

MINUTES

ENVIRONMENT & RECYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING AUGUST 4, 2020 – 2:00 PM- VIA REMOTE

Committee Members Present: John Kennedy Bailey, Chair – Ben Adams – Naomi Bays
Will Laird

Others Present: Mayor Goodwin – Kevin Baker- Brent Webster-Jared Lanham –Jane Bostic
Mackenzie Spencer – Emmett Pepper

John Kennedy Bailey, Chairman called the meeting to order. The first agenda item was a discussion on the status of the Recycling Program/ Relationship with Raleigh County.

The Chairman began the stating that the Raleigh Co. facility had ceased operation since March of this year due to Covid-19 and reopening at this time is unknown. Additionally, if or when it reopens there may be a per-ton fee charged to the City and any other municipalities who previously used the facility at no cost for recycling. Brent Webster explained that according to the partners associated with Raleigh Co. the Solid Waste Authority continues to lose money and there would be considerable cost to the City to continue participation with the facility there. Brent Webster and Jared Lanham provided the Committee some tonnage and dollar amounts related to the City's possible cost, which is considerable.

Mayor Goodwin expressed some citizen concern over confusion about the Recycling trucks in the neighborhood when the City in fact is currently not recycling. Jared Lanham explained that he and others in the department has tried to remove "recycling" from the trucks as best they could. Additionally, the reason they continue to run those trucks is to avoid the additional volume placed on the refuse trucks which would create longer wait time at the dump as well as the delaying the area pickup time. He stated that they try to make it clear to the residents that recycling is currently going to the landfill and not being recycled.

Next Agenda item is the Consultant Contract approved by City Council. The Chairman deferred to Jane Bostic who advised that the contract was awarded to MSW Consulting. They are tasked with reviewing every aspect of the city's recycling program as well as what other cities with similar demographics may be doing. It will be a comprehensive well-rounded study. She anticipates that it should be completed by the end of October.

Next Agenda item is the discussion of a Resolution (#369-20) creating a "Green Team". The Chairman explained that essentially it would be a group of volunteer citizens working with the City to advance our recycling goals. He then deferred to Emmett Pepper, who stated that he felt it would be useful in engaging the public in having an opportunity to look at sustainability goals and opportunity for any money savings by saving energy. He stated that city of Morgantown and maybe a couple other cities have taken this step and hopes the City of Charleston can put some form of a "team" together to collaborate with administration.

The Chairman said that he looks forward to working with the City Attorney as to the proper language for the Resolution to present at the next E&R Committee meeting. The Chairman then asked for any other comments, questions, or concerns. Will Laird asked whether we had comparison costs with other cities such as So. Charleston. Jared Lanham provided the monthly tonnage and other costs to the City per month versus So. Charleston and Beckley and explained that based all costs involved the City of Charleston cost is almost triple the amount of both. Will Laird also asked if there was a way to determine the carbon footprint and current composting in the city. The Chairman explained that the previous Composting facility is currently not operational and currently the citizens yard waste is going to the landfill. Jane Bostic added that these were issues that could be addressed by the Consultants.

Ben Adams expressed some concern about some of the language in the Green Team Resolution And suggested that perhaps a “working group” would be a less complex approach. The Chairman said that the Resolution is yet to be finalized and would welcome any suggestions or recommendations from this Committee as well as the City Attorney.

Naomi Bays asked for some clarity as to whether the City of So. Charleston is still recycling Brent Webster responded that at last check they were basically in the same position as the City of Charleston in having to take it to the Landfill as well. Naomi Bays also asked if there were and guidelines as it relates to the “environmental” aspect of the E&R Committee. The Chairman said that currently the recycling aspect has been the main focus but is hopeful that in the future there can be more focus on issues and concerns as it relates to the environmental impact and would, at some point like have some conversations about the issue and welcomes any and all thoughts and suggestions regarding putting greater emphasis on that aspect.

There being no further comments or concerns, the Chairman entertained a motion to adjourn. Naomi Bays made the motion to adjourn. Will Laird seconded. Meeting was adjourned.

