



GWINNETT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

75 Langley Drive | Lawrenceville, GA 30046-6935
(O) 770.822.7000 | (F) 770.822.7097
www.gwinnettcounty.com

Charlotte J. Nash, Chairman
Jace W. Brooks, District 1
Ben Ku, District 2
Tommy Hunter, District 3
Marlene M. Fosque, District 4

Official

Informal Briefing Minutes

Tuesday, February 4, 2020 – 10:30 AM

Present: Charlotte J. Nash, Jace Brooks, Ben Ku, Tommy Hunter, Marlene M. Fosque

1. Support Services

Solid Waste/Recycling Update

Representatives from Gwinnett County's residential and recyclable materials haulers presented information on the Curbside Recycling Program. No official action taken.

Curbside Recycling Briefing

Company Introductions

Background

July 1, 2010 – Started Service, 180,000 + homes, 5 service zones

July 1, 2018 – Contract Amendment (7% rate reduction, processors required removal of glass, agreed to senior rate, gave a choice for a cart to recycle)

Current Status

Meeting all solid waste program objectives successfully

Gwinnett's program is considered the model for urban counties

Recycling participation rate is higher than National Average

What Happened to Residential Curbside Recycling?

1980's saw high rebates, slight rebates, no rebates, \$0 Processing Charges

Now, Paying unforeseen Processing Charges that transforms the Industry

Top 3 reasons for the new Recycling Processing Charge

1. High Contamination Levels
2. Loss of China market taking recyclables from United States
3. Lower to negative commodity values after processing

**Result =
Unsustainable Losses
for Processors**

Local Examples and Timeline

Global Problem, not just Gwinnett County, impacted every City or County that has a recycling program around the world

Local Georgia Examples

- Atlanta \$75 per ton PC, Source WSB News (200% Increase)
- Clarkston, GA Suspended Recycling Program, Source AJC
- DeKalb County \$65 per ton PC, Source Pratt Industries
- Average increase per home in Gwinnett Cities is \$0.61 + PC
- Augusta-Richmond County \$85 per ton PC, may suspend program

Timeline

- ✓ Notification from Processors in early November for 1/1/2020 effective date (some small haulers were notified of an effective date of 12/1/2019)
- ✓ We met with Recycling Processors to try to Negotiate downward
- ✓ We notified County staff in late November
- ✓ We met with County staff in November and December
- ✓ Today's Briefing to educate the BOC and General Public

New Recycling Processing Charge = Undue hardship / Uncontrollable Circumstance beyond our control (similar to Force Majeure)

Calculation of the Increase

- Added up total recycling tons from each hauler for Gwinnett County Recycling Routes plus any increased transportation costs
- Each hauler has a different amount because we don't all use the same recycling processor and recycling tonnage varies across the County

Example from Gwinnett Cities, average \$0.61 + per month per home effective January 1, 2020.

What do we do now? In this together!

Recommendation

Continue recycling with new processing charge retroactive to effective dates

Phase Two

Narrow recycling program's accepted materials and evaluate program recyclables that offer the best benefit to the planet

Focus on cleaning up contamination leading to more sustainable commodity values

The public wants to recycle, and is willing to pay for it. The path to creating a durable recycling program requires a **multi-faceted approach**.

Questions