



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Solid Waste Management Division

MINUTES
Special meeting of the
ZERO WASTE COMMISSION
Monday, March 15, 2010
North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Street
Workshop Room B, 1st floor

Chair David Tam called the meeting to order with a quorum at 7:10 PM

1. Roll Call:

Commissioners present: Jensen, Kirkpatrick, Tam, Gomez, Arthur Boone as alternate for Farrah Moos, Blachman (7:22)

Commissioners absent: Kalil, Smartt

Staff: Andy Schneider – Recycling Program Manager; Ken Etherington - Division Manager; Claudette Ford – Public Works Director; Tania Levy – Analyst; Lisa Malek-Zadeh – Senior Budget Specialist (7:35)

Members of the Public: Martin Bourque and Daniel Maher of the Ecology Center (EC); Jeff Belchamber and Sara MacKusick of Community Conservation Center (CCC); Dan Knapp and Mary Lou Van Deventer of Urban Ore; Residents: Mark and Nancy Gorrell, Adam Heffler, Allen Magdalene and Bruce Smith.

2. Approve Agenda: Boone/Jensen M/S/C to approve the agenda 5/0/0

3. Comments from the Public: Dan Knapp provided handout information on a new business model for Berkeley's disposal system.

4. Announcements and Commissioner Comments: Arthur Boone introduced himself and explained his substitution for Farrah Moos.

5. Approve Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2010: Jensen/Kirkpatrick M/S/C to approve the minutes. Approved 5/0/0

6. Refuse Fund Budget Balancing Alternatives, Commission Review and Action: The meeting date was moved to give the Commission an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed balancing options prior to the City Council review on March 23rd. There was discussion of single stream commercial collection, single operator trucks, split body collection vehicles and the implications of potential layoffs. There was also discussion of potential issues around automated collection including: servicing both sides of the street, container placement and our need to replace part of the fleet anyway. Jensen stated concern with possible loss of the Associate Management Analyst and/or Solid Waste Division office staff as it may reduce our ability to support new and existing programs. Schneider reported that our clean, dual-stream paper is currently marketed and paid for in the same manner as other single-stream paper from the region. He asked if information on domestic markets or better pricing is available that it be presented in order to justify our dual stream sort. Chair Tam requested the R3 rate study and Malek-Zadeh reported that we will be doing our own breakout of collection costs and rate analysis. Bourque requested that other diversion efforts, like organics collection not be lumped together as recycling,

and that we try to correct the perception in the press that recycling is the reason for our deficit. There was discussion of the term Regulatory Fee and why we would choose to use it to cover the costs of collection, rather than a completely new rate structure. Chair Tam suggested that the Commission pass a motion encouraging Council to approve an adequate rate increase sufficient to cover items in the balancing plan.

Kirkpatrick added that we anticipate having an informed discussion of the benefits and problems with single and dual stream recycling over the next six months to inform our plan to reach our diversion goals. Van Deventer asked that the Commission consider Knapp's recommendations for developing business at the transfer station.

Chair Tam made a motion to extend meeting 10 minutes: Jensen/Gomez 6/0/0

Blachman leaves (9:17)

The Commission discussed the budget balancing proposal from Public Works Administration, dated February 22, 2010, and passed the following resolution:

1) The Zero Waste Commission urges Council to remove consideration of a policy shift from Dual Stream to Single Stream for commercial recycling by collecting co-mingled materials (Proposal 9) for the following reasons:

Savings, if any, are minor, compared to the overall deficit. Approximately \$575,000 of the \$650,000 yearly savings represents cost reductions gained through equipment upgrades and better route management, which stand independent of whether the city continues with Dual Stream or switches to Single Stream. The argument for Single Stream hinges mainly on increased participation (a contention itself which is currently subject to a lively debate within the Waste Management Community) rather than on decreased cost. The argument against Single Stream centers on poorer material yields, and a degree of contamination that may negate any gains made through increased participation. The ZWC would like the time to more properly and coolly examine the issue and make a recommendation to the Council. We anticipate having this conversation, along with other focused discussions of Zero Waste goals, over the next six months.

2) The Zero Waste Commission recommends the retention of the Associate Management Analyst position in the Solid Waste Division, (Proposal 8), and asks for a careful examination of the reduction of customer service personal (Proposal 7).

Council has asked ZWC and staff to work toward a 75% diversion by the end of 2010, and 100% diversion by 2020. This goal requires both innovative thinking and execution. The loss of support staff, and of the analyst in particular, will greatly affect city efforts to achieve these Zero Waste goals.

3) Shortfalls might also be addressed through enhancing new commercial accounts (proposal 15) beyond the projected \$15,000. Staff currently lacks any dedicated sales force. The addition of such a position would place the City's collection services and transfer station on a more equal footing with the sales staffs of private concerns in pursuit of desirable commercial accounts, and could yield considerable financial benefit.

4) The Commission recommends that the City investigate and implement a new rate structure that is designed to cover the cost of basic refuse and recycling services, consistent with the city's waste reduction goals (Proposal 16). This should replace the current rate structure that depends on declining refuse service revenue to cover all the Division's activities. As part of the effort to

shape a new business model, the ZWC asks staff to consider and evaluate, among other possibilities, Urban Ore's proposal to the Commission of March 15, 2010.

Chair Tam made a motion to extend meeting 5 minutes: Jensen/Gomez M/S/C 5/0/0

Jensen made a motion to approve the Commission Resolution: Jensen/Kirkpatrick M/S/C 5/0/0

7. Division Update: Deferred due to time constraints

8. Adjourn: Boone/Gomez 5/0/0 to Adjourn at 9:27 PM M/S/C 5/0/0