

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday
November 2, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113
Bellevue City Hall
Bellevue, Washington

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Diann Strom (Chair), Sanjay Kumar (Vice Chair), Vanja Knezevic, Aaron Morin, Lisa Schreiner, Gregg Takamura,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Anne Howe

OTHERS PRESENT: Andrew Lee, Deputy Director; Catherine Drews, Assistant City Attorney; Stephanie Schwenger, Solid Waste Contract Administrator; Jennifer Goodhart, Program Administrator; City Council Liaison Ernie Simas

MINUTES TAKER: Laurie Hugdahl

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Strom at 6:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Commissioner Kumar, seconded by Commissioner Knezevic, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Pamela Johnson, spoke regarding conduit, trees, and the Bridle Trails/Pikes Peak Water Tower. Regarding underground conduit, she expressed concern that some projects are not using conduit. She has discussed it with Nav Otal and will be following up. She spoke in support of developing a tree strategic master plan. It will take years until the 15 neighborhood plans are done, but the City needs a good code that works for all of Bellevue that can be built on in the neighborhoods. She discussed the status of neighboring communities' plans. She has started a petition and has gathered 115 signatures in support of developing a tree master plan. She noted that clearing and regrading is allowed in Bridle Trails, but the cost for a permit is prohibitive so some people are not getting permits. Regarding Pikes Peak Water Tower, she spoke in support of the way this process unfolded with both community involvement and city responsiveness. She noted that this collaborative process takes longer, but ends up with better results.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 16, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Schreiner, seconded by Commissioner Kumar, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5. REPORTS AND SUMMARIES

Deputy Director Lee reviewed these items.

- ESC Calendar/Council Calendar

Staff had originally planned to do an update tonight regarding the AMI contract, but the process isn't as far along as planned so that will be postponed. The annual ESC retreat will be happening on December 7.

The AMI presentation to Council has been tentatively moved to December 4. There will be a briefing to Council on November 6 on the Pikes Peak Reservoir and Pump Station Project.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- New Standardized Commission Bylaws
Presenter: Catherine Drews, Assistant City Attorney

Deputy Director Lee explained that the Council has requested standardization of bylaws of all commissions and boards. Assistant City Attorney Drews explained that staff has presented a template of bylaws for all commissions and boards. There are three variables for the Commission to decide relating to: meeting days and times, adjournment time, and the time allowed for oral communications. She reviewed the standard template as contained in the Commission packet.

There was consensus to:

- Keep the meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month.
 - Keep the time limit for oral communications to three minutes.
 - Keep the adjournment time to 9:00, but a motion can be made to extend a meeting if necessary.
- Solid Waste Contract Performance
*Presenters: Stephanie Schwenger, Solid Waste Contract Administrator
Jennifer Goodhart, Program Administrator*

Stephanie Schwenger reviewed the results of the residential cart labeling audit of 1000 containers. The audit found that 20% of carts did not meet the labeling requirements. The City has issued performance fees for audited containers with missing, outdated, and/or unauthorized stickers and will continue to enforce labeling provisions in the Contract. Republic will relabel containers with missing, damaged, outdated, and/or unauthorized issues by December 31, 2017.

Commissioner Morin asked about potentially auditing more containers in order to have a stiffer penalty. Ms. Schwenger explained that that 1.5% of the accounts was a statistically significant amount of carts. She explained that the City's desire is to get compliance, not necessarily to penalize, and the contractor has been cooperative.

Ms. Schwenger then reviewed the results of annual customer surveys including satisfaction with service and recycling practices, preferences, and awareness of services. The City has a prescribed satisfaction level of no less than 80% minus the margin of error. The following results were for single family customers:

- General: 86%
- Telephone Courtesy: 82%
- Collection Crew: 80%
- Knowledge of customer service staff: 78%
- Handling of phone requests: 76%
- Response time following a request for a new/replacement cart: 74%
- Response time following a missed collection: 52%

Ms. Schwenger commented that Republic has improved in their response time following a request for a new/replacement cart since last year, but will be submitting an action plan for improving the response time following a missed collection as that result was below the acceptable threshold.

For Multifamily/Commercial customers:

- General: 98%
- Collection Crew: 84%
- Telephone Courtesy: 82%
- Handling of phone requests: 79%
- Knowledge of customer service staff: 77%
- Response time following a request for a new/replacement cart: 75%
- Response time following a missed collection: 74%

Ms. Schwenger noted that Republic met the minimum threshold for all these categories. Commissioners asked follow-up questions about the process.

Councilmember Simas asked what outcome the City is hoping to get from this. Ms. Schwenger thought it would be an improvement in recycling rates and reduction of the contamination rate. At a basic level, it is a contract requirement with which Republic must comply. Councilmember Simas asked about measurements staff would be looking at to see if the labeling is having the desired impact. Ms. Goodhart explained that the City gets a report each month of waste and recycling amounts including contamination.

Commissioner Morin asked about contamination in the recycling containers. Ms. Schwenger commented that if it is egregious, Republic will leave a note and won't pick up materials until the contaminants are removed from the container. Councilmember Simas suggested that the ESC probably should be asking for the waste and recycling reports on a regular basis in order to have more information and make better decisions.

Councilmember Simas asked who crafted the questions for the survey. Ms. Schwenger stated that staff created them with the consultant. Councilmember Simas said he wondered if the customer has a different idea about satisfaction than the City does. He suggested adding a follow-up question in areas that there was dissatisfaction the following year in order to discern what the customers' expectations are and what can be done about it. Ms. Schwenger reviewed the survey language for clarification.

Commissioner Kumar asked about neighboring communities survey results for the sake of comparison. Ms. Schwenger indicated that staff would look into that. Commissioner Kumar asked about having the Commission surveyed. Ms. Schwenger indicated that the Commission could discuss the questions for the purpose of discussion and information, but it could not be included in the results because those only include random samples.

Chair Strom asked if the action plan submitted by Republic this year would be different than the one submitted last year since it was addressing the same category. Ms. Schwenger stated her expectation that it would be different. Commissioner Morin expressed an interest in seeing the action plan. Deputy Director Lee indicated that staff could provide that.

Ms. Goodhart reviewed the survey results around recycling practices and preferences. The single family survey showed that the preferred modes of receiving information include stickers on the carts, direct mail brochures, Republic's website, and Bellevue's website. Regarding customer understanding of collection procedures, customers are still uncertain about where to take unusual items, special pickup requirements, and how to

schedule special pickups. The new recycling guide attempts to clarify this. The awareness of Republic's recycling drop-off center and recycling center still needs improvement.

The multifamily/commercial survey showed a high percentage of respondents who self-report that they are recycling, but only about one in three report taking advantage of the embedded organics recycling program. Only 11% of multifamily/commercial customers indicated they would take advantage of an organics recycling program. 52% of customers indicated they would like to see presentations and information in language other than English. The City does offer these in some other languages and will promote those more.

Based on the findings, the City will continue to work with Republic to improve promotion of options for non-routine collection and special recycling. Staff intends to conduct content review of customer websites to ensure information is being consistently provided to customers. There is a plan to pilot an organics recycling program in select small apartment and condominium properties to increase and improve participation in organics recycling in the multifamily sector. There is also a plan to offer material preparation instruction posters in languages other than English, such as Spanish, and highlight the availability of trainings/presentations in languages other than English.

Commissioner Kumar asked why there isn't an online feature for scheduling non-routine pickups. A representative from Republic stated that Republic has an app called My Resource which provides alternative ways for communication. Commissioner Kumar suggested highlighting this more on the recycling guide.

Commissioner Knezevic recommended that there be more of a focus on tenants of condominiums because she thought the City would get more of a buy-in with tenants than with the property managers.

Commissioner Schreiner asked if people sometimes contact staff if they are unsatisfied with Republic's responses or lack of responses. Ms. Schwenger indicated that staff does receive some communications. There was discussion about several commissioners' experiences of unsuccessfully trying to contact Republic.

7. COMMISSION REPORT

None

8. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

None

9. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Deputy Director Lee explained that the AMI contract has been pushed out, but staff still hopes to get it in front of Council as soon as contract negotiations are further along. While the City wants to be expedient with the negotiations, this will be a 20-year agreement so staff is focusing on being thorough.

Commissioner Morin recommended looking into a customer satisfaction survey element due to the long-term nature of the contract. Deputy Director Lee thought that it wouldn't be written into the contract initially, but it could be revisited.

Commissioner Kumar thought that ensuring the company's ability to stay current with technology (both hardware and software) might be the most important aspect of the agreement. Deputy Director Lee explained that as long as the service provision is good the City doesn't necessarily care what technology is being used, similar to contracts with providers like Verizon. Commissioner Kumar agreed but noted that with contracts with Verizon, the City would have the option of switching. This would not be the case with AMI due to prohibitive costs. He felt this was most important with the software, and especially security. Commissioner Morin asked if there would be the ability to walk away and choose another company if things aren't going well. Deputy Director Lee explained that the contract is being written with appropriate outs on either side.

Commissioner Morin requested that the Commission receive occasional reports regarding waste and recycling amounts. Deputy Director Lee indicated staff could provide those.

10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Takamura, seconded by Commissioner Schreiner, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.