

Minutes
Saint Paul Garbage Advisory Committee
6:00 p.m. January 20, 2022
Rondo Library
461 North Dale Street, Saint Paul

1. Introduction of Group members, City staff

Committee Members in attendance: Alisa Lein, Sarah Axtmann, Celeste Marin, Scott Jensen, Rosemary O'Brien, Bruce Johnson, Drew Nelson, Gabriele Pillmann, Linda Huber, Robin Graham, Chris Nagel, Javonna McCoy-Barber

City Staff in attendance: Susan Young (Manager Resident and Employee Services), Sarah Haas (Garbage Program Manager), Jeannette Rebar (Outreach and Engagement Specialist), Kris Hageman (Recycling Program Manager)

2. Approval of Minutes of 1/6/2022 meeting

Minutes approved

3. Questions/comments from previous meeting

- How individuals with limited English proficiency can access garbage services? What are the translation services?
 - Individuals can contact the City at 651-266-6101 and be connected with the State Language line for translation services and connected with the garbage hauler
- Christmas trees haven't been picked up yet.
 - City is aware of this issue. One hauler did not get trees picked up during the 2 week time period. People should leave the trees out and they will be picked up.
- Received the current garbage bill late. Just got it and its due.
 - City is aware of this issue. There will be no late fee on these bills. Individuals who received a late bill and get a late fee should call the City.

4. Garbage 101

See the Garbage 101 PowerPoint and Garbage 101 Document for information.

Questions/comments raised during the Garbage 101 presentation

- Divert waste by 50% by 2020 – did this happen?
 - It was a stretch goal
 - Residuals in recycling went down
 - Food waste/organics will really help divert more waste
- Is there evidence that reducing garbage cart size reduces the garbage generation?
 - One city did a study – not necessarily; weight per size cart didn't go up proportionately

- Largest cart – don't pack garbage down; lots of air
- Smaller carts – are often packed
- Staff will look to see if other studies have been done
- Lesson shared: use smaller bags to fit more in smaller cart
- Why is Ramsey County 28% tax? How is set? What is it used for?
 - Use to support environmental programs, household hazardous waste, R&E Center
 - Staff will ask for Ramsey County to give some information on how they set that environmental charge
- Bulkies – no additional cost; set as part of the overall negotiations? Built in to the overall cost of the garbage program?
 - Yes, part of original negotiation
 - Every city handles bulkies differently
- What % of residents use the bulkies program? Is there different use by ward?
 - Has increased – went up 30% last year
 - Do education on the bulkies program
 - Don't have the full data on this
- Price for bulkies not spread out evenly by size of cart. Is it possible to get rid of this since not everyone uses it?
- Is 28% tax is based on the amount of the bill and not the weight?
 - Based on the garbage bill not amount of garbage
- How will they sort out compostables if they are in the cart? Anything in the cart is taxed?
 - Ramsey County hasn't said yet
 - Staff will ask Ramsey County on how set 28% and how they will handle the organics in the garbage cart when it is rolled out
- Is the 28% charged to everyone, even larger units?
 - Yes 28% tax is charged on the garbage bill amount for all residential
 - Staff have more information on this that they will share
 - Yes, pay tax for garbage at condos too
- Was the 28% tax on the garbage bill even before the City garbage program?
 - Yes, it is a tax that was on the bill
- There is a state tax and county tax on garbage
- There is a difference between residential and business garbage taxes
- Bulkies not fully used? So haulers are getting money for bulkies that aren't being picked?
 - Correct, the City doesn't get a rebate or help with illegal dumping
- Data on the illegal dumping? Changes since garbage?
 - Have seen a decrease
 - Will share this information – staff has information
 - Illegal dumping doesn't necessarily align with bulkie pick ups
 - Often getting dumping at border of cities; first exit past your home/community
- Appears that most people don't need bulkies – is it possible to have reimbursement for bulkies if not used or to just pay as you go for them?
- What cities have city administered billing?
 - Staff are working on a report – staff will share this report
- Number of units in garbage program?

- 74,000 units
- Number of staff in Garbage program? How is the Garbage Administrative fee spent? Do you have a spreadsheet of how this is spent?
 - 5 staff for the Garbage program
 - Overhead
- Is there a charge to change your cart size?
 - Can make 1 cart change per year without additional cost
 - \$25 per cart change after that
- % of unpaid bills for private garbage haulers?
 - 8% un paid
- Only 5% are repeat non-payers; some people prefer to have the garbage bill added on to the property tax bill
- Do we know where the 10% of non-payments are located?
 - Pretty spread out geographically for legislative hearings
- What is the penalty for not paying?
 - Late fee plus \$2.50 charge when it goes on the property tax (2021 rate)
- Is there a required number of recycling carts per unit? Is there an additional cost to get more carts?
 - No
 - Every single-family home got a medium cart
 - 1-11 units – got 2 large carts
 - Larger units – more carts or dumpsters
 - Can change cart size or add carts
- Why do single family homes pay more than multi-units for recycling administrative fee? How is this justified? Could we charge all units the same amount?
 - Based on the County's designation of property types in property taxes – land use codes
 - Has been in place for a while
- We don't have any business people here: businesses give us lots of things that have to go in the garbage?
 - City does have an ordinance for takeout containers – recyclable or compostable containers

5. Initial list of topics the Committee wishes to consider

- Hear from Haulers – customer service aspects
 - Data about hold times or complaints?
- Learn more about RFPs and the process
 - What have other cities done?
 - What information would be helpful to include from us?
 - What we can ask for?
 - What would other cities do differently?
- Talk to or hear from cities that are doing municipal collection
- Best practices
 - Balancing types of properties – rentals, low-waste, multi-unit
 - Opt out

- Cart sharing
- What issues have bubbled up for Saint Paul/what have we heard from residents?
- Look at bringing in more than 4-unit properties
 - What do other cities do?
- Provisions for associations?
 - Ability to opt out
- Do all haulers have capability of dumpsters?
 - Dumpster options

6. Confirmation of date/time of next meetings

- Thursday, February 3, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 17, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 3, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
- All meetings at Rondo Library in the Multipurpose Room or online through Teams