

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday  
November 5, 2020  
6:30 p.m.

Zoom

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Knezevic at 6:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Vanja Knezevic (Chair), Diann Strom (Vice Chair), Neal Hines, Anne Howe, Negin Khanloo, Ken Wan, Ling Zhuang

**COUNCIL LIAISON:** Conrad Lee

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Brian Bartle, Deputy Director, Utilities; Councilmember Conrad Lee; Lucy Liu, Resource Management and Customer Service Assistant Director, Utilities; Linda De Boldt, Engineering Assistant Director, Utilities; Brian Landau, Engineering Planning Manager, Utilities; Cherish Jackson, Interim Executive Assistant, Utilities; Joe Harbour, Operations and Maintenance Assistant Director, Utilities; Erin Hislop, Conservation and Outreach Program Administrator, Utilities; Heather DeWitt, Interim Solid Waste Program Administrator, Utilities; Don McQuilliams, Operations Manager, Utilities; Mike Gonzalez, Utilities Emergency Management Coordinator; Doug Lane, Senior Engineer, Utilities; and Laurie Hugdahl, Minutes Taker

**2. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS**

Chair Knezevic explained that several items in the Commission's bylaws needed to be suspended temporarily in order to remotely hold meetings and comply with the Governor's Emergency Order concerning the Open Public Meetings Act which prohibits in-person meetings. Deputy Director Brian Bartle read an introductory statement regarding procedures for the meeting.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Knezevic pointed out that the date of the minutes agenda item should be corrected to 10/22/2020, not 11/22/2020.

**Motion made by Vice Chair Strom, seconded by Commissioner Khanloo, to approve the agenda as amended. The agenda was approved unanimously (7-0).**

**4. ORAL & WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

Public comments were solicited. There were none.

**5. COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Councilmember Lee reported that the Council is deliberating the budget currently and hopes to have it approved by mid-December or earlier. He expressed appreciation to the Commission for their diligence and their consideration of important environmental issues in addition to many other things.

**6. STAFF REPORTS**

None

**7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) 10/22/20 MINUTES**

Commissioner Zhuang referred to the second to last paragraph on page 3. The sentence that reads, “She noted that it is possible to see the effects of urbanization by the physical condition of streams,” should be replaced with the following: “She asked if the staff sees any effects of climate change to the streams.”

**Motion made by Commissioner Khanloo, seconded by Vice Chair Strom, to approve the 10/22/20 minutes as amended. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) 2020 Annual Solid Waste Collection Contract Performance Review Results**

*Erin Hislop, Conservation and Outreach Program Administrator*

*Heather DeWitt, Interim Solid Waste Program Administrator*

Outreach Program Administrator Hislop reviewed the 2020 Annual Solid Waste Collection Contract performance review results. This year the survey was about customer satisfaction with Republic Services' performance in specific areas and customer awareness of and practices and preferences around recycling and organics.

### Customer Satisfaction

Among single-family customers, Republic scored well in four of the six areas of satisfaction that were surveyed. This year satisfaction scores dropped with regard to response time following a missed collection, and they were just below the contract threshold for satisfaction with helpfulness of customer service staff over the phone.

Among multifamily/commercial customers, Republic Services scored well in five of the six areas of satisfaction surveyed. Satisfaction scores decreased from last year and did not meet the minimum satisfaction requirements for response time following a missed collection. Telephone courtesy and helpfulness of customer service staff met the minimum satisfaction scores, but decreased in satisfaction from last year. Scores slightly increased or remained steady for overall satisfaction, satisfaction with customer crews, and response time following a request for a new or a replacement container.

Like last year, Republic Services did not meet performance minimum satisfaction scores in either sector for a response time following a missed collection. This is the sixth year in a row that Republic received relatively low marks for response time following a missed collection from single family customers. Apartment and condominium complex managers and business owners also rated response time to missed collection below the city's minimum satisfaction requirements for the third year in a row. Because Republic did not meet the satisfaction ratings required by the contract they were subject to a \$50,000 performance fee. Additionally, Republic Services must develop and implement an action plan for improving response time following a missed collection. The City will request that the 2021 Action Plan include new actions that have not been tried as well as scheduled and measurable milestones for implementing changes that improve those response times before the next annual survey in 2021.

Commissioner Wan pointed to the persistent low performance of Republic Services in the customer satisfaction category and asked about previous performance fees and the possibility of increasing performance fees. Ms.

Hislop explained that Republic Services has paid a \$50,000 performance fee each year, and there is not an escalation in the current contract. The focus right now is on working with Republic to create a new mutually agreed upon action plan that addresses the compliance gaps and the issues identified in the customer surveys. Commissioner Wan recommended that the City should consider an escalator in the next negotiation with Republic Services.

Commissioner Khanloo asked about the impact of the low customer satisfaction. She suggested that the performance fee should be related to the impact. Interim Solid Waste Program Administrator Heather DeWitt commented that a performance fee of \$100 per customer is assessed for missed collections which are not picked up within one day. For 2020 contract year, there were 159 customers who did not get their trash, recycling or organics picked up within one business day, so Republic was assessed a total of \$15,900 in performance fees (\$100 per customer).

Vice Chair Strom agreed with Commissioner Wan on strengthening the City's resolve to make sure missed collections are taken seriously. She expressed hope that the City would get a thoughtful and serious response to this situation.

Commissioner Zhuang commented that the Commission had previously recommended modernization of Republic's technology. She suggested that the legal team might be able to revisit the contract to see if there is any room to address the response issue earlier than seven years when it's time for a new contract.

#### Recycling Practices, Preferences and Awareness

Ms. Hislop reviewed the results of the recycling survey which show that single family's top three sources of information for solid waste are printed brochures, Republic Services' website, and stickers on their cart. These findings underscore the importance of providing annual recycling guides to customers, keeping the Republic website current, and maintaining proper container labeling. The single family survey showed uncertainty about recycling continuing to decline. The percentage of single family customers aware of Republic Services' customer resource center continued its six-year rise. Results of the single family survey demonstrated that Republic Services and the City's efforts to improve customer awareness of their recycling options for unusual items is working.

Commissioner Khanloo requested the actual number of responses instead of just percentages in the future.

Commissioner Wan asked if there is a target or goal for percentage of awareness. Ms. Hislop was not aware of a target for the drop-off center other than *the more the better*. Commissioner Wan recommended that goals be developed.

Ms. Hislop reviewed results of single family awareness of take-back programs for difficult-to-recycle items. These programs gained in public awareness, but the opportunity remains to improve customers' familiarity with and the use of the take back programs for potentially hazardous materials. The multifamily/commercial survey results show that a lower percentage of survey respondents participate in organics recycling. Even though this is a lower percentage, that amount aligns with responses throughout the last five years. Among those surveyed who are not currently recycling their organics, interest in organics recycling declined.

Next steps for single family include continuing to develop preferred information modes, promoting convenient options for recycling unusual items, and encouraging latex paint recycling and promoting the new statewide latex paint produce stewardship program. Next steps for multifamily/commercial including improving promotion of recycling and organics resources.

Commissioner Zhuang asked how Republic Services handles the recyclables. Ms. Hislop commented that the contract requires that the recyclables get recycled and that the compostable items get composted, but the City does not have a say in how the vendor accomplishes this. Commissioner Zhuang asked for a report on how these are actually handled. Ms. Hislop indicated she could request it from Republic, but she didn't think they were required to provide it. Commissioner Zhuang recommended that this metric be built into the contract as part of the City's commitment to a zero waste goal.

Ms. Hislop reviewed outreach programs occurring through the Covid-19 period. This includes support for K-12 students in distanced learning, assistance to multifamily properties and businesses, and creative partnerships. Finally, Ms. Hislop reviewed survey results regarding customer handling of hazardous waste. Topics included single-family handling of vehicle motor oil, CFLs (compact fluorescent lightbulbs), and handling of medications. Next steps include increasing customer education efforts about proper handling of household hazardous waste and improving awareness and use of existing recycling take-back programs.

**b) Update to the Utilities Emergency Management Program**

*Don McQuilliams, Utilities Operations Manager*  
*Mike Gonzalez, Utilities Emergency Management Coordinator*

Operations Manager McQuilliams reviewed Utilities' role in Emergency Management. He discussed the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS), and the Utilities Emergency Management Program framework. He also gave a status update including the hiring of full-time Emergency Management Coordinator Mike Gonzalez, training exercises and drills, revision of the Emergency Response Plan, development of communication plans, establishment of a Utilities Emergency Management Team, and review of existing mutual aid agreements.

As part of America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, which is a requirement of the EPA and is specific to the water system, the Risk and Resilience Assessment and the Emergency Response Plan were required and successfully completed in 2020. In the future the City must recertify both every five years. Operations Manager McQuilliams also discussed challenges of operating in a COVID environment.

Commissioner Zhuang asked about the definition of *emergency*. Mr. McQuilliams explained that it is very broad and covers all kinds and sizes of emergency events. Commissioner Zhuang requested more information about numbers and kinds of emergencies that have been handled in the past and if resources are sufficient to address those in the future. Mr. McQuilliams indicated he could bring back that information.

Vice Chair Strom asked if there were any risks identified by TetraTech that the City and Cascade Water Alliance are mitigating for. Mr. McQuilliams replied that the evaluation focused heavily on cyber-hazards, and it looked at the system on a big, regional scale. There are some little things that came up as things to look at, like improvements to several reservoirs, but nothing that was a big risk.

Mike Gonzalez, Utilities Emergency Management Coordinator discussed the future of the Utilities Emergency Management Program. An annual review and updates to the Emergency Response plan will be performed. There will also be increased Emergency Management training and exercises. Staff will create an Integrated Preparedness Plan, a monthly Emergency Management Newsletter, a formal process for activating Utilities Operations and Command Centers, and a Communications Response Plan. Staff intends to increase interdepartmental cooperation through combined exercises, utilize available grant funding opportunities, and review and establish mutual aid agreements.

Commissioner Zhuang asked how climate change might change the way that the City prepares for emergencies in the future. Mr. Gonzalez replied that climate change will change the way business is done across all utilities and the city as a whole. It something that everyone keeps in mind and is also being talked about at the regional level.

**c) Water System Post-Earthquake Level of Service Goals**

*Senior Engineer Doug Lane*

Senior Engineer Lane reviewed the status of the seismic vulnerability assessment focusing especially on recovery times and level of service goals. Predicted recovery times following a Cascadia Subduction Zone event is predicted to be 70 days for service to 100% of the population restored. The Seattle Fault Zone (east) event would result in most likely 540 pipe repairs and 90 days to restore service to 100% of the population.

Vice Chair Strom referred to the fairly long period before service is restored to certain areas. She asked how Utilities is trying to maximize value as they replace aging infrastructure to be able to decrease the number of days until service is restored. Senior Engineer Lane replied that the current main replacement program will make pipelines more resilient. He commented that the delay of getting outlet from Seattle is a major factor in the restoration time, especially in the Seattle Fault event, and Bellevue doesn't have direct control over this. Vice Chair Strom asked for any updates on what Seattle is doing to prepare for this. Senior Engineer Lane responded that Seattle has 20 and 50-year goals. They are prioritizing the Cedar supply to the south and then the Tolt supply to the north. The Tolt is where Bellevue gets most of its water. He suggested that the City could lobby Seattle to prioritize the Tolt.

Commissioner Khanloo asked about Bellevue residents' awareness of potential scenarios. Senior Engineer Lane replied that there is not much awareness right now. He explained that an Emergency Water Supply Master Plan will be created next year. Part of this will include outreach and increasing public awareness.

Mr. Lane then discussed mitigation timetable options:

- Option 1: Do nothing – Never attain recommended service levels, no immediate rate impact, highest risk, conflicts with City Policy, non-compliant with AWIA (America's Water Infrastructure Act), not recommended
- Option 2: Minimal – 100+ years to attain recommended service levels, low rate impact, R&R program drives schedule, revise standards to require resilient piping, etc., assets become resilient

- when replaced, current approach for water mains
- Option 3: Risk-Based – 20-50 years to attain recommended service levels, moderate rate impact, based on risk, prioritized to highest benefit/cost, address all “low hanging fruit” plus the most critical facilities, consistent with other utilities, recommended option
  - Option 4: Aggressive – less than 20 years to attain recommended service levels; high rate increases and community impacts (construction); “Moon Shot” requiring substantial hiring in utilities, high demand on suppliers and local contractors, potential “bubble” in unit costs, and delay of other programs and initiatives; may not be feasible; still would not address supply vulnerability (SPU), not recommended

The proposed goals for Option 3, the risk-based strategies, are being developed and will come back to the ESC. Mr. Lane reviewed assumptions that would be used in developing the goals and discussed Level of Service charts included in the ESC packet for a Cascadia Subduction Zone event and for a proposed Seattle Fault Zone (east) event.

#### **10. REVIEW OF COMMISSION & COUNCIL CALENDARS**

Deputy Director Brian Bartle explained that this will be the final meeting for 2020. He also reviewed the Council calendar.

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion made by Chair Knezevic, seconded by Vice Chair Strom, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.