

Agenda item 10: Assessment of solid waste proposals

Like almost any issue that I focus on the questions just keep coming. Why does the city negotiate the waste management contract on behalf of the actual users/payers? Why does the city, in effect, get a \$300,000 kick back from the waste management company and no one even notices? If I recall, Recology also offered the city some attractively priced street cleaning services as part of their old contract. The vendor and the city negotiating for us both have an incentive to increase the cost of service. Seems like a conflict of interest.

City staff is apparently point on the negotiation. I don't think any of the current city staff live in the city and experience the service and service needs that may be unique to our city. For example, most of the cities around us have dedicated local sites for electronic recycling. Sebastopol does not. Half our population is elderly and may not be easily able to load large objects into their pickup truck and haul it to the dump. Much of our city is wooded and that creates a significant burden to collect and recycle leaves and branches.

Although, city council members have a much better insight into the needs of homeowners. You are conflicted as well. You probably want the \$300,000 as badly as the city staff does. We do need input from someone that is not making more money from higher rates.

This decision will have a broad impact. Citizens are likely to be hit with a substantial increase in rates. You heard the complaints that citizens were not heard regarding water rates. Start at tonight's meeting planning for a very well publicized town hall to present to anyone interested in the contract decision. Maybe as people get used to the zoom and in person town halls as an opportunity to voice their opinion, attendance will continue to grow. This should be a single issue town hall, not a city council meeting that goes into the middle of the night before it gets to the topic of the waste contract.