



Approved 9/12/19

**City of Cleveland Heights
Refuse & Recycling Task Force**

**9/5/19 Meeting Minutes
Cleveland Heights City Hall – Council Chambers – 6:00 p.m.**

Ms. Constance Johnson opened the meeting and greeted the task force.

Ms. Johnson asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes.

Mr. Jordan Davis said that he did not have a chance to review the minutes and that he cannot approve the minutes and that 24 hours is not enough time to review the minutes.

Mr. John Blackwell asked if they could delay approving the minutes.

Ms. Johnson responded that she did not want to set a precedent and that Mr. Joe Kickel prepares the minutes and supporting documents in addition to his other responsibilities and that it would be beneficial to get the minutes sooner it might not be possible since the task force is meeting every week.

Ms. Johnson said that if the majority of the task force is okay with accepting the minutes then the group should proceed.

Ms. Johnson asked if anyone wanted to make a motion to accept the minutes.

Ms. Susan Clement made a motion to accept the minutes.

Ms. Carin Miller seconded the motion.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was any objection.

Ms. Johnson asked if everyone was on the same page with regards to the revised meeting schedule.

Ms. Johnson then moved the meeting to old business.

Ms. Susan Efroymsen asked if there was ever an answer to the reduction in workers compensation costs for automation.

Ms. Collette Clinkscale said no we have not, the only thing that we do know is that the workers comp. will go down.

Ms. Efroymsen said that we ought to be able to know how much it will go down.

Ms. Johnson said that we cannot do an apples to apples comparison, and that based on the types of claims hard numbers would be hard to come by.

Ms. Efroymsen said are we talking about 1000, 10,000, 100,000 decrease, can we at least get a number.

Ms. Clinkscale said that she'll speak with the HR Director again, but she cannot guarantee a solid number.

Mr. Joe Kickel said that when you talk about workers comp claims there are a lot of variables, maybe nobody has an injury in one year, and maybe three people are hurt in one year.

Ms. Clinkscale asked Mr. Tony Torres to give examples of the types of injuries that have been experienced in his department over the last few years.

Mr. Tony Torres said that he has had two shoulder replacements, a gentleman that had a hip replacement, and another worker that had a shoulder replacement.

Ms. Carin Miller offered to perform some research on the reduction of claims.

Mr. Blackwell said that it ought to be possible to get some sort of statement from a city like Lakewood about how much they have experienced.

Ms. Johnson said that the gentleman from Lakewood said that he recalled about a 15% reduction in claims.

Mr. Blackwell said since we know how much is being spent on workers comp for refuse collection we should be able to reduce that amount by 15%.

Ms. Johnson asked if workers comp is broken down by department.

Ms. Clinkscale said that is one of the problems. We have multiple departments with multiple divisions. Ms. Clinkscale said that she would check with HR.

Ms. Efroymsen said that workers comp looks at the risk assessment for the number of employees and what the charge is, and shouldn't the city be able to get a number from workers comp.

Ms. Johnson said that we are getting back into the risk assessment and is it a pool, or is it by area.

Ms. Efroymsen said that the BWC should be able to tell us what the change should be.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Torres about what Case Western pays per ton for refuse, and about how much tonnage the city receives from them.

Mr. Davis asked about the sale of recyclables, and why the amount reduced and then spiked, and is now declining. Mr. Davis asked how the revenues are determined.

Mr. Torres said that the city receives a statement from Kimble with the tonnage that is delivered and the amount owed to the city.

Mr. Davis asked if he could see a copy of one of the statements and also the Kimble contract.

Mr. Blackwell brought up the Kimble tour and the statement that Don Johnson made about Kimble losing money.

Ms. Miller asked if we know when the contract will expire.

Mr. Torres said September of 2020.

Ms. Miller asked if there are any protections in the contract.

Mr. Torres said that Kimble asked about a year ago to re-negotiate the terms, but the group would not hear it.

Ms. Clinkscale commented about a recent meeting with the consortium where Kimble was asking for the Cities in the consortium to amend the contract to pay half of the increase in costs.

Ms. Efroymsen commented about a contradiction that she heard about recycling and that about 10% of what we think is recyclable is actually recyclable, and commented that it is important to educate people to properly recycle.

Ms. Miller said that we should be following the recycling rules of the county, and that there is a discrepancy between the county and the MRFs but the county is working with them to correct it.

Ms. Johnson said that we don't know what is going to happen in 2020 with recycling, and we don't know how this is going to happen.

Ms. Efroymsen asked how contract negotiations go. Does Kimble just give the county a contract and they tell them what it's going to cost.

Ms. Johnson said the county negotiates the contract and we the city just decide whether we want to participate in the contract or go it on our own.

Mr. Kickel clarified about the recycling consortium, and the spreadsheet that was provided to the task force for private hauler contracts.

Ms. Efroymsen asked if the city of Cleveland Heights wanted to bid the contract out the city would determine how they would want to pay for collection and the company would provide a bid.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was any old business.

Ms. Clinkscale said that she wanted to talk about the rates that need to be charged for bulk collection. Ms. Clinkscale advised that committee should recommend that the city should revise the fees, and the city should conduct a study.

Ms. Efroymsen asked about some sort of escalating fee for repeat offenders.

Ms. Clinkscale said that she would recommend that the task force recommend some language regarding repeat offenders.

Ms. Johnson agreed with some sort of language about repeat offenders.

Ms. Johnson moved the meeting to the draft decision tree.

Mr. Kickel presented the draft decision tree.

Mr. Blackwell asked if prices could be included in the decision tree.

Mr. Davis said that prices are all over the place, it will be very hard to determine what the actual costs will be in the future.

Ms. Miller said that the task force will not be able to recommend to council an exact cost.

Ms. Johnson said that many of these numbers have been previously discussed.

Mr. Blackwell said that we do have the numbers, and we should be able to project some numbers.

Mr. Kickel ran some estimated numbers based on the previously discussed City of Westlake contract and based on the number of units for Cleveland Heights the cost would be approximately \$1.9 Million.

Ms. Hope Wright said that costs would also go down if the city no longer collected apartments, and if the city changed its bulk collection policy.

Mr. Kickel said that the city would still probably have to have staff on hand for special collections, handicap collections, litter cans, etc..

Ms. Clinkscale said that the city would still staff based on feedback that she has received.

Mr. Davis asked about seven trucks.

Mr. Blackwell asked about maintenance costs.

Mr. Kickel talked about the cost of backing out the automated carts, and the automated front containers.

Ms. Johnson asked if everyone is comfortable with understanding the cost of automation.

Ms. Miller said that the task force needs to understand the difference in the cost to automate vs. the cost of keeping the fleet the same.

Ms. Johnson asked if everyone had a copy of the chart that Mr. Kickel was referencing.

Ms. Wright commented on how some sort of bin will need to be used with the elimination of blue bags.

Ms. Johnson said that bins are an issue, but the task force needs to focus on the solid waste aspect of the decision.

Ms. Johnson said that whatever the task force decides, especially if they decide not to privatize that there is going to be some sort of additional cost associated with it.

Mr. Torres said that if the city does decide to privatize the city will not be able to go back to in house hauling, and the contractor will come in with a low price, but costs will start to increase over time.

Ms. Clinkscale said that if the city does decommission the transfer station it will not be able to open it again.

Ms. Davida Russell said that privatization is nice in the beginning but it can quickly diminish.

Ms. Johnson asked for some volunteers to look at recycling containers, and other questions that have been raised.

Ms. Clement commented that she would like to know the bottom line for automation vs. private haulers.

Ms. Clement commented that prices would have to be competitive.

Ms. Johnson said that privatization costs can be hard to get, since they vary by community.

Ms. Johnson asked Ms. Clement if she could find out how happy local communities were with their private haulers.

Ms. Clement said that she is not sure where she would find that kind of information.

Ms. Johnson said that nobody on the task force is an expert on any of these matters.

Mr. Kickel said that for most contracts they are usually tied to an index usually a CPI adjustment.

Mr. Kickel said that the city of Westlake's contract is probably the most recent contract.

Ms. Clement asked why they decided to switch to privatization.

Mr. Kickel said that they probably didn't just switch, but that their previous contract probably expired.

Ms. Efroymsen asked if any of these cities owned their own transfer station.

Mr. Davis said that one of the reasons that we have recycling is because landfills were filling up and the cost of landfilling was on the rise.

Mr. Blackwell said that landfilling is not really a problem in Ohio, but it is near the coasts.

Ms. Johnson asked the task force if they have these costs, and if anyone has any questions, they should ask now.

Ms. Lehn asked if Mr. Kickel could go over page five of the decision tree.

Mr. Kickel discussed page five of the decision tree which discussed additional costs for conversion, and possible recycling fee increases based on the current recycling climate.

Ms. Efroymsen asked about utilizing small bins vs. large bins and changing the frequency of recycling such as recycling bi-weekly.

Ms. Clinkscale said that she didn't think that it would change things, whether it is bi-weekly or weekly, the tonnage would remain the same.

Mr. Torres said there would probably be some small savings such as fuel, and wear and tear.

Ms. Wright asked about the decision tree and the recommended fee analysis, and whether it was related to the bulk collection fees.

Mr. Kickel explained the decision tree and the bulk collection fee decision was a basic revise or no, and if yes, if the city were to engage a firm to analyze the current fee, they could also look at the current bulk fees and make a recommendation.

Ms. Efroymsen asked about the fee study, and wouldn't it be obvious how much the fee would have to increase based on what it being charged now, and what the difference would be with the new equipment costs.

Ms. Johnson commented about the broad and diverse community and how a fee increase might affect people, and that she would prefer that a group that is familiar with such matters be engaged in this type of work.

Mr. Kickel asked the group if they have follow up questions, could they please send them in a group email to the task force so that city staff can research some of the questions in advance.

Ms. Miller suggested a close of business on Monday as a deadline so there is some time to get answers.

Ms. Johnson commented that many of the questions have been answered, and it seems that we keep revisiting things.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was a motion to say that all questions should be submitted by the close of business on Monday prior to the week's meeting.

Ms. Miller made a motion.

Mr. Davis seconded the motion.

Mr. Kickel commented that he would like to urge the task force to start coming to a decision, and that he hoped that the task force would comment on what they would like to add to the tree at the meeting, so they can start putting a pen to paper and start forming a written decision.

Ms. Russell commented that the task force seems to get hung up with certain aspects of things that the task force has not been charged with.

Ms. Johnson commented that it seems we are all on the same page.

Ms. Johnson moved the meeting to the public comments.

Ms. Sandy Moran commented that the task force should definitely have projected costs for the different options showing the different decision options.

Ms. Moran commented that she is a master recycler, and that she has a relationship with the recycling partnership which is a non-profit group with corporate sponsors that offer curbside recycling grant program for communities like Cleveland Heights where they are going from a bag system to a cart system. The grant is an ongoing process that will be available through 2020. The program also has \$13,000 for communities towards education.

Ms. Moran commented that there are concerned citizens who are willing to assist.

Ms. Moran commented that the recycling partnership recently launched programs in conjunction with the EPA with Akron, Centerville, Cincinnati, Columbus, Fairfield, and Lorain and they are very active locally as well as nationally and that there are multiple funding sources that Ms. Diane Bickett has commented that she has informed the group about.

Ms. Moran asked the county if they are familiar with the recycling partnership.

Ms. Moran said that Ms. Bickett is the expert authority, and that Ms. Bickett said that she has not heard anything from the task force.

Ms. Johnson said that the contracts and practices that the group was discussing had been provided by Ms. Bickett and the county.

Ms. Moran asked who the expert was that put together the decision map and whether anyone from the county had worked with the group.

Mr. Kickel said that the map was based on the group's discussions.

Ms. Moran commented about not only soft costs, but reputational costs if the task force or the city were to decide to eliminate recycling.

Mr. Kickel commented that he is not aware of anyone on the task force contemplating eliminating recycling, but it is something that has occurred nationally in some communities.

Ms. Clinkscale commented that the City Manager stopped in but didn't want to interrupt but she wanted to thank the task force for their commitment for agreeing to meet weekly in an effort to come to a decision.

Ms. Johnson asked if there were any more questions.

Ms. Wright made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Davis seconded the motion.

Ms. Johnson asked if anyone was opposed.

Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting.