be routed by request. Multiple collections will be available each month, limited to 96 cubic ft. pile per collection. It will still be limited to wood waste 6' or less in length and 6" or less in diameter—no trees but brush. Brush will be collected within 1-5 days of the request. He noted that now they have to drive every street but with this new routing technology, they will be routed directly to the location, which will be more efficient.

Mr. Holland went over the cost savings of two brush collection trucks at \$120,000 annual lease, three automated garbage trucks at \$252,000 annual lease; two recycle collection trucks at \$67,000 annual lease; and seven positions at \$221,500. He asked if there were any questions.

Councilman Gilbert questioned the 96 cubic feet. Mr. Holland stated that this is 4' wide by 4' high and 6' long. Councilman Gilbert thought this was little. Mr. Holland explained that right now it is only 96 cubic feet per month, and we will be going to multiple pick-ups of this size. Councilman Gilbert asked if there would be an explanation to the community on the 96 cubic feet? Mr. Holland responded that it needs to be placed in front and only 96 cubic feet per pick-up; that people can get the guidelines—same as trash flash.

Councilwoman Robinson stated that she was very, very happy that we were going to two times a month in Chattanooga for recycling; that this is a huge plus for our image and people take pride in recycling; that everyone can give back, and this is for everyone; that it is an activity that a child can take pride in, and they can play an important role towards saving our environment. She again mentioned the image this projects and offers one of our greatest treasures, which is intangible in our City, being clean and beautiful with a lovely environment. She offered her thanks to our Mayor.

Councilman Murphy asked about potential lay-offs in the savings of positions? Mr. Holland explained that these positions are vacant, and no one will lose a job.

Councilwoman Scott noted that we had a contract with this Public Relations firm last year and the year before; that some real good advancements had been made in reducing residue. She stated, however, that this contract had a lot of “bells and whistles”, and she was looking at a more pared down contract in scope and expense.

Mr. Norris responded that it is a proven fact that if you do not constantly keep this word going out that recycling will fail; that the same thing would happen in Chattanooga, and the same success will skyrocket when we put more in it. He mentioned that in Nashville’s recycling efforts two years ago, they spent \$2.00 per capita for recycling education; that Waterhouse had done a yeoman’s work, and they need to keep it going—that it is not just the residue reduction; that when we change our program and add to it, Waterhouse gets the word out to the public; that they told the public about the disposal of fluorescent lights, and the word got out to the public about the recycling centers; that it may appear that there are “bells and whistles”, but it pays off.

Councilwoman Ladd stated that she mirrored Councilwoman Scott’s concern, and she appreciated Mr. Norris for saying this; that she had some concerns with the amount of this contract; that so much can be done with the free press—that constituents can be informed, and she was not convinced we were using the free press—that there might be a better way and not use so much for marketing; that some constituents feel this is wasteful spending by the Council.

Councilman Benson stated that we don’t know what this economy will do, and it is scary—this is a true perception of spending money; that maybe we don’t need a year’s contract but a six-month contract, which could be renewable after six months, and we would not be locked in for a full year.

Mr. Johnson explained that we first made the changes in recycling after we appointed a Citizens' Committee that worked on this 3-4 months, and one of the things that came out of this was education, education, education, education, and we took their advice, and it worked; that we had cut the Public Relations contract back, but then came up with these changes and added money back; that we would probably cut the contract back next year; that if we stopped this, it would hurt.

Councilman Gilbert stated that the signs had helped in his community; that the signs reminded him, and he did appreciate Orange Grove.

Councilwoman Robinson mentioned that one thing last year, we all began using the new light bulbs, and she thought we were doing the right thing in spending more for them and what happened was that we found we could not throw these away in our garbage; that the Mayor says we are on top of this, and we do have the capacity to respond and to build on the strengths we have, and this is not the time to cut back; that this is a very, very important new program, and she did not want to be "penny wise and pound foolish".

Mayor Littlefield mentioned to Councilwoman Scott that this is a \$100,000 Public Relations Program; that the beauty of our system is the partnership with Orange Grove, which makes for a more efficient program and Orange Grove can use the money—that this makes things happen; that it is important to let people know about this program, and we need the good will of the community and need to appeal to our children, and the genius of Waterhouse is appealing to children with Rocky the Recycling Raccoon. He jokingly added that he thought for a long time that Councilman Rico was Rocky the Raccoon, because he showed up everywhere! He added that this concept was very popular and helped get the message across.

He went on to urge everyone to look at the numbers—that we have cleaner recyclables—that previously one-half of what they picked up was garbage, which was mixed in with the recyclables; that we will be doing this with new trucks, which will be less funding and very efficient—they can do a much better job, and we will save three-fourths to one million dollars in the process. He asked the Council to bear in mind that we would be saving this much and that Dan Johnson and Daisy Madison were very conservative and the "cheapest" people he knew; that we will be spending \$100,000 to make progress, and he thought it was a good investment.

At this point, Mr. Norris went over a proposed Ordinance that amends the Code relative to garbage and refuse. He explained that they deleted every reference to "Superintendent" and substituted "Director of City Wide Services". He also noted a new section dealing with interference with inspections and abatement. The director may recommend or require the proper containers or number of containers. The city shall provide one initial container to each residential location. If a second container is needed, one may be leased by the property owner, with no more than two containers at any single family dwelling. He went over non-residential service locations.

At this point, Councilwoman Robinson stated that she had a constituent who kept e-mailing her about the type of garbage can that could be used. She asked if this person could go to Lowes and use their can along with our equipment? Mr. Holland responded that it had to be a city container. Councilwoman Robinson stated that she wished she had had that answer.

Mr. Norris noted that there was also some questions about strips malls and our cans. Councilwoman Robinson stated that she thought they had to use dumpsters. Mr. Norris stated that some do and some don't; that a garbage bag also needed to be placed in the can.

Councilman Benson confirmed that this could be numerous plastic bags and not just one big one. Mr. Norris stated that we just wanted to keep our cans clean; that there were also a frequency of calls on where the cans should be placed for pick-up.

Councilwoman Scott asked by making this change concerning bags inside the cans, would Public Works turn them down if they did not have a bag in the can? Mr. Norris responded "no", that they could not do this, but he would love to be able to. He stated that this Ordinance would be on the agenda for first reading next week—that he thought this was the time to tie this in.

Attorney McMahan questioned the Ordinance being on next week's agenda. Mr. Norris stated that each Councilperson should have a copy of this in their box to look over for next week.

Councilman Benson asked if there could be no more than two containers at any time? Mr. Norris explained if more were needed, then they would need to go to commercial pick-up; that if he saw any residence with 5-6 of the City cans, he made a call about it. He noted that it costs \$100,000 to purchase cans. Mr. Holland noted that it was more like \$113,000. Mr. Norris mentioned a 10-year warranty and in-house replacement. He also noted that cans disappear—that they are the property of the City, and they should remain with the property—that if he happened to see a city can in the County, he made a call about this. Mayor Littlefield noted that some are even moved to Georgia! Mr. Norris added that he had even seen one being used as a dog house in the back yard.

Mr. Norris asked if there were any questions on **Ordinance 5(b)**, which is a closure and abandonment for Mark Jackson on tonight's agenda for final reading? There being none, he moved on.

**Resolution 7(f)** was for temporary usage at 129 Walnut Street for installation of a sign, outdoor seating, and planters. This is for an Ice Cream Shop. A picture was shown, and it was noted they are checking with Parks and Recreation as to contracts with other vendors selling snow cones.

Councilwoman Robinson asked if the outdoor seating would be the property of the Ice Cream Shop and was told “yes”.

Councilman Benson pointed out that other vendors have to pay, and this is competition. Mr. Norris responded that these other vendors were not selling ice cream but snow cones.

Mayor Littlefield quipped that he and his wife had already enjoyed ice cream there and were very pleased—that they did not know it was illegal.

### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR JUNE 9, 2009**

**Resolution (b)** authorizes a contract for Hamill Road Improvements—Highway 153 to Hixson Pike—Phase 2 to Tennessee Dirtworks, LLC in the amount of \$374,100.00, plus contingency amount of \$37,400.00, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$411,500.00.

**Resolution (c)** authorizes a temporary right-of-way usage at 4519 Balcomb Street to allow the porches of three houses to protrude into the right-of-way. Public Works was recommending denial on this. A picture showed the houses under question that are protruding. Mr. Malone noted that the houses are 30 years old and all on one lot; they did not have a building permit. They attempted to re-subdivide, but the lot was too small, and they could not meet the setbacks.

**Resolution (d)** authorizes a contract for River Street Extension—Phase I to Dillard Construction, LLC in the amount of \$710,190.53, plus a contingency amount of \$69,809.47, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$780,000.00.

Councilwoman Robinson wanted to know where this was? Mr. Norris responded that it was North Market Street going across the Bridge and presented a map. It is from Cherokee Blvd. past the driveway. We will streetscape the roadway from Cherokee Blvd. to the parking lot. Mr. Norris noted that there was an issue with TDOT concerning what we can do under the Bridge—it is a Homeland Security issue.

Mayor Littlefield added that they are tied up now with this issue but the State is not opposing. Councilwoman Robinson wanted to know if this is open. Mayor Littlefield responded “only to me”—that he had a vehicle with ground clearance. He noted that the Rain Garden had not been developed; that they had to work out with TDOT concerning all of the equipment under the Bridge. Councilwoman Robinson wanted to know if there were problems, and Mayor Littlefield responded “yes”, but we would work them out.

Mr. Norris explained that we wanted parking underneath the Bridge for busses, but we can't do this either. He added that the Rain Garden was part of the contract.

**Resolution (e)** authorizes to accept funds from TVA in the amount of \$35,000 for the installation of a "Low Impact Parking Lot" at Renaissance Park as part of Contract No. E-07-001-201, River Street Extension, Phase I.

Mr. Malone explained that the Rain Garden is made up of plants to absorb metals.

Councilwoman Scott noted that on the front part of a sheet that she had it shows "0" cost—that TVA is putting out \$35,000. She stated that it did not mention any match. Mr. Malone responded that the match is in the contract. Councilwoman Scott wanted to know where the \$35,000 match was in the contract? Mr. Malone mentioned a grant and \$2,000 going for a sign. Councilwoman Scott continued to question the \$35,000 match. It was noted that there is no match, prompting Councilwoman Scott to note that then this was incorrect. She then went on to talk about a large Rain Garden and wanted to know if the City would provide \$37,000 and asked if this was correct? Mr. Malone responded "yes" and "no", mentioning a 50/50 match with TVA. Councilwoman Scott then said "we are matching?" Mr. Norris clarified that it was all in the \$80,000.

Councilman Benson asked if we were still talking about Resolution (e)? Attorney McMahan clarified that it was Resolutions (d) and (e). Councilman Benson wanted to know what a Rain Garden is? Councilwoman Robinson responded that it consists of plants that will clean the stormwater runoff. Councilman Benson asked who would maintain this? Mayor Littlefield responded that it was part of the Park. Councilman Benson wanted to know if this was a joint effort with the County? Mayor Littlefield responded that mostly it was us—that it is the Old Roper site. Councilman Benson continued to ask if we would have to maintain this? Mr. Norris explained that it was the last part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Waterfront and that this was a joint effort. Mayor Littlefield added that it would help clean urban runoff.

Councilman Murphy asked to see the former slide in order to get his bearings.

Mayor Littlefield pointed out the SunTrust building and the road behind the building, which will tie the two parks together. He also pointed out the hills where people slide down, noting that we have to replace grass there. He reiterated that it would tie the two parks together.

Councilman Murphy confirmed that it would make it easier to get into Coolidge Park.

At this point, Councilman Benson stated that he was hearing rumors that the Waterfront was going to cost us more?

Mayor Littlefield responded that everything he knew, the Council knew—that they had announced everything; that the Hard Edge will cost some repair.

Mr. Johnson noted that TVA had not yet responded back on the Hard Edge.

Mayor Littlefield stated that we would get through this; that as soon as they knew more, they would let the Council know.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.