

The special called work session of the City Council of the City of Newnan, Georgia was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 in the Richard A. Bolin Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Keith Brady presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brady called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Mayor Keith Brady: Council members present: Rhodes Shell, George Alexander; Cynthia E. Jenkins, Ray DuBose, Paul Guillaume and Dustin Koritko. Also present: City Manager, Cleatus Phillips; City Clerk, Megan Shea; Assistant City Manager, Hasco Craver and City Attorney, Brad Sears

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON SANITATION WASTE PROGRAM

Assistant City Manager introduced the speaker and consultant, Abby Goldsmith. She started her company 8 years ago in order to advise local and state governments on how to manage solid waste more sustainably.

Ms. Abby Goldsmith stated that she had completed 2 studies to come up with recommendations on how the City may want to proceed with waste management. First there was a benchmark study that looked at other cities around Georgia and their programs. Second there was a comprehensive cost of service analysis to better understand what current and future costs would be and what rates would need to be for customers.

Benchmark Study

Ms. Goldsmith explained that the communities looked at are about the same size as Newnan, then a few smaller and larger and all provide collection services to their residential customers. The study first looked at level of service provided, such as frequency of service, curbside collection and recycling. Newnan currently offers 4 services, garbage, recycling, yard waste and bulk items collection to residents. Newnan is in line with most of the benchmark communities in regards to frequency of collection. Most cities require residents to call ahead for bulk items and some charge a fee.

Next the study looked at who collects. All cities are either through the City or a contractor. There are a few cities that split services between City and Contractor, which is how Newnan currently does it.

An overview of fees charged was looked at. Newnan's fees fall in the middle of the cities looked at, some were lower and some higher. Newnan is unique where residents currently pay the contractor and then the contractor remits fees to the City. All benchmark cities

looked at handles their own billing. Some bill on utility bills, require pre-paid stickers for containers or bill in advance on property tax.

There was a discussion regarding billing on taxes. Some cities send the bill with the tax bill but it is separate. If there are delinquent accounts that do not pay most cities, including Newnan currently, do not penalize the resident.

Another unique part of how Newnan does things currently is that there are no limits or fees on bulk items or excess yard waste. Most places limit how many bulk items can be set out or you pay additional.

In regards to the central business district, many of the benchmark cities do not provide downtown collection. A few cities that do downtown collection have centralized locations for drop-off. Newnan also offers other services for downtown businesses to keep the commercial district clean (i.e. grease collection devices, litter free alleyways, clean sidewalk, etc.).

Ms. Goldsmith gave an overview of the conclusions from the benchmark study. What works well is requiring all residents to have collection at least weekly and have containers, contractor/city split on residential collection offers a high level of service and central business district contributes to a clean downtown. Other conclusions include looking at how residents are billed and Newnan's relationship with the transfer stations.

Cost of Service Study

This was done by looking at the current line item budget and creating a test year then projecting that for 10 years. Then develop a replacement schedule for equipment and project that for 10 years as capital expenses. This allowed a projected annual cost of services for 10 years then calculate rates needed to cover the costs. Test year expenses looked at brush & bulk, sanitation refuse and residential refuse with operating costs and salaries. Downtown collection varies depending on type of business and how big the business. Restaurants and larger businesses have higher rates.

Conclusions from the cost analysis show the projected net cost to provide 3 sanitation services (brush & bulk, downtown properties and garbage and recyclables from residents) would be \$1,039,448 in FY22, increasing to \$2million in FY31. The majority of this would be brush & bulk (70%). If more residents paid for sanitation services the monthly fee per household would be less.

Recommendations

Ms. Goldsmith gave an overview of her recommendations based on the two studies. First is to continue collection contract through December 2022 then issue an RFP by March 2022 for bids on new contracts to begin January 2023. She also recommended getting additional reports from the current contractor that may help evaluate service further. For billing, service may be managed by the City and begin in January 2023 with an estimated

annual cost of \$100,000. A billing mechanism will need to be established, preferably through utilities and educate residents on changes.

Other recommendations include set-out limits for garbage and yard debris. Some other cities limit size or weight. Also require residents to request collection of bulk items is recommended. Set-out limits can be difficult but they are recommended to reduce time and cost involved, minimizes the risk of injury to collectors and discourages unsightly setouts. A legal alternative can also be offered.

For the central business district, recommendation included ways to reduce subsidy from general fund such as offering centralized dumpsters and increasing fees for collection to cover costs. Ms. Goldsmith mentioned that the City could consider a public/private partnership to manage a transfer station.

Discussion

Council asked about volume changes over the next 10 years. Ms. Goldsmith stated that the State of Georgia used to have waste reduction goals. Total amount will always be about the same but ideally it will move from garbage to recycle. There may be other ways to manage waste in the future. State used to have incinerators but it is tied to the cost of landfill and related to generating energy. Essentially, the cost to dispose of waste in a landfill in the region remains the most cost effective strategy.

City Manager stated that some concerns to focus on prior to issuing the RFP are concerns from private haulers. The sanitation program has to be clearly defined so the haulers know what to bid on. When the current contract was bid 10 years ago, the industry was a lot different and we received numerous bids. This time around there may only be 2-3 proposals received. Some haulers are not interested and some haulers have consolidated.

Having different contractors for waste and recycle was discussed. Ms. Goldsmith said it's not common and cost wise its better to have one do both. City Manager stated it would be hard to separate.

Council expressed serious concerns about the issue's residents are currently having with GFL. Ronata Brown, Regional Sales Manager with GFL was in attendance and spoke to the issues they have been having. The call center changed phone systems and there was a computer breach which has caused problems. Ms. Brown acknowledged that they do need to do a better job of communicating service delays. There have also been staffing issues but your pick-up day should be your pick-up day. Council expressed an interest in continuing the solid waste management conversation at an upcoming retreat.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Koritko to adjourn the meeting at 4:40PM

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Megan Shea, City Clerk

Keith Brady, Mayor