

**RESOLUTION NO. 20201001-061**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin is committed to a Zero Waste goal to reduce the amount of trash sent to landfills by 90 percent by the year 2040; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) is the City department charged with residential curbside collection of trash, recycling, and composting, among other services; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Resource Recovery provides collection services for over 200,000 households in the City of Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, a global pandemic caused Austin residents to shelter in place, leading to an increase in generated household waste, and between April 2019 and April 2020, ARR saw a 10 percent increase in solid household waste; and

**WHEREAS**, solid waste pickup is one of the most dangerous jobs nationwide, with a fatality rate of 33 deaths for every 100,000 workers; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 can travel through biohazardous waste and close contact between individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, typically, ARR approves 60-90 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requests every calendar year and so far in 2020, ARR has approved a total of 170 FMLA requests; and

**WHEREAS**, 33 ARR employees resigned between January 2020 and July 2020, which is comparable to annual resignations in past years; and

**WHEREAS**, the starting hourly rate for an ARR operator is \$16.00, and the same operator could make a higher starting hourly rate in the private sector; and

**WHEREAS**, ARR requires operators to have at minimum a CDL B license and such training is covered by ARR and typically costs \$1,318 per trainee; and

**WHEREAS**, Human Resources seeks to engage, attract, develop, support, and retain the best workforce in the country to serve Austin residents; and

**WHEREAS**, during the COVID-19 pandemic, certain ARR services, such as bulk collection, have been suspended or reduced due to lack of staffing and COVID-19 precautions;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

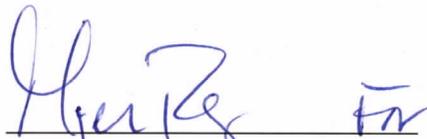
The City Council directs the City Manager to review current compensation and training practices and explore opportunities to improve ARR operator retention, compensation, and satisfaction.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Council directs the City Manager to determine the feasibility and timeline for resuming regular ARR services that are currently suspended or scaled back. The City Manager should err on the side of employee safety and should not resume such services if it is determined that any services pose a true risk to our employees.

**ADOPTED:** October 1, 2020

**ATTEST:**

  
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Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk