

CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL (WORK SESSION)
Council Chambers
Monday, July 7, 2008
4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dan Bedore called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Councilors Floyd Collins, Ralph Reid Jr., Jeff Christman, Bessie Johnson, Dick Olsen, and Sharon Konopa

Councilors absent: None.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Tom Cordier, 2240 Park Terrace, wished to speak. He said he read Allied Waste Industries, Inc. (AWI) annual report and the Plastic Bag Fact sheet in the agenda packet. Six months ago he thought the Council asked AWI for information on what it would take to collect plastic film separately, but all he saw in the report is that their trucks are not set up to do it. To him, that does not seem like a good-faith effort to see what it would take to set it up. He spoke to Chris Thomas from a company that is the downstream company of AWI Clackamas, who said he has seen a large increase in non recyclable material arriving in the new tan-colored commingled bins, which increases the amount of material that they have to pull out. Cordier said that according to Thomas, this is not unusual whenever a change similar to this is made. Cordier said, on one hand, we went through a rate increase but on the other hand, those costs will come back to haunt someone because someone will have to pay for it. Cordier said AWI told him that when the downstream processor pulls the plastics from the waste stream, it automatically goes to the landfill, but Thomas said that is not true: they remove it and recycle it as best they can.

Regarding the issue of community training and awareness, Cordier read from an advertisement by AWI in the newspaper about how to be a “conscientious consumer.” Item 1 is to “think of the new recycle carts as a not-so-subtle suggestion.” The article goes on to say that customers in Albany and Lebanon will get carts in April to replace the commingled blue bins. Everything but glass and oil goes into the cart. It has greater capacity. Cordier called AWI’s public relations staff, Julie Jackson, and asked her to restate the phrase but according to Cordier, she would not even admit that what she said is not true. He submits that AWI has not really looked at what it would take to outfit a truck to pick up plastic film at the same time the glass and oil are being picked up. In a January 1, 2008, *Democrat-Herald* article Hasso Hering encouraged AWI to pursue finding out what it would take to remove plastics, just like Cordier asked. Thomas said he got bales of plastic from AWI and they both assumed it came from the recycle center. There is no way to differentiate AWI’s waste stream from the others. Cordier said if he was giving this report, he would report how much plastic was processed separately.

ALLIED WASTE SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

Operations Manager Kevin Hines introduced himself and General Manager Carol Dian. AWI’s report includes historical rate increases and landfill rates; information about how the company started, how it has grown, what they do, and where it is headed; and fact sheets on plastic bags and the new auto commingle recycling. Hines explained that the facility AWI uses, which is the same one Cordier talked to, does not allow AWI to send plastic bags to them commingled. Picking up plastic bags curbside would be a step backwards from AWI’s goal to eventually accept glass in the commingled cart. If they were to allow plastic bags to be picked up along with glass now, it would only be short term; then once glass was allowed in the cart, they would still have to pick up plastic bags. AWI’s goal is to pick up as efficiently as possible and to make it easy on the customers by not forcing them to separate everything out. Hines is sure there must be a way to have the trucks modified, but in the long term it would be a step backwards in efficiency. Also, the bags only make up about .03 percent of what ends up in the landfill.

Plastic bags can be recycled at local grocery stores or at AWI drop sites, so there are recycling solutions available.

Dian said there is less than two percent of waste from the bins. On a grand scale, given the volume and number of people participating in the program who are doing it correctly, it really is a small issue. AWI’s budget had well over \$10,000 allocated for advertising and promotion materials. Dian described the materials. She said, it is unfortunate Cordier selected one sentence from one article; yes, the sentence could have been restructured and clarified, but overall the material was a good effort to educate.

Hines said AWI put a container at the Recycle Depot for plastic film in April and as of July, they had picked up 900 pounds of plastic. It takes about 1,200 pounds to make a bale, or about every four months.

Councilor Jeff Christman really likes the program. He asked when will the glass be able to be commingled? Hines said it is delayed due to a political issue with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) because of concerns that shattered glass may become imbedded in material to be used for newspaper. Hines is confident they can make it a “green” process, but it will take time.

Christman asked can AWI place plastic bag collection points throughout the community? Hines said yes, but the location and whose property it is on is key to its success. For example, there was a recycle depot for rural customers at a school, but it was not patrolled so it became a dumping ground for all types of garbage. Finding a good location, obtaining property owner permission to put it there, and finding staff collection points is the challenge.

Councilor Floyd Collins thanked AWI for their support during the [Hackleman](#) neighborhood clean-up event.

Collins thinks plastic bag recycling options should be at the forefront of AWI's newsletter.

Councilor Ralph Reid asked if a third party is taking time to manually separate items in the next step of the program, will the rates increase again? Dian said some of the additional contamination cost is offset by the increased volume of recyclable material: for example, paper is valuable. Although, if fuel continues to increase, rates may become an issue.

Councilor Sharon Konopa said she is a strong advocate for recycling, but the new [commingle](#) cart is so large that she can't get by it to get to her car in her garage. She still uses her blue bins. Also, she does not like the look of neighborhoods that are full of garbage cans – potentially three at each house. When they are brand new they look alright but soon they will be unattractive and faded. She prefers the blue bins.

Konopa asked, since stores can obviously find buyers for their bales of plastic bags, how come AWI can't? Dian agreed there is a market for the bags, but the problem is there is not a market for sorting the waste stream to pull the bags out.

Konopa asked, why not have plastic bags picked up on the same days that glass is picked up? Dian said that each time the program becomes easier and more efficient for the customer, participation and volume increase. The goal is single stream recycling. Having to pull certain items out or pick up separately is a step backwards from a single recycle stream.

City Manager Wes Hare asked is there material that should be recycled that is not? Dian said drivers have a camera that shows the actual dumping into the truck. They have reported seeing paper and cardboard going in the garbage rather than being recycled even though it has been recyclable for a long time. If the driver notices he will let the office know and AWI will send that customer information.

Councilor Dick Olsen asked, how many [commingled](#) carts are there? Dian said, about 22,000 carts service about 26,000 customers (including carts at apartment buildings).

GANG ACTIVITY IN ALBANY

Police Officer Ken Fandrem introduced himself.

Bedore noted that he saw Fandrem give his presentation at a parent-teacher conference and he did a great job.

Fandrem said that in early 1990 he was an Explorer with Albany. Since then gang activity, shootings, and stabbings have increased. As a young Explorer he made a connection with the gangs, and in fact a skinhead gang tried to recruit him. Fandrem would pass on the tips he got from gang members to the Police Officers. He continued as an Explorer through college, and then went to work for the Marion County Juvenile System where he wrote a treatment plan for gang recovery. Currently, he is one of two School Resource Officers for Albany. He has been in his current position for five years.

Fandrem noted that historically gangs were most active at the adolescent levels, but now he sees recruitment occurring even at the elementary level.

Fandrem gave a PowerPoint presentation (see agenda file).

Konopa is glad a Gang Task Force has been established. She would like to get periodic updates on their work.

Konopa commented that in the last legislative session, the Beaverton Police Department attempted to pass legislation that would hold parents responsible for graffiti. Fandrem said that is true in Albany as well, because parents are liable for the activities of minors. Some agencies require that consumers must sign documentation in order to purchase spray paint. Discussion followed.

Fandrem said in the fight against gangs, enforcement by itself does not work. We have to change the way they think. Gangs are often formed in prison and gang affiliation is a family affair.

Bedore asked, what illegal activities other than tagging are occurring in Albany? Fandrem said gangs are involved in weapons trade, assaults, and all kinds of drugs.

The Council discussed the graffiti abatement program that worked well for awhile when tagging was heavy in Albany but has since fallen off the radar. Tagging is becoming prevalent again and the volunteer base for the program needs to be rebuilt now.

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Collins said that other cities have ordinances requiring phone and electric companies to remove graffiti on their property within 48 hours. Discussion about Albany franchises followed.

Collins asked, from a policy level, how can the Council help? Discussion followed. Fandrem said a new position has the graffiti program listed as part of their responsibility.

The Council discussed gang activity at Monteith Park during the day and during concert events.

Konopa asked Fandrem if he sees himself as a mentor to the kids. Fandrem described his experience and how he has learned to differentiate his roles. The gangs do have a great deal of respect for him because of the relationships he has built over time.

Olsen asked if teachers get the same respect from the kids that Fandrem gets. Fandrem said yes, it can happen, but it is a lot harder for the teachers. For a lot of these gang kids, intimidation will not work because if the teacher confronts the kids, they will take the challenge head on.

Reid asked, do you need more school resource officers? Fandrem said they have three now. Ideally they would like one for every middle school and high school, though that is not likely. The three officers each have unique skill sets that make the program successful. Greater Albany Public Schools pays for a portion of the program.

Fandrem said he will be meeting with Benton County. They use a resource model rather than an enforcement model like Albany does. Benton County has gangs although their activity is less than Albany's.

The Council asked for periodic updates from Fandrem about the program.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS

Collins said he attended the Timber Carnival and got feedback that Konopa's presentation on July 4 was good. Olsen agreed and said it was a nice event.

Konopa commended the Timber Carnival volunteers. It took a lot of work and brought back a lot of memories for her. It is nice to see Timber Linn Park being used for the event. She commended the Parks & Recreation Department for their excellent maintenance of the park.

Collins said folks also thanked the City for supporting the fireworks event.

Konopa noticed a condemnation in the *Democrat-Herald*, but she did not recognize the property owner's name. She wasn't aware there were condemnation proceedings currently underway. Hare will look into it.

Konopa said she is disappointed that the Albany Chamber of Commerce (ACC) is hosting the Council Orientation event. Who should host was a divisive issue a few years ago and she would have appreciated it if it had come to the Council first. Bedore clarified that his response to the ACC was that to his knowledge, the City was not initiating an orientation event and if they did, it seemed it would be a duplication of ACC's efforts. He does not think ACC will be discussing their agenda, but rather just sharing information.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Hare said that there is an article in tonight's *Democrat-Herald* which analyzes the City's budget over the past years. He noted there are some corrections that must be made to the article regarding increases to wages. Staff has notified the paper of the corrections and they will make them, but Hare cautioned the Council that they will likely get calls from constituents before the corrections are printed. Staff discussed the specific questions, the answers given, and how the information was misconstrued in the article.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the Work Session adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Dibble, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

Reviewed by,

Stewart Taylor
Finance Director