

Bobbie Walthall

To: David L. Corliss
Subject: RE: comments for pending solid waste study session

From: lauri di routh [mailto:lauridi@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 04, 2011 10:19 PM
To: rrcab; Kathy Richardson; Tammy Bennett; mdever@sunflower.com; aron cromwell; robchestnut@sunflower.com; mikeamyx515@hotmail.com; Michael Eglinski
Subject: comments for pending solid waste study session
Importance: High

January 4, 2011

To City Commissioners, Staff and Members of the Sustainability Advisory Board:

I offer the following comments, for your consideration, as you engage in a study session to determine the fate of solid waste management in Lawrence.

Let me begin by saying that I am delighted to see that the options offered by staff recommend quantitative waste reduction goals, and provide recommendations for source reduction. I am also excited to note that the options offered give a legitimate spotlight to the option of PAYT, in an even-handed way. PAYT offers our community an excellent opportunity to reduce both costs and waste, for the long run: <http://www.mswmanagement.com/november-december-2010/recycling-payt-collection.aspx>

Further, I fully support the City moving toward automated residential collection where feasible, as a method of controlling costs, improving efficiency, and reducing worker injuries and worker's compensation claims.

All that said, I am disappointed with the lack of data in the proposals/options offered. Yet again, citizens and commissioners alike are not being provided with the hard numbers and research necessary to make fully informed decisions. As I have said before, I believe that the City should have solid, comprehensive and objective information at hand before making long-range commitments regarding solid waste and recycling.

The options offered do not provide current cost analysis or full cost accounting for all programs; current waste characterization data; an objective landfill life projection; nor any estimate of the relative greenhouse gas impacts of the options offered. Without such data, we lack the tools necessary to effectively engage in long-range planning.

I do understand that resources and staff time are limited, but I am afraid if we proceed without basic data collection and analysis, first, we will squander current and future resources and potentially pursue misguided program options. I remain convinced that a more comprehensive approach to solid waste planning is necessary. The City would greatly benefit from external professional solid waste planning expertise.

All that said, as planning begins, I would very much like to see the City's solid waste and recycling discussion to include one or more of the following:

- Discussion of collection and transfer of recyclables, and/or exploration of a public/private partnership for collection and transfer, and/or exploration of a public/private MRF. I do not believe that the City, alone, has the tonnage to justify a full service MRF.
- Discussion and cost analysis of reduced frequency yard waste collection (2x a month, instead of weekly, perhaps?) and/or consideration of charging for yard waste collection.

- Licensure of all commercial recycling and waste haulers operating in the City. This licensure should confirm that haulers have adequate insurance and commit to a contractual agreement that materials collected will be reported and recycled.
- Discussion and cost analysis of, and/or consideration of ,charging for recycling services provided to commercial generators of white paper and cardboard. This service is generally not provided for free for or by the private sector—why are we subsidizing it? How many stops does the City's commercial recycling truck make where generators fail to place or sort their materials as requested? Should we reduce our collection schedule? Is our providing a free service with no conditions encouraging abuse and inefficiency?
- I believe that we need an open drop off option for the County's HHW facility. Currently, residents can only use this facility by appointment, which I believe discourages participation. There is strong national data (see NAHMMMA) that shows that an exclusively by-appointment approach really doesn't come close to capturing all the waste that HHWs can capture; I fear that lots of HHW is still going to the landfill. I think we can do better.
- Discussion and cost analysis of construction and demolition (C&D) waste reduction options, specifically, consideration of a ban on landfilling of corrugated cardboard and/or scrap metal generated by C&D boxes, or a price incentive for those contractors that opt to segregate and recycle. Exploration of wood waste recycling, and/or a beneficial reuse option such as the City of Topeka is doing with Frito Lay.
- More comprehensive reference to the auditor's discussion of and recommendations regarding the City's recycling rate calculations.

Finally, I encourage the City to be proactive in soliciting feedback regarding proposals for solid waste. It should be noted that the options offered in the document to be discussed are not readily available on the City's website, to date. To the best of my knowledge, the document in question is absent from the WRR website, the City's Study Section weblink, and the Sustainability advisory board's site. As the City moves forward, I do hope that better outreach will be pursued to ensure that all interested parties can engage in this very important discussion.

To that end, I request that my comments, here, be made part of the public record.

I appreciate the Commission and staff's consideration of my suggestions.

Thank you all for your time and your ongoing commitment to improving solid waste and recycling services in Lawrence.

Please let me know if I may be assistance in City's ongoing efforts.

Laura Routh

