

PUBLIC HEARING

CITY OF LE CENTER
LE CENTER CITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2019 @ 7:00 PM

TO DISCUSS NEW SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING COLLECTION SYSTEMS

*** MINUTES ***

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Fredrickson, J. Weiers, C. Scott, C. Harmeyer, N. Hintz

Absent: None

Staff: Admin. Collins, City Attorney Moran, P.W. Supt. Roemhildt

II. COUNCIL DISCUSSION ON SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING SYSTEMS

Josh F. – explained the whole/ current situation; with the county ending the current system on January 1. As it works now, the city shop area is a mess every weekend.

Jenny W. – stated she prefers the contracted collection service; a better option for the city residents. Most of the residents contacting her prefer the contracted service.

Nathan H. – very open to the wants of the community; but feels the containers left out can be a problem. The cost of replacing the failing refuse truck is a big consideration.

Christian H. – maybe containers will help keep the town cleaner; and maybe they will help residents to recycle more.

Collin S. – the city shop area really is left a mess after weekends. He really learned to appreciate our city blue bag system after moving here. Expense of a new garbage truck and the elimination of the county subsidy may help us decide.

Atty Moran – stated some pros and cons of both container commercial haulers and the current blue bag system.

Josh F. – touched on the cost of budgeting for the blue bags vs. containers, size of family, an aging community, and how the recycling center is an employment opportunity for our youth. Stressed NO council decision has been made on this subject. Stated the general rules for residents to speak at the podium.

Council invited residents to come to the podium and speak.

III. RESIDENTS COMMENTS & TESTIMONY

Joe Boettcher- the blue bag system is perfect for him as a single person household. He pays \$30.00 per year; commercial collection would be \$30.00 per month. He pays virtually nothing for his garbage removal; and recycles everything.

Terry Overn- why are no RFP quotes available to the public right now? Nobody knew about this meeting; why hold during homecoming week? Why is the current agreement ending? He's in favor of current blue bag & recycling system as is.

Lance Wetzel, County Commissioner- county residents would be able to take their recycling to the county satellites at the county highway shops. He has opposed this change at the city/ county level; but was outvoted.

Duane Swenson- in favor of the current blue bag system; but could favor the container services if the price is right. And what about the brush system?

** At this point, Mayor shared the estimated costs of our bids. Stressed estimated...

Leo Schmitz- he can guarantee that the containers won't be staying in the garages out of sight, no matter the ordinance. Agee's that there will be add-ons to the prices given. Loves that he can put his blue bag out weekly and have it picked up by the city. Le Center has a great thing here; why change it?

Charlene Washa- uses very few blue bags and recycles everything. How would she even use commercial containers in the downtown apartments?

Renee Nichols- she has family of eight; it's very hard to get down to recycling center each Saturday. In favor of commercial containers.

Travis Fischer- many times has garbage wrappers in his yard. Talked about the health issues related to the blue bags vs. the cats & dogs tearing into them on Wed. night. Stated taking recycling down on Sat. morning can be a problem for some people. Suggests re-doing the bags to tie better; and stronger to help keep the litter in better.

Don Reak- gate the city shop area to keep people out during non-hours. Commercial containers would be more expensive than our current blue bag system. Budget for a new garbage truck when it is needed.

** Josh F. noted: if we keep the current system, we will be adding security upgrades at the city shop = gates and cameras.

Steve Brown- he's a businessman; he spends \$300 per month to get rid of his garbage. He gets home late at night and cannot get his garbage out. This system is not working for young people; it's outdated. The rules are not made for young people. City picked a bad night for this meeting during homecoming week.

Mark Becker- could the council please have another meeting with some solid costs?

Bob Closser- keep it the same; he can know his costs by how many blue bags he uses. It's a definite plus for the city residents. There may be a time to go to commercial containers, but this is not the time. Help keep the kids employed at LCDS facility.

Bob Emmers- he is for commercial containers. He disagrees that the added fee should not be added to the water bill. Now, people pile and store garbage in their garage; by having containers, this forces people to pay for the service, so they'll for sure use it. The neighborhood stores, piles, burns garbage. Containers will help take care of this.

Gail Blaschko- likes the current blue bag system; but sees there are other options.

Adam Fennell- in favor of commercial containers; can load more into them than the blue bags. Goes thru two pkgs. of blue bags per month.

Travis Nichols- commercial containers would be more cost efficient. People throw away their recycling into blue bags; can't get up to city shop on Sat. mornings. Would keep city cleaner/ enforce the "put it away" ordinance.

Anonymous @ crowd- lots of old people in older homes may not have garages; where will they put their containers? And, will they pick them up in the alleys?

Jordan Nichols- very much for commercial containers. He's double bagging now. Questioned why they can't get containers on their own? At least they're varmint-proof

Al Christensen, Tri-County Solid Waste- explained what T.C.S.W. does for the three counties involved. Spoke on the way the commission pays out money to each county. Stated: people don't like change; containers in front of the house don't look that bad.

Several statements related to: can we do more/ better way of advertising next meeting?

Sherry Kristiansen- with her young family, can't get down to the recycling center. She goes months not being able to get down there; must store recycling in backyard containers. In favor of commercial containers. Think of the young families that are gone on weekends. More young people are moving into town who will be in the same situation. At least open the recycling site on one weeknight.

There being no further residents wishing to speak; Mayor Fredrickson, Councilman Scott, & Councilman Harmeyer spoke to review some of what was commented thru-out the hearing. And- a big thank you to all who attended: 57 signed-in residents.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Scott, Seconded by Hintz, to adjourn the public hearing. Approved unanimously. 8:48 PM Chris L. Collins, Admin.