

Minutes
Saint Paul Garbage Advisory Committee
6:00 p.m. February 3, 2022
Rondo Library
461 North Dale Street, Saint Paul

1. Welcome and Introductions

Committee Members in attendance: Alisa Lein, Scott Jensen, Gary Brown, Drew Nelson, Rosemary O'Brien, Linda Huber, Gabriele Pillmann, Gloria Penaloza Ruiz, Celeste Marin, Bruce Johnson

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 1/20/2022 meeting

Minutes approved with change to add Andrew Rovig to committee members in attendance

3. Questions/comments from previous meeting

PowerPoint presentation - [Responses to Questions from Previous Meeting](#)

Additional information & Questions related to PPT

- Ramsey county organics
 - o Questions about tax on garbage with organics in the garbage container – Ramsey County staff will come talk to committee if the committee wants
- Garbage Prices before Coordinated Collection ([2018 Report](#))
 - o Bloomington had an even larger spread in prices
 - o In Bloomington, people said they just kept paying as the prices went up, didn't ask questions or reach out to hauler to see about lowering price
 - o Full report is available online
 - o Under coordinated collection, some people are paying less and some people are paying more
 - o Is there a breakout of where the costs were higher or lower?
 - Representative of all haulers and all zip codes
 - There is a breakdown by zip code in the report
- Garbage Cart distribution
 - o Medium cart was default if not specified size
- 2022 Budget
 - o Staff will double check the financing section for transfers
- Illegal dumping
 - o Citywide drop-off events did include mattresses

Further questions

- Is there breakdown of the carts per district or per area?
 - o Could do this but it would require lots of staff time
 - o Carts change all the time
- Budget information
 - o Just the expenses being shown
 - o What is the income coming in? Is the budget positive or negative?

4. Organized Trash Collection Budget, 2022 ([attachment](#))

Covered in PowerPoint: [Responses to Questions from Previous Meeting](#)

5. Solid Waste Management Options in Metro Cities ([attachment](#))

PowerPoint presentation: [Programs in Other Cities](#)

Additional information & Questions related to PPT

- Word document has lots more information than PPT
- Focused PPT on the cities that have organized collection
- Illegal dumping – how is it handled by the other cities? Is it done by City staff in those cities?
 - o Depends – some don't do it all, some use City staff, some contract out the service
- If there's illegally dumping behind my garage, do I have to pay to remove it?
 - o If it's in the public right of way, the City will dispose of it
 - o Could use your bulky item
 - o If it's on your private property, you are responsible for disposing of it
- Pricing
 - o Hennepin is 15.5%, Ramsey is 28%
 - o Richfield is garbage only
 - o Questions about Minneapolis
 - Base fee - \$26 per month per dwelling unit, plus carts
 - Multi-family – share carts?
 - 4 units and under – can share carts as long as there is no overflow
 - Use base fee to cover recycling, etc., additional cost per month based on cart size
 - More than 4 units can opt in, but no dumpsters
 - Can double check on dumpsters
 - o Yard waste pricing varies significantly
 - o Bulky item pricing vary depending on contract

Additional questions/comments

- Are Mpls and Saint Paul the only ones that have the city fee?
 - o Mpls doesn't have an annual fee on the property tax; they do a base fee to cover this

[Fire alarm at library – break in meeting]

Additional questions/comments continued

- Thinking of property taxes considering all the public buildings and exempt churches, how does that affect the rest of the population in terms of having to compensate for them? (How) Does it increase the fees for individuals compared to non-capital cities?
- I feel strongly that the more jobs get created to support this trash program the more costly it will be for us at the consumer. Bigger government is never less costly. Let's focus on reducing the cost for residents. This is additional income for the city so of course they don't want to get rid of it but make decisions to make this more affordable for fixed income homes. With increased monthly rent, let's make this an affordable program by not continuing to employ people to support this program. We the resident can take care of our own bill and we do. It is a disservice to continue to employ city staff to support a costly and inefficient program.

6. Begin development of list of recommendation topics for report to Mayor and Council

Started with the list of likes/dislikes, what's working/not working from January 6, 2022 meeting (see [minutes](#) for original list)

Additional items or potentials for topics to include in the report

- Bulkies
 - o Don't use the program, don't get charged
 - o No incentive – was told it would be at a cost
- Temporary service hold
 - o Don't need a reason
- Recycling fees – different price by unit size
- Opt-out opportunity
- Open process for developing the contracts and negotiating them; how does the bidding process go
- Collection problems – missed collections, complaint process, credit for missed service; gives all the power to haulers and not customers; no non-performance sticks
 - o Staff will share the liquidated damages information from the current contract
 - o Aren't given correct info about bulkies
- Ability to have shared carts or dumpsters for the block
- Monthly pick-up
- Changed cart sizes – took 5 weeks and didn't get credited right amount for the difference in service
 - o Would like to be able to see what the price changes would be so that people can check for the credit – have weekly rates online
- Option for monthly billing vs quarterly, especially for multi-family
- Reason that buildings with more than 4 units weren't part of the program?
 - o Staff can go back and check

- Multi-units are considered commercial and handled by different equipment
- Pretty standard for cities to do 4 and under
- More trucks because apartments use dumpsters
- City coordinated billing
- Single hauler or municipal hauler instead of consortium
- Ala cart garbage service – buy into the items you want like bulky items; but if you get cited for garbage then you lose your choice
- Green – waste reduction; incentives for waste reduction; financial incentives
- Costs – what can we do to reduce costs for everyone? Ex: pay a yearly fee and get a month free
- Reduce costs – make more affordable for low-income; don't need bigger government

Larger buckets for the report

- Green
- Costs/Pricing/Services
 - Service hold
 - Cash flow – City financials
- Opt-out/Opt-in/Cart sharing – Applicable households; townhouses
- Bulky items
- Next contract mechanics
 - Process – renegotiate existing contract, RFP
 - Length of contract
- Billing/Customer service
- Yard waste
- Other cities doing something that we like
- Hauler bucket list?

Additional questions/discussion

- How does it work when a Senior is not paying property tax and the garbage bill goes on the property tax bill?
 - Senior deferral of property taxes – garbage bill becomes part of these deferred taxes and will have to be paid when the house is sold

7. Confirmation of date/time of next meeting

February 17 meeting process

- Next meeting will have topic areas based on the discussion
- For each topic/bucket area – what do you want
 - For ex: Opt-in/opt-out – what do you want; agreement = majority report; other information = minority report
 - Staff will organize it and bring it back for review and edits
 - This is the committee's report but not everyone is going to agree on everything
 - Staff will also be providing a staff report – this may be in agreement or have some differences from committee report

Hauler consortium will be at March 3 meeting

- What do they like or don't like with current system?
- What would they change?
- Can we get some written information from the consortium?
 - o Greg will ask consortium
- What is the purpose for having the consortium in?
 - o Staff told them 20 minutes

Upcoming meetings

- 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