

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA HELD SEPTEMBER 26, 2013, HELD AT 6:00 P.M., AT THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS BUILDING, 826 NORTH MAIN STREET, COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Joens called the special meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Diane Joens, Mayor
Karen Pfeifer, Vice Mayor
Jesse Dowling, Council Member
Tim Elinski, Council Member
Randy Garrison, Council Member

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Terence Pratt, Council Member
Ruben Jauregui, Council Member

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Doug Bartosh, City Manager
Marianne Jimenez, City Clerk
Steve Horton, City Attorney

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO STAFF:

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING RESIDENTIAL WASTE REMOVAL AND RECYCLING SERVICES

Mayor Joens stated people have stopped her and asked her what the Council is going to do about trash, but this is an issue that we will probably be talking about for a long time because there are members of the community that do want to discuss this. She stated they would start with the survey from 2010.

Mr. Bartosh stated the survey had been requested by a member of the public so it was important that the Council have that information as well.

Mayor Joens stated these surveys are not professionally done. This survey had 758 responses, 512 were against. She reviewed the current strategic initiatives, explore options to place waste disposal cans on one side of the street for pickup and also establishing a truck route with weight limits on residential streets.

Mr. Bartosh stated the truck route plan would establish routes to streets that are more conducive to truck traffic. That wouldn't impact trash trucks.

Mayor Joens stated she attended Waste Management's open house several years ago at the Grey Wolf Landfill and they showed the new part of the landfill and told her that it was going to be full in 60 years, and she wondered if we were doing enough as a community to have

the least impact on our landfill as we can.

Dusty Ralston, the district manager from the Grey Wolf Landfill, stated he has been there since 1993. When they opened up they had only 27 years of airspace available. They went in a got an expansion from the national forest service, which added on 60 years. In 2010, when they did the last cell expansion it was about 60 years. They did another one this year, which gave them enough airspace for at least another 91 years. With the current technology changing at such a rapid pace both in recycling and in compacting the trash, in the next couple years they will have over 100 years of airspace. Within that timeframe, it starts landfill mining.

Council Member Elinski stated he is glad that this is back on the table and he has been concerned about the way we have handled the trash for years. The number one complaint from citizens is they want better streets and sidewalks and it is difficult because we are constantly playing catch up. He is also concerned about how we handle the recycling as well. He thinks that if there is a can in front of every door, then people will use it and it will be good for our future. He also understands that people like having a choice. He hasn't made up his mind one way or another.

After a disruption from a member of the audience, Council Member Dowling stated this is a contentious issue and the important thing here is that we are just having a discussion. The Council knows how everybody feels by the feedback that we are getting. There is not one answer to this situation and working together we can reach a better outcome for everybody involved. He looked at the average weight of the trash trucks which was 25 tons, a school bus is around 11-14 tons, a UPS truck is around 5 tons, a passenger truck average 5000 pounds and a passenger car is about 4000 pounds. There is a pretty drastic differential between them that he could see. A lot of what used to pay for our street repairs and maintenance was HURF funds, but the state continues to sweep the HURF funds. We can look at the haulers that are already there to make it more efficient and that may be better for them in the long run and better for us.

Mayor Joens stated we have a lot of homeowners associations that create their own rules and choose a certain hauler.

Bill Larsen, from Cottonwood Ranch, clarified that when a certain population is reached in a subdivision, the hauler will grant a discount to all the residents that sign up with them.

Vice Mayor Pfeifer stated she was open to discussion on this one more time because we do have a new council member and they need to be brought up to speed and hear their views on it also. She hasn't changed her opinion or feelings about putting people out of work. She doesn't feel like she is going to change her mind on this one. She likes the hauler that she has and doesn't want to be told who is going to pick up her garbage, but if we can come up with some kind of solution like one side of the street, and recycling is a big thing and there are people who can be recycling that aren't recycling. There are ways it can be done that we don't need to dictate to anybody or take their rights away.

Vice Mayor Pfeifer than read a letter from Council Member Pratt, who apologized for not attending this important meeting and is vehemently opposed to having the city contracting with only one trash hauler because if we did go out to bid those companies that were underbid would be affected very badly. If a locally owned business did not get the contract, local workers who pay taxes in Cottonwood could be in danger of losing employment and an increase in unemployment could have a negative effect on our city and our fellow citizens. We have already conducted a survey and our citizens have overwhelmingly expressed that they want the freedom to choose their own company. He believes that if we go to one hauler, then it will create a monopoly and businesses operate more effectively with competition.

Vice Mayor Pfeifer stated at this point she does not want to go with one hauler.

Council Member Garrison stated this discussion came about due to our prior discussion on how to deal with recyclables since the city pays upwards of \$20,000 a year to provide places for people to drop off recyclables. That is a cost burden that is taken over by the city. He thought it would be a good idea to talk about trash pick-up along with recyclables since there are companies out there that deal with recyclables as part of the regular trash service. When he was campaigning he had three topics that were a priority amongst the people that talked to him about what they wanted to be seen done in the city; better roads, truck traffic in their neighborhoods to decrease, and their neighborhood cleaned up. All three items are affected by the trash service that goes through our neighborhoods. He talked with Jerome, who provides trash service to their citizens, and spoke with Clarkdale and they explained their program to him and he asked someone from Clarkdale to come represent what they do.

Mayor Joens stated she has discussed how she feels and her concern is recycling and if we are doing the best we can. She invited Gayle Mayberry, Town Manager of Clarkdale, to explain what they do.

Ms. Mayberry stated prior to 1986, Clarkdale operated their own trash collection with town crew members. In 1986 they decided to go into a private-public partnership with a company to provide that service. They go through a competitive bid process with a three year contract with an option for a three year extension. The key contract provision for the town is that the town is the face of the contract. All the customer service comes through the Town of Clarkdale and the citizens don't deal with the contractor. Residential customers are not mandated to use the town service, if they choose to have residential trash service, they have to use the contracted service through the town. The town negotiates a unit price with the contractor and then they mark that price up for the administrative costs for handling the billing and handling the customer service. They also add in services such as brush pickup and the town pays for the regional recycling from the proceeds from that contract and hold neighborhood cleanup events. The current pricing for their customers is one 96 gallon container is \$18.25/month, and they can get another 96 gallon container for a \$1 extra. For the smaller containers, 64 gallon container is \$15.75 or \$16.75 for two containers.

Council Member Elinski asked if the neighborhood cleanup is put into the contract when they go out to bid.

Ms. Mayberry stated no it is not. The town runs that program and will use any contractor they wish.

Mayor Joens asked how much recycling do they get.

Ms. Mayberry stated with their current provider they get about 18-20 percent that is recycled.

Mayor Joens asked if some of it isn't recycled because it is contaminated.

Ms. Mayberry stated yes some of it is contaminated and some of the materials cannot be recycled.

Council Member Garrison asked about the extra fees that Clarkdale charges to administer the service and if some of that funding goes into the street repairs.

Ms. Mayberry stated they operate the sanitation fund as an enterprise fund so that the excess that accumulates there is transferred into their street funds.

Chris Taylor, from Taylor Waste, asked Ms. Mayberry what the contractor is charging them, so we can see a difference.

Ms. Mayberry stated the large container price from the contractor is \$10.50, and \$3.00 for a second container.

Council Member Elinski asked how many opt out of the trash collection.

Ms. Mayberry stated about 75 percent of their community has trash service.

Council Member Garrison stated he did quite a bit of research of this item. While he couldn't find a study done by the Arizona Environmental Quality, he did find four studies from other states. One of the things that was done in every study, the customers realized 20-30 percent reduction in cost by going to a single service provider, and the reasons they went with a single service provider is the same reasons that were mentioned; keep the roads in good shape, the truck traffic on the roads, noise in the neighborhoods, keeping the neighborhoods clean, and having a responsible party to deal with that trash. We are only talking about Cottonwood and none of the outlining areas around us. One of the ways municipalities dealt with it is they went through and created an ordinance that would set up perimeters of how they operated, such as having all the containers on one side of the road, and having all the trash picked up on one day. In his neighborhood there are trash containers five days of the week. Another way cities deal with it is they create franchises and they charge a franchise tax. If an operator wants to collect trash in a neighborhood they

will be charged a franchise tax upwards of \$20-30 for a business license. That money goes back into the streets funds to pay for cleaning up the streets and keeping them in good shape. One other discussion is everyone in the Verde Valley would like to see us create a trash sorting facility on this side of the hill and that would create upwards of 50 jobs.

Mayor Joens stated the city has taken upon collaborating with Taylor Waste on community cleanups to revitalize our neighborhoods. Trash breeds trash and they are not dumping as much anymore.

Council Member Elinski stated that for anyone that thinks that the city is going to go with a single source provider, he wanted to point out that it is really Council Member Garrison and he that are really pushing for that. He doesn't believe that this council can agree on that, but he really wants folks to think about the issue. He supports local business in everything he does.

Mayor Joens opened the floor to the public for comment.

Harold Allred, Terry Cluff, Cedar Earls, Dale Allred, Meg McMullen, William Bush, Jeanine Peterson, Bill Larsen, Jack Pease, Bob Backus, Sy Brandon, Bob Gillies, Sondra Grandy, Coleen Gilboy, and Leise Landreth, spoke in opposition to going with one hauler, citing loss of freedom in selecting the hauler they chose to contract with, increase cost for the service, and putting local business owners out-of-business.

Chris Taylor, owner of Taylor Waste, stated Taylor Waste has been voted #1 as the best waste hauler for the past 10 consecutive years and they are family owned business. They feel honored to live where free enterprise is made available. Council Member Garrison's family owned a water company that was very successful. The City of Cottonwood approached the water company differently than way the city is approaching the garbage owners, and they were offered to sell their business to the city, which they did. He asked Council Member Garrison how he would feel if the city took over the water company without paying them a dime and was forced to walk away from it. This is the dilemma that Taylor Waste is faced with. This was addressed in 2010 and the citizens overwhelmingly opposed the idea. With going to one hauler prices are not guaranteed to be reasonable and service is not guaranteed.

Council Member Garrison stated he did not have the choice of selling his business, did not set his price and did not have the ability of his vast years of education and experience and move outside this town and continue to work, so he did lose his business, he did lose his dream, he did lose his future and he didn't have a choice in it either.

Ed Kiyler, from Cottonwood, suggested creating an ordinance to regulate the current haulers and creating a citizen committee to look at this issue further.

Tandy Taylor, co-owner of Taylor Waste, stated they have many concerns of bidding out the waste hauler to one company. They have four residential garbage companies serving

Cottonwood. Two are local, one is in Prescott Valley and the other is a worldwide corporation. Their company gives a lot to local non-profit organizations and sponsors local events such as trash service for Thunder Valley Rally.

Jay Eby, from Patriot Disposal, stated he happens to be the provider for Clarkdale right now and the customer service they receive now has not decreased since they have been there. They take all the recyclables to one place and have taken their recycle trucks off the road.

Council Member Elinski stated the way he is looking at this he is trying to figure out how we can preserve and maintain our streets without having to implement a tax or an improvement district, or somehow by which we don't have to negatively affect the pocket books of the citizens. One of the first places that we looked at is the amount of traffic on the road and how it affects the condition of the road. One way or the other, we as the community are going to pay for the maintenance and improvements on the streets, but it sounds overwhelmingly that people want choice.

Vice Mayor Pfeifer stated where we go from here, possibly, is to get all the interested parties in one room and hash out how we can improve the roads and keep the roads from being torn up and start from that.

Mayor Joens suggested a citizen committee be created from all areas around the city to continue the discussion on how we act responsibly with this issue.

Council Member Garrison stated we started the discussion on recycling and we have gone the other direction and we still have to deal with the recycling issue. Everyone up here doesn't want to put businesses out of business or people out of work, but we also have the responsibility of making things better for the city. He thinks it would be beneficial to have a citizen committee, but he is more concerned with how we would do that in a timely manner because the contract has already run out on the recycling services.

Mr. Bartosh stated staff can deal with the recycle issue. They tend to be year contracts and we have an out at any time anyway, but the reality is that the council will not be able to deal with this issue within a year's period of time. His suggestion is to move forward with the recycle issue and handle the curbside trash and recycle issue as a separate issue.

Mayor Joens stated she would like a citizens committee to tell the council what they would like to see in the city. She asked the council if they want to do the committee, yes or no.

Council Member Dowling stated we might need to have another public meeting or work session to let everybody digest what they have already heard and let the council come up with some more facts or figures prior to determining that we will have to create a committee. He would like to see the actual figures of the wear and tear on the street.

Mayor Joens asked Mr. Horton about what they do in Chandler.

Mr. Horton stated there are hybrids which provide a single provider who is either the city or contracted with the city as well as the allowance of other providers. The city wouldn't have to contract with a single provider to the exclusion of others. The options available to the city are as big as the whole outdoors.

Mayor Joens asked if staff could look into brush and how we could deal with that.

Mr. Bartosh stated one of the problems with that is do we have a use for it after we compost it or whatever. If we go through the expense of compositing and then are still taking it to the landfill anyway, it is just an expense we don't need to incur.

Mayor Joens stated she thinks she has heard the direction of where the council wants this to go and she heard to hold another meeting to continue the discussion.

Mr. Bartosh recommended prior to that meeting staff put together an informational report that he can give to the council and the public with some comparisons and data that could enrich the discussion a little bit more.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Joens moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Pfeifer and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Diane Joens, Mayor

ATTEST:

Marianne Jiménez, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

I hereby certify that the attached is a true and correct copy of the minutes of a special work session of the City Council of the City of Cottonwood held on September 26, 2013. I further certify that the meeting was duly called, and that a quorum was present.

Marianne Jiménez, City Clerk

Date