



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

MATT CARLUCCI, SR.
COUNCIL MEMBER AT-LARGE, GROUP 4
OFFICE (904) 255-5218
E-MAIL: MCarlucci@coj.net

CITY HALL AT ST. JAMES
117 WEST DUVAL STREET
4TH FLOOR, SUITE 425
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

MEETING MINUTES

Council Member Matt Carlucci called the meeting to order. Present were Council Auditors Brian Parks and Kim Taylor, Dylan Reingold from the Office of General Counsel, and Council Members Jimmy Peluso, Tyrona Clark-Murray, and Rahman Johnson.

CM Carlucci opened by introducing two proposed ordinances: one to raise the solid waste fee, address the current debt, and evaluate alternative scenarios; and another to create a low-income exemption for residents unable to afford the increase. He invited Mr. Reingold to confirm that the proposed low-income exemption would mirror the structure of the existing stormwater fee exemption, which Mr. Reingold affirmed.

Ms. Taylor provided an overview of the current costs and fee structure, along with projections of the solid waste debt. She reported that the debt is expected to exceed one billion dollars within seven years. To align the residential fee with current service costs, the rate would need to rise to approximately thirty dollars and forty cents per month, which would also free the franchise fee to begin repaying the solid waste loan. Ms. Taylor reviewed additional scenarios illustrating how a "stairstep" approach to fee increases would impact the annual loan balance. She noted that the Council Auditor's Office could model any additional scenarios requested by Council Members, emphasizing that the final decision is ultimately a policy matter for the Council. She also recapped the history of the solid waste fee since its creation in 2008 and explained the advantages of maintaining a dedicated fee rather than funding solid waste services through the General Fund.

CM Clark-Murray asked how the debt projections would differ under a gradual fee increase compared to a one-time adjustment. Ms. Taylor responded that the original twelve dollars and sixty-five cents monthly fee has never been updated. CM Johnson thanked CM Carlucci for presenting multiple options and invited former Council Member and Council President Warren Jones to provide historical context. CM Johnson expressed preliminary support for scenario three and said he would continue discussions with the Council Auditor's Office. CM Clark-Murray asked for clarification on whether residents would see the fee reflected monthly or annually on their bills.

CM Carlucci asked whether eliminating the fee and covering the cost through the General Fund would require renegotiating the interlocal agreements. Mr. Reingold confirmed that it would. CM Peluso inquired whether each proposed increase would require a public notice. Mr. Reingold explained that the code mandates annual notices regardless of rate changes, but this requirement has been waived each year. He added that no current council can bind a future



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council to future increases. CM Peluso noted that political pressures could make repeated votes on future increases challenging, a sentiment CM Johnson echoed.

CM Johnson asked how the loan balance would change under the stairstep scenarios. Ms. Taylor explained that once the fee fully covers service costs, other revenue sources could be redirected toward paying down the loan. He then asked CM Carlucci about plans for public engagement. CM Carlucci replied that public meetings would likely take place after the new year, near the end of January, though specific dates had not yet been scheduled.

Former CM Warren Jones raised concerns about double taxation issues affecting the Beaches. Mr. Reingold responded that those matters have been litigated and are being closely considered by both the Council Auditor's Office and the Office of General Counsel. CM Carlucci added that the cities of the Beaches and Baldwin would be included in the assistance plan, since their contributions to the General Fund warrant inclusion in any relief program.

Public comment was offered by John Nooney, who spoke about the treatment of Accessory Dwelling Units in relation to the solid waste program.