

**WORKSHOP**  
**Unincorporated Area Universal**  
**Solid Waste Collection**  
**February 8, 2011**  
**12:00 p.m.**

The Board of County Commissioners met for a Workshop on Tuesday, February 8, 2011, to discuss Unincorporated Area Universal Solid Waste Collection.

Present were Chairman John Dailey, Vice-Chairman Akin Akinyemi, and Commissioners Jane Sauls, Kristin Dozier, Nick Maddox and Bryan Desloge. (Commissioner Proctor arrived after the workshop had convened.) Also present were County Administrator Parwez Alam, County Attorney Herb Thiele, and Board Secretary Rebecca Vause.

Chairman Dailey called the Workshop to order at 12:00 p.m.

**Facilitator(s):** Alan Rosenzweig, Assistant County Administrator  
Tony Park, Director, Public Works  
Norm Thomas, Director, Solid Waste Management  
Scott Ross, Director, Office of Management and Budget

The meeting was turned over to Assistant County Administrator Alan Rosenzweig who provided an overview of the workshop topic. He recalled that the Board had requested the workshop be scheduled to discuss the possible implementation of universal solid waste collection for the unincorporated area. He indicated that the Board would be provided a power point presentation which will address the issue along with other inter-related issues such as: 1) Waste Collection Franchise Agreement; 2) Non-ad Valorem Solid Waste Assessment; 3) Variable Rates or Pay as You Throw (PAYT), and 4) Role of the Rural Waste Service Centers (RWSC).

Mr. Rosenzweig shared that the County currently has an agreement with Waste Management (WM) by which County residents can receive curbside collection for a cost of \$210 annually. Additionally, those residents not subscribing to the service can use one of the five rural waste service centers at no cost; however, all households pay a \$40 non-ad valorem assessment for waste disposal annually. He noted that the program was being subsidized with approximately \$1.3 million in general revenue dollars and this was not consistent with the Board's overall long term goal that the program operate like a business by collecting enough revenue to fully fund the entire operation.

1. Waste Collection Franchise Agreement: Mr. Rosenzweig stated that at present there are approximately 23,000 unincorporated residential customers receiving curbside collection. Billing for this service is done by WM; however, if the County assumes the collections through non-ad valorem assessments the rate would be reduced by 9%. The agreement expires in April 2013 and does contain a provision for universal collection.

Mr. Rosenzweig utilized various maps to depict the distribution of current WM customers (and non subscribers). He pointed out that households subscribing to WM services were more heavily weighted within the Urban Service Area (USA) than outside the USA.

2. Universal Collection: The Board was informed that universal collection would aid the County in achieving the State mandated 75% recycling goal and allow the program to operate within the County's adopted Guiding Principles by the elimination of general revenue dependence.

In addition, universal collection would require all residences to pay the same rate; significantly decrease the demand for rural waste service centers and allow collections to operate more efficiently.

Some noted disadvantages to universal collection included: 1) current non-subscribers would be required to pay for collection services; 2) the closure of the RWSCs would eliminate an opportunity for social exchange at the RWCSs; thus complaints can be expected if the centers are closed; 3) could be a challenge in a number of areas due to minimally improved property access, and 4) the possibility of increased illegal dumping as a method of protest.

Mr. Rosenzweig used maps of the Killearn Lakes and Lake Shore neighborhoods to illustrate the highly inefficient system of collection in that WM trucks currently drive past homes that do not receive collection services and it is presumed that those homes not receiving curb side collection transport their waste to the rural waste collection sites.

The Board learned that an alternative to requiring the entire unincorporated area move to universal collection was to implement mandatory collection only inside the USA. Mr. Rosenzweig shared that 74% of residents within the USA already subscribe to WM services; while outside of the USA, the ratio is the opposite, with 62% being non-subscribers.

He continued that for the Solid Waste Fund to operate as a business, consistent with the County's adopted Guiding Principles, residents outside the USA would need to pay for the cost of operating the RWCS. It was offered that those homes purchase for an estimated cost of \$85.00 annually, a permit to use the RWCS.

Mr. Rosenzweig provided to the Board steps necessary to implement universal collection. He emphasized that should the Board want to utilize the non ad valorem assessment process, first class notices would have to be mailed to residents, public hearing held and adoption prior to September 15.

Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) or Volume Based Fee Structure: Mr. Rosenzweig shared that this method of disposal and collection may be more appealing to some citizens who do not use WM services. It allows the customer to control their costs by reducing their waste and recycling, as the cost of the service is based on the size of waste cart utilized. Other advantages realized by this method includes free recycling, provides parity, reduces generation of waste, and increases recycling participation. The Board was provided fee structures utilized by other municipalities around the state and country who utilize this method.

A brief overview was presented on the operation of the five local RWSCs which revealed that an estimated 15,072 households regularly use the facilities at a cost of \$1.3 million annually. Additionally, in response to its request regarding the cost of supplying recycling bins to RWSC customers, the Board was informed that it would cost approximately \$8 per bin for a one-time expense of \$116,000.

In conclusion, Mr. Rosenzweig provided an overview of the two approaches to consider in implementing universal collection in the unincorporated area and reviewed the options presented to the Board for consideration.

This concluded staff's presentation.

#### Board Discussion:

Commissioner Sauls expressed concerns about subjecting residents to another fee and referenced the recently adopted fire services fee of which her office continues to receive calls voicing objection to the charge. She asserted that closure of the RWSC would be a real disadvantage to rural customers and that illegal dumping in the forest and along forest roads would increase by this action. She remarked

that it was "poor timing" to implement mandatory collection and proclaimed that the Chambers would be filled by residents opposed to this action.

*Commissioner Sauls moved, duly seconded for discussion by Commissioner Dailey, to approve Option 5: Accept staff's report on universal collection and take no further action at this time.*

Commissioner Dozier opined that it was the right time to implement universal collection as the County would have two years to educate the community and the economy is improved. Commissioner Dozier had a number of questions for staff from which she learned that the \$1.3 million subsidy was funded by the entire unincorporated general revenue dollars and the changes would benefit the current method of collection, disposal and recycling. She ascertained that although there are significant challenges in reaching some properties within the unincorporated area, staff proposed options such as combining of residential waste and recycling in a small dumpster type container assessable on a nearby highway. Additionally, staff commented that RWCS closures included the collection center at the solid waste facility; however, this decision could be revisited. Commissioner Dozier stated that she understood the concerns regarding the additional fee, but with a good public education campaign felt the programs could be properly implemented and this was the direction the County needed to go.

*Commissioner Dozier offered a substitute motion to approve Options 1 & 3: 1) If the Board directs universal collection for the entire unincorporated area, direct staff to: a. Proceed with developing the franchise renewal process to include implementing universal collection in the unincorporated area effective October 1, 2013; b. Correspondingly close the rural waste collection centers effective October 1, 2013, and c. Authorize an extension of the existing franchise agreement with Waste Management, Inc. from March 2013 to September 2013. The motion died for lack of a second.*

Commissioner Akinyemi commended staff for their excellent and detailed presentation. He indicated that this was an issue he had advocated for a while and would in the long run be of cost benefit. He stressed the need to engage and receive public comment prior to implementation. He pointed out that the current method of collection was inefficient and the subsidy could not be sustained. Commissioner Akinyemi offered Options 2 & 3 as a compromise stating that it was consistent with what should be offered in the USA and that PAYT if presented correctly would be appealing to some residents.

*Commissioner Akinyemi made a substitute motion, duly seconded by Commissioner Maddox, to approve Options 2 & 3: 2) If the Board directs universal collection inside the USA, direct staff to: a. Proceed with developing the franchise renewal process to include implementing universal collection inside the unincorporated USA effective October 1, 2013; b. Correspondingly establish an annual permit fee for utilizing the rural waste collection centers effective October 1, 2013, and c. Authorize an extension of the existing franchise agreement with Waste Management, Inc. from March 2013 to September 2013, and 3) direct staff to proceed with implementing universal collection with Pay-as-You-Throw (PAYT).*

Commissioner Maddox stated that he could support the motion with the addition of a friendly amendment. He asked that the motion include direction to staff to come back with a pay-as-you-throw concept for the rural waste collection centers. Commissioner Maddox offered that the concept would integrate those outside the USA in recycling efforts and confirmed with staff that the recommendation would assist the program in achieving self-sufficiency and help efforts to achieve the 75% mandated recycling goal. Staff commented on a proposed concept to implement a PAYT system at the rural centers such as the purchase of colored plastic bags which would be deposited at the center for a fee. Commissioner Maddox also pointed out the important role of the rural waste collection centers at sites for social interaction among residents. The friendly amendment was accepted by Commissioner Akinyemi.

Commissioner Desloge submitted that the Board has been hesitant to live by its Guiding Principle that the Solid Waste fund operate like a business and the issue of subsidy has to be addressed. He went

on record in support of Option 2 with the understanding to eventually incorporate Option 1. He too commented on the need to communicate with the public from the very beginning of this process. He established with Mr. Rosenzweig that the intent of Option 2 is to bring the Board into compliance with its guiding principles of a self sustaining Solid Waste program.

Commissioner Sauls expressed concerns about liability for the off-site waste containers (for those areas not accessible to WM vehicles) and reiterated her opposition to the motion.

Commissioner Proctor joined the workshop at 12:48 p.m.

Commissioner Sauls questioned the PAYT concept at the rural waste centers and the issuance of annual permits. Mr. Rosenzweig responded that staff would, pursuant to Board's current motion, not implement the permit fee concept, but go with a different PAYT concept for rural waste centers. Commissioner Sauls confirmed that there would not be a per month fee established.

The Board emphasized its desire that the public receive notice of the proposed change as far in advance as possible. Mr. Rosenzweig assured that Board that a broad communication plan would be developed to include specific timelines and timeframes and various types of communication methods.

Commissioner Dozier opined that the current motion would increase illegal dumping more than other options. She stated that public education component was key and suggested that staff "get out of the box" and consider other types of educational tools rather than letters and pamphlets.

County Administrator Alam clarified that the manner in which items such as furniture, household items, tires, appliances, yard debris, etc. are collected would continue as is; however a rate would need to be established for the disposal of the "bags" that would be sufficient to cover to cost of rural waste collection site operation.

Commissioner Sauls requested that the motion include Townhall meetings be held at the Woodville, Ft. Braden and Miccosukee service areas. The request was accepted by Commissioner Akinyemi.

Commissioner Dozier suggested that an area at the RWSC be designated where reusable bulky items can be placed for reuse. Norm Thomas responded that Option 2 includes a plan to add 12 x 20 covered pads at the sites.

Chairman Dailey stated that he shared sentiments on both sides of this issue. He believes that universal collection in the USA is the appropriate action to take, but agreed that individuals live in the rural areas because they do not want to pay for certain services. He deemed communication the key to successfully implementing the change and requested staff bring back a very detailed communication plan on how this action will be communicated to the public over the next two years. He indicated that he would support the motion today as presented in workshop form, but would withhold final judgment until he sees the final numbers. He indicated his interest in seeing the costs of PAYT in the rural waste centers.

The motion to approve Options 2 & 3, as amended: If the Board directs universal collection inside the USA, direct staff to: a. Proceed with developing the franchise renewal process to include implementing universal collection inside the unincorporated USA effective October 1, 2013; b. Correspondingly establish an annual permit fee for utilizing the rural waste collection centers effective October 1, 2013, and c. Authorize an extension of the existing franchise agreement with Waste Management, Inc. from march 2013 to September 2013, and 3) direct staff to proceed with implementing universal collection with Pay-as-You-Throw (PAYT). In addition add a PAYT component for the rural waste collection centers; prepare a comprehensive communication plan to include timeframes and methods of communication, and conduct Townhall meetings at Ft. Braden, Miccosukee and Woodville service areas.

The motion as amended carried 5-2 (Commissioners Sauls and Proctor in opposition).

The workshop was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
John Dailey, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Inzer, Clerk of the Court  
Leon County, Florida

RECEIVED