

Public Works Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Tuesday, November 14, 2006

Public Works Department Conference Room

CAC Representatives Present

Ms. Sharyn Fox, Chairperson
Mr. Phil Bomersheim
Dr. Harold Cones
Ms. Lois Custer
Ms. Sandra Davis
Ms. Sharron Kitchen Miller
Ms. Artistine Reid

CAC Representatives Absent

Dr. Arnold Abrams
Ms. Elsy Henriquez
Mr. Thomas Herbert
Ms. Crystal Hill

Public Works Representatives

Mr. Roy Chesson, CAC Coordinator
Mr. H. Reed Fowler, Jr., Director of Public Works
Mr. Tim Shockley, Acting Solid Waste Division Administrator

Call to Order

Chairperson Fox called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Mr. Bomersheim and a second by Ms. Custer, the minutes for the October 17, 2006 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

Change in Committee Bylaws

At the previous Committee meeting, it was agreed that the bylaws should be changed in order to clarify that when a member served a partial term (less than two years), the partial term would not apply to the term limit of two consecutive terms. To satisfy the requirement that proposed changes to the bylaws be presented in writing at least 15 days in advance of voting, the following proposed change to Article II, Section 2 was sent to all Committee members on October 23, 2006:

Section 2. Terms. The Manager shall appoint members for the Committee for two (2) year terms except appointments to fill vacancies, which shall be for the length of the unexpired terms. Appointed members of the Committee shall be eligible to serve for two (2) consecutive full two (2) year terms. Youth representatives shall serve for one-year terms.

Dr. Cones moved to approve this change and Ms. Reid seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. (Mr. Thomas Herbert, who could not be present for the meeting, gave his proxy to Chairperson Fox. Added to the seven votes from the members who were present, the motion received approval of two-thirds of the entire committee as required by the bylaws for amendments.)

Recommendation for Reappointment of Committee Members

With the change in the bylaws, all four Committee members whose terms are expiring (Dr. Cones, Ms. Custer, Ms. Miller, and Ms. Reid) are eligible for reappointment. Mr. Chesson stated that he would draft reappointment letters for these members. These letters would be forwarded to the City Manager for signature.

CAC members requested, for the next meeting, a list of everyone's term information, which Mr. Chesson offered to assemble and provide. At this point, Mr. Chesson passed out Media Release Forms for each member to sign. This is required by the City in order to post pictures on any City website. Forms for those members not at the meeting would be disseminated via e-mail.

Discussion of Bulk Waste Report Recommendations

From the start, there was a consensus that a call-in program for bulk waste collection should be initiated. Mr. Bomersheim, however, objected to the recommended volume limits. Various Committee members felt that by making recommendations on volume limits and construction debris, the Bulk Waste Report had wandered from the original issue of investigating the feasibility of a call-in program. Mr. Chesson said that he had been tasked to investigate the resources required by localities that required call-in for bulk waste collection and then to estimate what the costs would be for Newport News. The two localities that he had investigated (Virginia Beach and Chesapeake) both had volume limits and both prohibited any construction debris. He therefore felt that in order to extrapolate the costs to Newport News, it was necessary to assume the same rules as to what would be collected by the City.

Chairwoman Fox suggested that each recommendation be discussed and voted on separately. Dr. Cones moved to recommend that the City adopt a call-in program for bulk waste collection. Ms. Custer seconded. Chairwoman Fox called for further discussion prior to voting.

Ms Reid expressed concern about people not following the rules, particularly in eviction actions. Also, what if people put out waste without calling in? This led to some discussion on codes compliance. Mr. Shockley stated that this was being addressed in the draft revisions to Chapter 19 and that the revisions include a fine structure for violations. Field Representatives would begin stricter enforcement after the Chapter 19 review was complete.

Clarifying how a call-in program would work, Mr. Shockley said that bulk waste for each neighborhood would still be collected on the same day as normal trash collection. Scheduling would be on a first-come, first-served basis and that collections on any given day would not be scheduled beyond the capability of the Department to handle. When calling in, residents would be asked for information concerning the material to be picked up in order to assist the

Department in determining the workload. If a pickup couldn't be made on the date requested, the resident would be told when a pick up would occur.

Ms. Miller wanted to know if the Department could handle the volume of calls. Mr. Fowler said that call-ins could also be made using e-mail to schedule and that this would help limit the amount of calls. Ms. Miller pointed out that not everyone has e-mail and that many people would want to talk to a person regardless.

At this point, Chairwoman Fox called for a vote on the motion to recommend that the City adopt a call-in program for bulk waste collection. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion followed regarding litter and trashcan locations in public areas such as outside of businesses and on sidewalks. It was asked if more trashcans could be put out in public areas and whether businesses such as convenience stores are required to have trashcans near their entrances. As for businesses, it was felt that they were required to have trashcans for use by the public but this wasn't confirmed. As for city-owned trashcans along streets, Mr. Chesson and Mr. Shockley pointed out that there are logistics issues with maintaining and emptying such trashcans and that this would impinge on the Division's resources.

Chairwoman Fox brought the discussion back to the second recommendation of the Bulk Waste Report which involved setting a limit as to the volume of bulk waste that would be collected per household per week. Mr. Shockley advocated a 3 cubic yard limit as a maximum but also said that there should be a minimum limit since small loads took up a disproportionate amount of time to collect. Mr. Chesson pointed out that when a resident called in to schedule a collection, the operator taking call would gather information on what was to be collected. For small loads, the operator would instruct the resident to put the waste in the automated cart. This should eliminate small loads. It was suggested that the limit did not have to be the same for yard debris as for bulky items.

Mr. Shockley stated that bulk waste is supposed to be items that are too large to fit in the automated carts. It is not supposed to include volumes of normal trash that exceed the size of the container. When residents have more trash than fits in the container, they should either hold the excess until the following week or take it to the landfill themselves. If a resident routinely has more trash than fits in a container, they should order an additional container and pay the higher user fee. However, in Newport News residents have come to expect that excess trash will be collected as bulk waste.

Chairwoman Fox asked how the volume limits would affect collection in extreme situations such as major storms. Mr. Shockley pointed out that these situations are handled differently and that call-ins and volume limits would not apply when cleaning up after a storm.

At various times during the meeting, Mr. Shockley pointed out that some of what was being discussed is being addressed in draft revisions to Chapter 19. The Committee requested that these revisions be provided before the next meeting so that they could be better informed as to what was already being addressed by the Department.

Discussion followed on publicizing trash and bulk waste collection policies and procedures. The Environmental Calendar was mentioned, as was the City's cable station. Two new ideas were to put advertising-like messages on the collection trucks and to put messages in the user fee bills.

It was generally agreed that there should be a limit on the amount of bulk waste that would be collected but the Committee was unable to recommend a specific limit because there were more issues involved than could be discussed during the meeting. Ms. Custer moved, and Mr. Bomersheim seconded, that the Committee recommend that the Department establish bulk waste volume limits but leave it to the Department staff to decide on the actual amount. The motion was passed unanimously.

The third recommendation of the Bulk Waste Report concerning not collection any construction debris was briefly discussed as time was running out. Chairwoman Fox disagreed with this recommendation since many people would have no vehicle capable of carrying away such material. Mr. Shockley stated that the Department could still pick up construction debris as well as any other bulk waste in excess of approved limits but charge the resident a fee for this. Chairwoman Fox said that this was acceptable, as it would resolve the issue concerning people not being able to transport material to the landfill.

No decision was made concerning the third recommendation. Further discussion would be held after the Committee has had time to review the draft revisions to Chapter 19.

Summary of the actions/decisions concerning bulk waste:

- Recommended a call-in program for bulk waste collection.
- Recommended volume limits for bulk waste but left it to the Department to set the actual limits.
- Delayed any decision on whether construction debris should be allowed until members could review Chapter 19 draft revisions.

Establishing Dates for CAC meetings Through Spring 2007

The Committee agreed to continue meeting the 3rd Tuesday of the month from January through June 2007 (there will be no meeting in December 2006). These dates are:

January 16, 2007	February 20, 2007	March 20, 2007
April 17, 2007	May 15, 2007	June 19, 2007

At the June meeting the dates for the remainder of 2007 will be established.

Adjournment

Chairperson Fox adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.