

**STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF BEXAR  
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO**

**A BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO WAS HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL PLAZA BUILDING, TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2012.**

The San Antonio City Council convened in a Budget Work Session at 2:00 pm Tuesday, **August 28, 2012**, Municipal Plaza Building, with the following Councilmembers present: Bernal, Taylor, Saldaña, D. Medina, Lopez, Williams, Chan, Soules, and Mayor Castro. **ABSENT:** Ozuna and C. Medina.

**1. STAFF PRESENTATION ON THE FY 2013 PROPOSED BUDGET FOCUSING ON, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING CITY DEPARTMENTS:**

**A. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

David McCary, Solid Waste Director, presented on Services offered and Programs coordinated by the Department and the FY 2013 Proposed Budget. Mr. McCary stated that the City had achieved a 27% recycle rate and that there was room for improvement as 73% of waste generated was disposed at the landfill. An overview of the 10-Year Recycling & Resource Recovery Plan was provided stating that the goals of the Plan were based on cost, State mandates, types of Recycle Programs offered, and community attitudes towards recycling. Mr. McCary noted that an overall fee increase of \$4 to \$5 per month was required in order for the City to achieve a 60% recycle rate by 2020.

Mr. McCary provided an overview of FY 2012 Accomplishments which included the Residential Recycling Program, Organic Recycling Pilot Program, Curb-side Brush & Bulky Recycling Program, and Multi-Family Recycling Program. As it relates to FY 2013 Performance Measures, it was noted that the Department intended to have a 30% Residential Recycling Rate in FY 2013 and to collect 99.3% of all waste containers timely and without incident. Mr. McCary highlighted efficiencies since implementing the Automated Collection Program in FY 2007 and noted that the Department had saved \$11.5 Million annually.

It was noted that a rate increase was not proposed for FY 2013, however, a rate increase of \$1.25 per month was being proposed for FYs 2014-2016. Mr. McCary provided a breakdown of the increase and noted that \$1.00 per month would be allocated to the Organics Recycling Program with the balance off-setting the cost of inflation. As it relates to Efficiencies, it was noted that the Department did not plan on renewing its contract for collection services with Allied/Republic resulting in a cost savings of \$1.3 Million for FY 2013. A detailed overview of the Organics Recycling and Curb-side Program was provided as well as outreach strategy utilized to encourage recycling. It was noted that the Department planned to open two additional Neighborhood Drop-Off Collection Centers at a total cost of \$1.1 Million for both sites.

At this time, Matt Hobson, Solid Waste Planning Manager, briefed the Council on the Customer Survey conducted with participants of the Organic Recycling Pilot Program. He provided an overview of the methodology utilized, questions asked, and lessons learned. Overall, it was determined that a majority of respondents used the Organic Recycling Cart primarily for yard waste. It was stated that the 96-gallon cart was easy to use, placed the cart out at least once per month, and were not concerned with storage, odors, or pests.

Mayor Castro asked of the size of the waste containers available to residents and remedies offered by Solid Waste to assist individuals who had difficulty with taking the cart to curb. Mr. McCary responded that residents were typically issued a 96-gallon cart, but residents could request a 48-gallon cart. He stated that City staff was available to assist residents upon request and that a doctor's note was required. The Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program was discussed and Mr. McCary noted that residents would be charged based on the amount of trash generated and size of bin issued. Mayor Castro stated that the intent of the Program was to incentivize recycling while appropriately charging residents for the amount of trash generated. Benefits of the Organics Recycling Program were highlighted.

At the request of Mayor Castro, Mr. McCary explained the monthly rate charged by San Antonio in comparison to other major U.S. Cities. It was noted that monthly charges could be less in the future if residents decreased the amount of garbage generated while increasing recycling efforts. As it relates to the contamination rate of recyclable material, it was noted that the goal of the Department was to have a contamination rate of less than 15%. Mr. McCary highlighted outreach efforts initiated and noted that labels had been placed inside carts and on top of lids which denoted types of material to be disposed in the cart.

Councilmember Williams asked for clarification on the recommended Efficiencies mentioned in the presentation. Mr. McCary stated that he would provide the Council with a detailed listing of the cost savings, personnel compliment, and costs by program. He noted that the City had achieved a total recycling rate of 27%. Of this amount, 14% represented curb-side recycling, 12% brush recycling, and 1% organic recycling.

Councilmember Williams cautioned on the size of carts utilized, but noted that this concern would be alleviated with the implementation of the PAYT Program. He asked of the cost associated with each size of cart issued and collection schedule. Mr. McCary stated he did not have said cost information but did have cost models. As it relates to scheduled pick-ups, it was noted that the number of pick-ups would not change with the implementation of the PAYT Program. Mr. McCary stated that fees for waste collection services were automatically assessed regardless if services were utilized.

Councilmember Saldaña asked for a history of the Recycling Program and associated participation rate. It was noted that under a previous Recycling Plan, individuals were issued an 18-gallon recycle bin and that the Program had a 4% participation rate. Mr. McCary explained that the current Recycling Rate of 27% was due to Curb-side, Organic, and Brush Recycling efforts. He spoke on the types of recycled material collected. Councilmember Saldaña requested information on the contract with New Earth. Mr. Clayton Leonard with New Earth responded

that the contract did not limit the amount of organic material collected by the City and that the facility had the capacity to process more material.

Councilmember Saldaña voiced his concern with the turnover rate for truck drivers. Mr. McCary noted that the Department would always have turnover but alleviated the problem by frequently conducting job fairs. It was noted that the Department offered incentive pay based on performance.

Councilmember Lopez voiced his concern with the low number of individuals placing food scraps in the Organic Recycling cart. Mr. McCary explained that residents were not comfortable with placing food in the cart. He highlighted methods that could be used to increase participation and outreach efforts to be implemented. It was noted that the goal was to have a 5-15% participation rate. Councilmember Lopez voiced his concern with trash trucks leaking liquefied waste material. Mr. McCary noted that trash trucks were designed with a reservoir for liquids dispersed. Councilmember Lopez spoke to the possible challenges with achieving a 60% Recycling Rate by 2020 but noted that he was in support of initiating an aggressive educational program to achieve said goal.

Councilmember Soules requested clarification on the PAYT Program and carts to be issued. Mr. McCary explained that the Program would not be implemented until 2017 and that varying sizes of replacement carts would be purchased when the 10-year life cycle of current carts was reached. It was noted that more research needed to be conducted in order to determine if cost would increase once the Program was implemented. Mr. McCary stated that he would provide the Mayor and Council with a cost analysis of the Program. He spoke on how the goal of achieving a Recycling Rate of 60% by 2020 was established and noted that it was partly based on the findings denoted in the study conducted by R.W. Beck (now known as Science Applications International Corporation, "SAIC"). Scott Pasternak, Assistant Vice President with SAIC spoke to the methodologies used to assess residential recycling rates and tendencies. He noted that terminology utilized in the report accurately reflected material disposed. Councilmember Soules spoke on composting rates and how said rate assisted with achieving a 40% and 60% recycling rate. Mr. Pasternak detailed educational outreach efforts utilized in other communities to encourage composting while Mr. McCary highlighted local outreach efforts and partnerships developed. Councilmember Soules asked of seasonal trends for waste material collected. Mr. McCary stated that seasonal trends and the local climate did impact the amount of waste collected. Councilmember Soules spoke on the importance of selecting the most appropriate and cost effective Recycling Programs for the City and its residents.

Councilmember D. Medina spoke in support of the Department's Recycling Plan and noted how the quality of life of residents had already improved. He noted that more research was needed in order to determine costs associated with achieving the goal of a 60% Recycling rate by 2020.

Mayor Castro stated that the Recycling Plan was a worthy endeavor. He noted that he was confident that collection services would be provided at the lowest rate possible and that identified goals would be achieved. Mayor Castro stated that the Recycling Plan would be discussed in more detail at the next Infrastructure and Growth Council Committee Meeting.

## **F. DOWNTOWN OPERATIONS**

Jim Mery, Downtown Operations Director, presented on the Department's Role and Responsibilities, Performance Measures, and Proposed FY 2013 Budget. A status report of the River Walk Capital Improvements Project was presented. It was noted that the Project was estimated to cost \$14.5 Million and would be completed by November 2014. As it relates to Performance Measures, it was noted that the Department had installed 303 recycling containers in Parks and throughout the Downtown Area expected to generate 75,000 pounds of recyclables in FY 2013. Mr. Mery stated that the Department had earned a 97% Customer Satisfaction Rate from customers renting its facilities. He highlighted the Funds managed by the Department and noted that oversight of the Market Square Fund would be transferred to the Cultural Affairs Office as part of the Department's planned re-organization. For FY 2013, a proposed budget allocation of \$6.05 Million which represented a 19% budget cut from FY 2012 was reported. Mr. Mery provided a history on the re-organization and noted that a Task Force had been created to identify core functions and methods to enhance the delivery of services. It was noted that a total of 27 employees would be transferred to other City Departments as part of the re-organization.

Mr. Mery spoke on the Parking Fund and noted that the Department was not proposing a parking rate increase in FY 2013. He noted that Municipal Court would be transferring the city-wide responsibility of enforcing parking ordinances across the City to the Parking Enforcement Division within Downtown Operations. As it relates to the Market Square Fund, Mr. Mery was noted that they managed funding associated with Farmer's Market, El Mercado, the Market Square Parking Lot, and the Museo. Lastly, he provided an overview of Projects to be completed and services to be enhanced in FY 2013.

Councilmember Bernal thanked Mr. Mery for his leadership and assistance with implementing "Free Parking Tuesdays." Councilmember Bernal spoke in support of changes made at Market Square; especially during Fiesta.

Councilmember Chan asked for clarification on the Parking Fund Revenues. It was noted that the decrease in revenue for FY 2008 was due to the sale of the Riverbend Parking Garage. Mr. Mery stated that the Department was in the process of implementing a new Revenue Control System that would assist the Department in tracking parking revenue.

Councilmember Williams spoke on the potential impact that the VIA Bus Circulator would have on Downtown Parking. He requested that Downtown Operations research the possibility of adding parking spaces near the Circulator route.

It was announced that the listed departments would present on Wednesday, August, 29, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.

### **B. HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

### **C. ANIMAL CARE SERVICES**

### **D. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS & COMPENSATION**

**E. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES  
G. HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX RELATED DEPARTMENTS  
H. AVIATION**

**RECESSED**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Castro recessed the meeting at 5:45 pm and announced that the budget meeting would reconvene on Wednesday at 1:00 pm.

**APPROVED**



**JULIÁN CASTRO  
MAYOR**

Attest:



**LETICIA M. VACEK, TRMC/MMC  
City Clerk**