

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AUGUST 4, 2011

A meeting of the Environmental Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC) was convened on Thursday, August 4, 2011, at 5:15 p.m., in the Pueblo County Conference Room, 1001 North Santa Fe Avenue. Vice-Chair Kester called the meeting to order at approximately 5:25 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Susan Finzel-Aldred
Doris Kester
Ted Lopez
Charles B. Pelto
Chad Wolgram

Members absent were: Thelma Archuletta and Marvin Reynolds.

Staff present was Sandra Smith.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 3, 2011; APRIL 7, 2011; AND JUNE 2, 2011 MEETINGS

The minutes could not be approved due to the lack of a quorum.

CHAIR'S REPORT – ACTING CHAIR, DORIS KESTER

Acting Chair Kester stated she sent an application for EPAC membership to Ms. Fran Alexander at Vestas. Ms. Alexander indicated she would inquire if there was anyone within the company interested in applying.

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR REPORT – S. FINZEL-ALDRED

Ms. Finzel-Aldred distributed the June and July 2011 EC Report. She stated in June they conducted the Eastside Neighborhood clean-up. She stated they collected 20 roll-offs of solid waste, four with yard waste, 151 residents were served, and 53 showed up at the gate that day. In June she also attended the *Colorado Association for Recycling Annual Summit* in Breckenridge. She stated Pueblo will be the host city for the summit in 2012, June 10-12. She attended important sessions about community input and how cities addressed opposition to recycling ordinances around the state.

The big news for June and July is that Mr. Steve Nawrocki, City Councilman, is moving forward and trying to get some type of ordinance on the books regarding recycling for residential customers within the city limits. The first "Stakeholder Round Table" meeting was held on June 28th, which Mr. Nawrocki invited the local waste haulers and recyclers to give their input on the draft ordinance. She noted there were many impassioned and heated comments from the crowd. The guest speaker was Mr. Mark Gloriosa, Operations Manager of Gallegos Sanitation, a private waste hauler from Larimer County. He was able to give a position from a hauler's point of view. The General Manager was there to answer any questions. He stated he was working in the Fort Collins, Greeley, and Larimer County areas before and after recycling ordinances. Gallegos Sanitation is still in business and thriving. He is a proponent for pay-as-you-throw, noting it is a better system for the city and residents, although there are costs involved for the hauler. He stated the concept is about equity and solid waste management, not necessarily about recycling, but can drive recycling if handled in the right way.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred presented education materials at kids' camps and youth programs. Environmental Coordinator Ms. Jenny Kedward has been busy with the Solid Waste Assistance Program, which offers complimentary dumpsters to those that qualify and need help cleaning up their properties.

She stated phonebook recycling was promoted in July. New phonebooks were distributed in June and people have been looking for a place to recycle the old ones. The EC program has done the promotion and public education about it, and C&C Disposal and Recycling has provided the dumpsters at six locations with support from the DEX Directory in Denver. The recycle bins will be available through the end of September at the following locations: Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 2313 S. Prairie Avenue; Colorado Mental Health Institute-Pueblo campus, soccer field off West 24th Street; Girl Scouts of Colorado, Pueblo Center, 21 Montebello Avenue; Mesa La Gree's Market, 27050 Highway 50 East; Pueblo West Library, 298 Joe Martinez Boulevard, Pueblo West; and C&C Disposal, 21 Magneto Drive, Pueblo West.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred assisted Mr. Nawrocki in his efforts to move ahead and meet with more groups to discuss the proposed recycling ordinance. A public or community meeting is planned very soon to get people's input on how it might affect them residentially. She noted the drafter of the ordinance, Assistant City Attorney, Kurt Steigelmeier, passed away in July leaving the duties of writing and making revisions to the City Attorney, Tom Florczak.

She stated the Health Department has received several hotline calls regarding hazardous waste, which they have been addressing. She stated they have talked to over a 150 people this summer about their recycling issues. A lot of preparation has taken place for her storm water education booth at the Colorado State Fair. She stated they will have some new professionally made banners sponsored by the City Storm Water Utility.

She stated September will be very busy with three neighborhood cleanups scheduled three weekends in a row: September 10th, Blende/Salt Creek; September 18th, Avondale/Boone; and September 24th, Pueblo West.

Mr. Pelto asked if there was a transcript of Mr. Nawrocki's summit. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes and she would email him a copy.

Mr. Lopez stated the Health Department was involved in cleaning up a dumpsite in the Salt Creek neighborhood last month. He stated there was another site located at the end of San Juan Street between El Paso Street, where the road runs parallel to the ditch. Mr. Wolgram replied that the area had been cleaned. He stated dumpsters were provided; noting, it took three, thirty-yard roll-offs to clean the property. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated there were also about twenty-five tires, which will be taken care of at the September 10th clean-up.

WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE – C. PELTO

Mr. Pelto stated there was nothing to report from the last meeting.

He informed the members that *Pueblo Recycling Coalition* citizens group was having a meeting at 6:30 p.m. this evening with City Councilman, Mr. Steve Nawrocki, at the Pueblo City-County Library Lamb Branch. He recommended that EPAC members make an effort to attend the meeting.

SOLID WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE – T. LOPEZ

Mr. Lopez stated he attended Mr. Nawrocki's June 28th meeting for solid waste haulers. He distributed his notes on the meeting as well as a summary of the proposed Recycling Ordinance and a copy of the invitation letter Mr. Nawrocki sent to the waste haulers. He felt the waste haulers were getting the impression that things are going to change. He stated it was Mr. Nawrocki's intention to put this ordinance on the ballot this fall; however, the time frame to get it to City Council for final reading and ready for the ballot in November is very short. Based on the comments received at the meeting, it was evident that the proposed ordinance needs to be revised. Mr. Lopez felt it needed more explanation to the waste haulers and the public so it could be better understood. The purpose of Mr. Nawrocki's intent to move forward addressed three categories, i.e., economy, equity, and environment. Ms. Finzel-Aldred spoke of equity relating to volume-based rates, i.e., pay as you throw. He stated people question why they should pay the same rate for one bag of trash compared to someone else with four bags. It was suggested rates be based on the size of the waste container offering 32, 64, and 96 gallon containers. He felt it would take approximately a year to go through the process of public comments before the ordinance was ready for the ballot. He stated one of the issues the waste haulers were made aware of was the requirement to properly dispose of and/or process any recyclables collected. The only way they can do this is to haul the material up north, which would be cost prohibitive. He stated it was evident there needs to be an intermediate process to accept recyclables the haulers collect. He stated without that, it would be very difficult to enforce the proposed ordinance as written. He noted haulers were also required to have truck inspections every year, adhere to performance standards, and there was some wording to address complaints about waste haulers; however, nothing in the ordinance addressed what happens if a waste hauler loses his license. What happens to the customers he serves? Mr. Lopez asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred to send the EPAC members a copy of the ordinance and a copy of the comments made at the meeting, which Ms. Kedward transcribed. He stated the City's Public Works Department has finally prepared a strategy/concept paper to address all solid waste issues, which includes information outlined from the *Solid Waste Management Plan* of 2002. He noted it became evident that without additional enforcement of the current solid waste ordinances, it would be difficult to move forward with a "greater plan". He stated that EPAC needs to be more involved through the EPAC Solid Waste Subcommittee by helping coordinate the public meetings. City Council needs to be made aware that there is a group of volunteers willing to help move this proposal along and its name is EPAC! He suggested the EPAC Chair present a letter to PACOG to let them know that EPAC was here to help and should be relied on.

Mr. Lopez stated Ms. Finzel-Aldred informed him about a single-stream webinar sponsored by the EPA. He stated it was entertaining and educational. It raised a lot of questions and provided a lot of information. He stated single-stream seems to be the thing to do, but when it comes to markets, the value of the materials collected fluctuated greatly from season to season.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated she would email the proposed ordinance dated June 2011. This way everyone will have an original copy to refer to after revisions have been made. She would also provide a copy of Ms. Kedward's notes of the meeting.

Mr. Pelto stated that years ago when EPAC was addressing the same issue and provided input to City Council there was some discussion on what was going on in Fort Collins and their efforts of districting solid waste collection services. He questioned whatever became of the research. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied Fort Collins recently met with organized, highly-financed opposition. She stated it was a matter of timing (2009-2010). She noted she had a copy of a session she

attended at the Colorado Association for Recycling Annual Summit June 11 where the Fort Collins mayor spoke about what happened. Currently, districting is 'off the table' in Fort Collins. She stated that Fort Collins made a Request for Proposals (RFP) and chose a company to provide collection services to a specific pilot area of about 10,000 residents. When it got to the point to write a contract with the company, the company and the city could not agree on the terms. Fort Collins contacted the second highest bidder and again could not come to an agreement. Mr. Pelto stated as he understood it districting was a no-go; however, he heard they may be trying to get a single carrier for all of Fort Collins. Ms. Finzel-Aldred did not know if that was true, the RFP was just for a particular pilot area. Mr. Pelto stated that, in his opinion, the City of Pueblo has only two courses of action, 1) a single-hauler contract for the entire metropolitan area for a certain period of years, or 2) the City takes over the entire operation of waste hauling within the metropolitan area. He stated the last time this was brought forward to City Council, EPAC's suggestions were ignored (Fall 2008). Now City Council has put together a document that has no teeth in it to do any of the solid waste management to straighten out the mismanagement that is going on now. He stated he still has several waste trucks driving what amounts to 250 cars/each down his alley every week. The Public Works Department has stated it is costing them \$150,000 on an annual basis to maintain and clean up the roadways. The question becomes on how to convince the City Council of Pueblo that they need to save money, save assets, and implement a reasonable solid waste and recycling system inside the City!

Mr. Lopez replied he felt the City had more than two options. He felt Mr. Pelto's first option would not happen when there are multiple waste haulers already operating in our city. He stated, as retired City Attorney, Mr. Tom Jagger stated in the past, it would cause anti-competition. He stated that districting hasn't been put off the table, only thought of as not possible. He stated that City Council needs to understand the whole process of waste hauling, noting it is a complicated issue. He stated if City Council had better understood all of the details, they probably would have done a better job of negotiating a contract with Waste Connections, Inc. to open the landfill. When EPAC presented to PACOG and specifically to City Council, the plan they had asked for, he felt EPAC as an advisory committee could present any far-reaching ideas as long as it had rationale to back them up. He stated the leadership was not there at that time and districting was not strongly put into that report. He stated the strategy/concept paper that City Assistant Public Works Director, Mr. Mickey Byers, is presenting lists districting as a point of discussion, noting that districting is not off the table. He stated this is all part of a larger issue that the decision makers need to understand. He has spoken with a few members of City Council and the Pueblo County Commissioners pointing out that the issues of waste management were not simple. If there is going to be a legislative body making this decision, they need to understand the consequences. He remembers posing the question to City Council what would happen when the tipping fee increased. The immediate consequence was increased illegal dumping, residents disregarding current waste ordinances, and the City not putting enough resources for enforcement. The City could take waste collection over and subcontract the service. He stated it's not a unique solution to the problem of waste collection for any municipality, but it would require some intestinal fortitude to move forward with it! He noted that some Pueblo waste haulers have sold out to others in the last decade and he anticipates more in the future. He felt the City with its police powers through the City Charter, could consider districting, but the plan has to be worked out with all private waste haulers.

Mr. Pelto disagreed with Mr. Lopez with regards to the possibility of districting. He stated they needed to discuss ways to resolve the recycling issues in Pueblo in a more formal fashion. However, since he wanted to attend Mr. Nawrocki's meeting, there would not be enough time to address the issues at this evening's meeting. Mr. Pelto excused himself to attend said meeting.

Mr. Lopez asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if Mr. Nawrocki had planned his next meeting. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes, that the meeting Mr. Peltó was going to was scheduled for 6:30 p.m. The purpose was to get a small group of people, maybe 8-10, to help Mr. Nawrocki plan and make a strategy. She noted Mr. Nawrocki had met with waste haulers in June, and he wanted to reach out to the *Pueblo Recycling Coalition* to inform them of his proposed recycling ordinances and figure out how to get neighborhood associations and the public educated. She felt it was a meeting to discuss issues like where to have public meetings, who would be invited, and how to advertise. She stated there were a lot of issues that came about from the waste haulers' meeting indicating the ordinance needs to be revised quite a bit. Unfortunately the author has been lost so the continuity of legal help needs to be rebuilt. She apologized for the discussion of districting not going smoothly tonight, noting she has the history of Fort Collins and what happened. She stated districting is a big separate topic. She stated Mr. Nawrocki is supporting recycling; noting districting is about moving *solid waste* in the whole community. Recycling and pay-as-you-throw are two separate topics. Comments get very passionate because it's a large issue and everyone is trying to understand it. It has taken her five years to get to the expertise that she has now and she is still learning more every day. She noted that in the last five years, the economy has changed, legislation has changed, people have moved out of elected office and new people come in, beliefs and values change, and big business comes in and moves out, as well.

OTHER DISCUSSION

Acting Chair Kester asked if there was any other business to discuss at this evening's meeting. There being none, the meeting was adjourned.

AGENDA OCTOBER 6, 2011

The next regularly scheduled EPAC meeting is Thursday, October 6, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before EPAC, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra M. Smith
EPAC Recording Secretary

SMS