

**URBAN AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2009**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Urban Affairs Committee was brought to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Chair Shirley Doering.

Members Present: Barry Berg\*, Sandy Breuer, Shirley Doering, Ed Holmes, Sharon Schwartz, Pam Sohlberg and Earl Wilson.

\* Barry Berg arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Kathy Bodmer, Associate City Planner; Margaret Dykes, Associate City Planner; and Susan Bast, Dakota Valley Recycling.

Guests present: Kerfoot Metz, Pennock 4th Addition Townhomes; Rick Morcomb and David Domack, Dick's Sanitation/LSI; Jim Rauschnot, Allied Waste; Eric Dahlager, Waste Management; and Victoria Nelson, resident.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION: Earl Wilson moved, seconded by Pam Sohlberg, to approve the agenda. The motion carried 6-0.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2008**

MOTION: Earl Wilson moved, seconded by Pam Sohlberg, to approve the minutes. The motion carried 6-0.

**4. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. DRAFT RECYCLING/GARBAGE COLLECTION ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS**

Shirley Doering opened the meeting by explaining the procedure for taking public comments. She said that staff would make a presentation and then the Committee would take public comments.

Staff made a presentation to the Committee which discussed the history of the proposed ordinance amendments along with the results of the on-line resident survey. Staff stated that the survey showed strong support for amending the ordinance as previously recommended by the Committee.

Barry asked what happens when a collection day falls on a holiday. He said the ordinance clearly lays out that garbage is to be collected Monday through Friday only. Ed Holmes

commented that the ordinance provides for flexibility in the schedule during weeks when there is a holiday.

Sharon Schwartz said she never received notice of the survey. She was concerned that residents may not have known about the survey.

Next, Shirley said that the Committee would take comments from the audience.

Kerfoot Metz said that he lives in a townhome and that the City needed to remember that there are many townhomes in Apple Valley. He said that he is concerned about the size of the container. He stated that he was also concerned about seniors having to set their garbage at the curb. He said he is also opposed to biweekly recycling collection.

Pam said that she was concerned about the 3rd, 4th and 5th bins.

Jim Rauschnot, Allied Waste, said there are six holidays per year when the regular hauling schedule is shifted. He said Allied informs its customers that garbage and recycling will be collected on the following day.

Jim said that the issues of bin sizes for townhomes and walk-up garbage collection can be worked out with the hauler. Haulers will work with their customers.

Sandy Breuer asked whether haulers would make special arrangements for door-side collection or other accommodations if necessary. The haulers in the audience said yes, that they would.

Shirley asked what was done on heavy snow days. Jim from Allied Waste said when snow is really heavy they might pull trucks off of the road and go back and collect once the snow slows and the streets are clear. But taking trucks off the road occurs only a couple of times of year, if it occurs at all.

Pam Sohlberg asked whether the resident will see any benefit from the change to biweekly recycling collection.

Jim said that the haulers have had to pass on increased costs the last couple of years because of rising fuel prices. He said that if there are cost savings, those savings may be passed on to customers.

David Domack, Dick's Sanitation, said that he appreciates the City reviewing the ordinances. He said the garbage hauling industry has changed significantly over the last several years. Haulers are concerned about safety, not leaving trucks unattended, idling time, and efficiency. He noted that one benefit that Dick's has seen is that more cardboard is able to be collected with the single sort recycling method. He concluded by saying that curbside automated collection of garbage and recycling is efficient, saves money, and keeps the community cleaner.

Victoria Nelson, a resident, said that she has been attending the Committee meetings and is pleased with the amendments that have been presented. She said she likes the single sort recycling containers and curbside collection. She said that the changes are good for the City.

Shirley asked the haulers how long it typically takes for residents to transition into the new program, especially the biweekly recycling collection. Jim said it takes 6 months to a year.

Shirley asked whether every resident would be given a garbage cart. Jim said yes, all garbage and recycling collection would be automated, so the haulers distribute garbage and recycling carts that work with the collection arm.

Ed asked how the haulers deal with overflow. He said that sometimes if there is more garbage than can fit into the container, the resident will place his/her own container beside the cart. Jim said the haulers would jump out and either empty the can directly into the truck, or empty the can into the automated cart and then dump it into the truck.

Barry asked how overstuffed containers are handled. Jim said if necessary, the hauler will get out of the truck and take the top bags out of the container and throw them into the truck. Other times, the haulers can simply empty the can into the truck. If bags fall off, the hauler will clean it up.

Barry asked whether the haulers would use a single pass truck for garbage, recycling and yard waste. The haulers in the audience said no, they would use separate trucks for each item.

Lastly, Barry asked what would happen if someone set out their recycling on an off week? Jim said, in general, haulers will sometimes make a special trip if someone missed a collection week. However, he said that they would not generally make the separate trip. He said, to some extent, the resident needs to become "trained" to get used to the every other week collection. He said it takes about 3 to 6 months.

Sharon said she had a practical question. She asked whether a person could really throw a milk jug, then a newspaper, then a pop can straight into the bin. What happens if the items are placed in plastic or paper bags.

Jim said the use of plastic bags is not good because they can get tangled up in the sort facility equipment. He said the use of paper bags is no problem at all. He said, again, this would all be part of the customer education process.

Pam said she continued to be concerned about biweekly recycling collection. She said she is concerned about putrescence and odor if recycling sits for two weeks. She asked, since the haulers are saving money collecting every other week, would there be a reduction in rates. Jim said if there are savings, some of those savings might be passed on to customers.

The committee noted that one benefit of the City changing to curbside collection is that it may lead to more haulers to want to haul in Apple Valley, thereby creating more competition, and more cost savings.

Barry said that there is a difference between weekly and biweekly collection. He said that there are different impacts on the environment. He said it takes a truck off the road every other week and encourages more recycling.

Sharon asked whether there were any other cities in the metro area that had single sort weekly recycling collection. Jim said that to his knowledge, only Oakdale has weekly single sort collection.

Sharon said she wanted to discuss biweekly collection in more detail. Earl noted that the survey indicated that 80% of the respondents supported biweekly collection. Ed said that because the containers are covered, odor would be less of an issue. He said he likes the idea of biweekly single sort recycling collection.

Sharon said she continues to be concerned because she fills up her 18-gallon tub every week now. She said not having room in the garage for another container is due to the fact that she has a smaller two-car garage. It isn't a matter of having a bunch of stuff. She said she just doesn't have room. She doesn't like biweekly collection.

Earl commented that 80% of the survey respondents supported biweekly collection. He said he understood the concern for people with smaller garages. But there was overwhelming support for biweekly collection.

Sharon said the problem with not having room available inside of a garage would lead to storing containers outside. She said if that is the case, she is concerned about compliance with the City's screening requirements.

Shirley noted that no ordinance is perfect, that some will continue to have concerns. However, based on information that has been provided by the haulers, the public, and staff, she said she felt that the Committee is headed in the right direction.

Barry said he was concerned about voting for the ordinance amendment as one unit and instead preferred to vote on each of the amendments separately. A discussion ensued about how to vote on the proposed ordinance.

Sandy said that she takes the results of the survey seriously and that there is overwhelming support for the amendments. She said she felt that the best way to take action on the item before the Committee would be to represent the members of the community. She said she needed to vote in view of how 80% of the community responded.

Sharon asked whether Sue Bast could foresee any additional materials being added to the recycling stream. Specifically she asked whether yogurt and margarine containers would be added. Sue said there is no market at this time for that plastic, so it can't be recycled yet. Sue said at one time St. Paul took old clothing, but she wasn't sure if that was currently being collected. Sue also noted that 6 or 7 communities are collecting household organic waste in conjunction with yard waste. Other than that, Sue said she wasn't aware of any materials being added to the waste stream.

**MOTION:** Earl Wilson moved, seconded by Sandy Breuer, to receive the results of the on-line resident survey and to reiterate the Urban Affairs Committee's recommendation of approval of the draft ordinance amending Chapter 50 of the City Code and that it be forwarded to the City Council for adoption.

Pam said she still had a concern about bi-weekly collection of recyclables. She indicated that the every other week collection affects the size of the container, making it necessary to use larger recycling containers. She stated that the larger containers are difficult for some residents to store. Secondly, she was concerned about putrescence and that every other week collection of recyclables would result in odor and decay.

Barry said he continues to be concerned about the switch to curbside recycling. He said that curbside recycling will be difficult for seniors and those with disabilities.

The motion carried 6 to 1 (Schwartz).

Sharon stated that her no vote was based on the provision for biweekly collection of recyclables. She said she would like recycling to be collected weekly. She said that if the City is trying to promote recycling, then weekly collection is warranted. She said that the volume of recyclables may grow so that weekly collection will be warranted.

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

Shirley welcomed Ed Holmes, a new member, to the Committee.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Earl Wilson moved, seconded by Sandy Breuer to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.