Recommendation From
Boynton Beach Financial Advisory Committee

Subject/Topic: Solid Waste – Residential Garbage Collection

Reviewed By: George Feldman

Recommendation (Specific Action Recommended): Amend residential garbage collection schedules such that garbage is collected one time per week (ENTIRE CITY).

Existing service levels provide for residential garbage collection two times per week. This can be scalable to allow regional neighborhoods to select lesser service frequency. Neighborhoods (HOAs) would need to respond to a prepared questionnaire, choosing twice a week or once a week pickup. After reviewing responses, a cost effective determination could be analyzed saving the City operational expenses and reducing cost to taxpayers or HOAs. This would be a **cost neutral approach** before implementation. Note: The survey responses indicated support for once-a-week service to reduce costs.

Pros of Recommendation: This action would allow for a total cost reduction of approximately $275,000 annually assuming the entire City is affected. Some customers may prefer twice per week collection.

Cons of Recommendation: There are a number of cons as follows:

1. Many residents need twice per week collection either because of family size or the amount of refuse generated.

2. There will likely be an up front cost to implement this program. Carts are available today in two sizes, 65 gallons and 95 gallons. Many residents also currently use much smaller 35 gallon carts that are being phased out due to collection difficulties. Therefore, if the City transitions to once per week collection, many residents will request larger carts in order to accommodate larger volumes of garbage. Those residents that ask for large carts should be required to pay for the replacement cost of around $55 per cart.

3. Some residents will place extra garbage bags beside the City cart and expect it to be collected. This cannot be done with automated trucks. Customer complaints will rise and public health could be impaired. The City could return to rear load collection vehicles to allow flexibility on how residents place their garbage at the curb. Rear load vehicles require three employees so this could require the City to actually add staff which could offset the savings to go with one day per week collection.

4. Residents can request two carts and pay an extra monthly fee of $6.00 per cart. The City has some situations like this now. If once per week collection is implemented, some residents may request an additional cart. They may not have room to store this cart. Internal City tracking of these extra carts would become difficult.

5. The biggest negative impact would be to those residents who have regular garbage collection on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day and on the variable days of Christmas and New Years Day. The City does not collect garbage on these dates. Because the City is on a six day per week collection schedule (cost reduction measure in 2010), there are no make days available. Therefore, those with Thanksgiving Day garbage collection would go two weeks without garbage service and those whose collections days fall on Christmas and New Years will go three weeks without collection.

6. The public might expect a rate reduction in the monthly water bill. The public may perceive reduced solid waste services to correlate with reduced solid waste costs. This therefore would not benefit the General Fund deficit.

References (Staff, Documents, and Public): Discussion with Larry Quinn, Solid Waste Manager, Christine Roberts, Asst Director of Public Works, and Jeffrey Livergood, Director of Public Works

Impact on 2011/12 Budget: Savings of $275,000 to change entire City to once per week collection. Savings will vary if larger neighborhoods are allowed to opt in or out.

Impact on Out Year Budgets: Regular inflationary growth

Impact on Citizens: Impact on the public will be varied. Those that prefer once per week garbage collection would be pleased. Those that prefer twice per week collection will not. The most noticeable impact may be an increase in fly dumping. The City already experiences fly dumping despite the fact that the City collects garbage twice per week and also collects unlimited amounts of bulk trash and landscape waste twice per week. By reducing services levels for garbage collection, some may choose to fly dump causing the appearance of the community to diminish.

Impact on City Staff: Two staff positions (Equipment Operators) will be eliminated.

Committee Vote Result: For: 6 **Against**: 0