



Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes August 9, 2017

The Zero Waste Advisory Commission convened in a regular meeting on August 9, 2017, in Council Chambers in City Hall in Austin, Texas.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Acuna called the Commission Meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Gerry Acuna, Amanda Masino, Shana Joyce, Joshua Blaine, Cathy Gattuso, Blythe Christopher de Orive, Kendra Bones, Rick Rojo, Kaiba White.

Staff in attendance: Sam Angoori, Richard McHale, Ron Romero, Woody Raine, Michael Sullivan, Erin Benoit, Donald Hardee, Emlea Chanslor, Jessica Frazier, Tina Bui.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

One member of the public signed up to speak on this item.

Sarah Cheatham, Business owner and resident of Council District 3, spoke on mattress recycling based on concerns about mattresses in District 3, and hopes for help from the commission on this issue.

Commissioner Blaine asked if she had researched the issue on how some other cities were approaching this concern, and Ms. Cheatham noted that she had and but hadn't found conclusive answers, but if manufacturers had to figure out end of life issues for their products that might have an impact.

Sam Angoori, ARR, noted that ARR staff has been looking into the issue, and he said he would add to agenda for September ZWAC.

Richard McHale, ARR, noted that this was definitely an issue of concern and he has been meeting with a group in the early stages of examining the potential development of a mattress recycling facility, and if that project does not end up meeting ARR needs, that other options will be examined as well. Mr. McHale noted that Goodwill had discontinued their program when it became unviable, and that he would also contact the Austin Code Department about this issue. Commissioner Christopher de Orive noted that she believed an organization in Portland has a video describing their mattress program and she would share that with the commission.

2. APPROVAL OF MAY AND JULY 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Due to lack of a quorum in a vote to approve them at June 14 meeting, a motion to approve the May 10, 2017 meeting minutes was made by Commissioner Masino and seconded by Commissioner Gattuso. The motion to approve the minutes passed on a 6-0-2 vote with Commissioners Joyce and Bones abstained.

A motion to approve the July 12, 2017 meeting minutes was made by Commissioner Gattuso and seconded by Commissioner Bones. The motion to approve the minutes passed on a 6-0-2 vote with Commissioners Joyce and White abstained.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **C&D Working Group** - receive update from working group regarding recent discussions about increasing the effectiveness of the Construction & Demolition Ordinance.

This item was taken out of order. No members of the public signed up to speak on this item.

Commissioner Blaine provided an update on the item and noted that some ARR staff was working on outreach and data gathering in order to develop some feedback for the group to consider in their potential recommendations. Commissioner Blaine noted this item would be brought back in October for an update, and in the time before that meeting he would reach out to a contact who has been participating in a similar ordinance for the past 15 years. Woody Raine, ARR, noted he would be meeting with City Of Austin Development Services soon to obtain some feedback from their staff to add to the information they currently have. Discussion ended and no action was taken on the item.

4a. Food Recovery Working Group – As discussed at the URO Committee (Commissioner Gattuso, Chair) a member should be appointed to represent the ZWAC at the Food Recovery Working Group of the Austin Travis County Food Policy Board. Cathy Gattuso was nominated in a motion by Chair Acuna with second by Commissioner Bones and the motion was unanimously approved 9-0 with Commissioner Hoffman absent.

4b. ARR FY18 Proposed Budget

One member of the public signed up to speak on this item but deferred.

Jessica Frazier, ARR, presented a slide of highlights of the current proposed ARR budget for FY18, which was published on the web and emailed in advance to the commissioners on August 3.

Chair Acuna referenced page 495 of the budget where projected revenue is 93.9 million versus expenditures of 95.9 million, to which Ms. Frazier noted savings carried forward from this fiscal year which carries forward in to the next fiscal year.

Chair Acuna asked about reserve requirements. Ms. Frazier noted that ARR's requirement is 1/12th of operating expenses, or 1 month reserve and has been for at least 10 years. Excess reserves are in violation of rules due to those funds being obtained from rates paid by customers.

Transfers of funds to other departments were discussed and Ms. Frazier noted that it is not a practice used anymore, except in the event of a catastrophe, where City reserves would possibly be transferred to cover services. Diversion rates, rate increases and spending on compost collection service expansion (operational expenses and staffing) were discussed.

Chair Acuna asked what the figure on page 500 "Tons of all organics processed through ARR" represents, and Mr. McHale answered that this measure describes the organics processing that ARR does at Hornsby bend. The material processed at Hornsby bend is yard trimmings.

Mr. McHale discussed overtime and city policy under "Average Hours of Overtime per Recycling Collection Employee per Pay Period" listed on page 501. Holidays impact this figure, he noted, and the City is currently reviewing pay codes associated with overtime and extra pay.

Chair Acuna asked if, in the instance of a catastrophic event, there is a way to prepare by raising reserve levels above 1/12th. Ms. Frazier noted that operational funds have been able to cover the storms experienced so far, but the fiscal policy of the department does allow for changes to reserve levels, but solid

proof for this would be needed. Chair Acuna said he would like to explore this subject more, noting possibly 3 months could be a figure to consider.

Co-Chair Gattuso asked if the reserve fund makes interest. Ms. Frazier said she would confirm if it does, but she believes so.

Commissioner Blaine discussed employee turnover rate and goals for next year, and asked about proposed budget page 496 that states “in FY2017-18, the Litter Abatement program will collaborate with the Economic Development Department to expand trash collection and recycling collection along Red River due to increased foot traffic and the overall growth of downtown.”

Mr. Angoori noted that ARR is working with Economic Development Department on attracting businesses that focus on zero waste goals, and that he would look further into this and send an email to the commission with relevant details.

On page 507, Tons of Materials Received per Resource Recovery Center FTE, Ms. Frazier clarified ARR highly underestimated the figure here, and it far exceeded estimate of 60 tons per FTE.

Commissioner Masino requested the background survey information that relates to page 506 under “Average Customer Satisfaction With the Quality of all Curbside and HHW Services” specifically as it translates to high points for customer service. Ms. Frazier noted she would ask the staff liaison to send the link to the results document. Commissioner Masino asked for information on safety variables listed under “Lost Time Injury Rate Per the Equivalent of 100 Employees” compared to “Number of employee injuries that require medical treatment”. Commissioner Masino noted that ARR must be doing something effective here and she would like to learn more about that.

Commissioner Masino asked if the cost of service satisfaction point was addressed in the survey.

Andrew Dobbs, Texas Campaign for the Environment, spoke on the fee increase for composting being smaller than anticipated, and noting that for reserve adjustments, that is a Council decision which might mean cutting services or increasing fees, but to talk to Council if that is your desire. Mr. Dobbs notes that this budget looks like it is on the track his organization wants to see. Discussion ended and no action was taken on the item.

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- a. **Director’s Report** – General Updates: Master Plan Update, PARD Recycling Update and Plans, [Re]Verse Pitch Update, City Council Actions, Statistical Reports and Performance Measures.

Mr. Angoori presented the report review and asked the commission to spend the next several months helping put a draft scope of work together for the planned master plan review.

Emlea Chanslor presented the Parks and Recreation Recycling Department portion of the report. Mr. McHale noted that ARR has 100 recycling containers that will aid PARD while they wait on a purchase of new carts - they should get an additional 200 carts to pair with trash containers within a month or so. ARR recommends that PARD utilize the TCEQ and CAPCOG grant process in the next biennium for access to potential funding to obtain additional containers. Staffing is also their challenge now, but ARR is trying to assist them with the capital efforts involved.

Ms. Chanslor noted that container counts and needs will be evaluated and ARR hopes to have conclusive data by January. Commissioners discussed Leave No Trace campaigns in other cities and nationally, and Ms. Chanslor noted that we will be incorporating that type of info into messaging on this concern.

Commissioner White asked about composting in parks. Ms. Chanslor noted a proposed pilot at Republic Square Park will be a good way to test this effort and information will be provided on this as the departments continuously evaluate creative approaches.

A motion was made by Commissioner Masino, Commissioner White second, and the recommendation below was unanimously approved 9-0 with Commissioner Hoffman absent.

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of ZWAC to review, evaluate and make recommendations to Austin City Council and the City staff regarding City policies concerning solid waste, recycling, organics management and Zero Waste; and

WHEREAS the City Parks and Recreation Department is currently limited by the availability of containers and staff hours to offering recycling in only 4 of 300 parks, 5 of 6 golf courses, and 14 of 51 pools; and

WHEREAS it is advisable for the City to model through its facilities and programs the practices required of residential and commercial properties in the City; and

WHEREAS City parks, golf courses, and pools serve well over 2 million visitors per year; and

WHEREAS the collective zero waste impact of providing services at pools, parks, and golf courses would divert significant quantities of material from landfill; and

WHEREAS the Parks and Recreation Department seeks financial support to expand their current recycling efforts to encompass all of their managed facilities;

THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Zero Waste Advisory Commission advises the Austin City Council to prioritize action to expand recycling and organics collection in City Parks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission advises the Austin City Council to take appropriate and necessary budgetary steps to ensure the same; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission advises the Austin City Council to direct Austin Resource Recovery to identify available assets that could immediately be used to expand recycling and organics collection at City parks, golf courses, and pools.

- b. **Office of Performance Management Review** – receive an update on the current review of ARR.

Mr. Angoori provided an update on the OPM Review, that work continues on the review and ARR is hoping it will be ready for September, but given budget season it may need to come to ZWAC in October. Discussion ended and no action was taken on the item.

5. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- a. **Director's Report** – General Updates: Master Plan Update, PARD Recycling Update and Plans, [Re]Verse Pitch Update, City Council Actions, Statistical Reports and Performance Measures.

Ms. Chanslor presented the [Re]Verse Pitch Update and Commissioner Blaine recommended mattresses as material that might be good to propose for use in the competition. Commissioner Joyce asked for cost estimates on weekly recycling. Mr. Angoori noted that it is under staff analysis and in September or October information should be ready for ZWAC. Discussion ended and no action was taken on the item.

OLD BUSINESS

3a. Council Working Group – review recommendations from City Council’s Waste Management Policy Working Group.

Three members of the public signed up to speak on the item but deferred.

Chair Acuna reintroduced the recommendation from July 12th ZWAC and asked to resubmit it now with today’s date, now that full Council would review the working group recommendations. Commissioner Gattuso made a motion to submit the recommendation, Commissioner Masino seconded, and the recommendation below was unanimously approved 9-0 with Commissioner Hoffman absent.

WHEREAS, it is the Responsibility of the Zero Waste Advisory Commission (ZWAC) to review, evaluate and make recommendations to the City Council and the City staff regarding City policies concerning solid waste, recycling, organics management and Zero Waste; and

WHEREAS, implementation and/or adherence to City policies must be reflected in the process of soliciting for and procuring goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the ZWAC desires the opportunity to effectively review, evaluate and make recommendations concerning solicitations for goods and services, and the contracts derived from those solicitations; and

WHEREAS, the ZWAC cannot effectively ensure adherence to City policy or make recommendations regarding the proper interpretation and application of City policy without the opportunity to review proposed solicitation documents prior to their issuance, and proposed contract documents prior to a request for approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Zero Waste Advisory Commission of the City Of Austin requests that staff present to the ZWAC the “Scope of Work” and the “Scoring Criteria” for proposed solicitations prior to the official issuance of any solicitation related to solid waste, recycling, organics management and/or Zero Waste.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ZWAC requests the staff to present negotiated contract documents to the ZWAC prior to requesting a recommendation for approval of a contract related to solid waste, recycling, organics management and/or Zero Waste.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ZWAC asks the City Council to provide directive to ARR staff to comply with this recommendation in an effort to facilitate sound and consistent policy throughout.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Waste Management Policy Working Group recommendations; update on OPM review; Mattress Recycling Options; Organics Pilot Diversion Data; Solicitations Update; Code NEXT recommendations; Electronics Recycling RCA; Cost Projections for Weekly Recycling; Electric Car Funding; Committees and Working Groups Updates

Commissioner Blaine noted he will be away for the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Gattuso, seconded by Commissioner Joyce, and the meeting was adjourned by Chair Acuna at 7:56 pm to no objection.