

CITY OF DYERSBURG
Board of Mayor & Aldermen/Aldermen
Monday, November 15, 2021

1. **Call to Order:** The Board of Mayor and Aldermen/Aldermen convened for their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, November 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Dyersburg Municipal Court Room. Mayor John Holden called the meeting to order. All members were present. The meeting opened with a prayer by Alderwoman Mary Claire Hopper.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Mayor John Holden called for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 1, 2021 meeting. Alderman Baltimore made a motion to approve the minutes and Alderman Hammond seconded the motion and the minutes were approved. All were in favor.
3. **Unfinished Business: None**
4. **New Business:**

A. Street/Sanitation Committee Meeting Minutes – November 10, 2021 – Chairwoman Mary Claire Hopper

The proposal was first brought before the Street and Sanitation Committee, consisting of Alderwoman and Committee Chair Mary Claire Hopper, Alderman Ricky Hammond, Alderman James Baltimore, and Mayor John Holden, on July 29 by River City representatives David Schweitzer and Jamie McCoy. The proposal included leasing the City 2 Heil automated trucks, which McCoy mentioned could serve on average 1,600 homes per day, every household receiving a cart from River City, and having 2 City of Dyersburg employees per truck. Additionally, McCoy said the City would have \$423,600 in annual savings in the Solid Waste enterprise fund (however on Nov. 10 the direct savings was announced as approximately \$350,000). The committee did not take any action in July. Mayor Holden said he would reach out to mayors in other municipalities who use River City's services.

Mayor Holden reported his findings when the committee took up the discussion again on October 22. He noted the cities of Bolivar and Lexington use River City's services and did not have any issues.

During the October 22 meeting, it was mentioned that the potential cost savings should be considered, especially with the need of a new cell at the landfill looming.

Mayor John Holden recommended the River City reps, City Treasurer Steve Anderson, City Recorder Scott Ball, and Sanitation Director Greg Wilson meet to hash out all the numbers involved with the proposal and to have some time to field questions and concerns from residents.

- This will only be a positive impact on the cleanliness of the City.
- Direct labor savings annually of approximately \$350,000

- First-year savings will mostly fund the purchase of the cans to be provided.
- After the first year, the savings will help fund the next cell construction at the landfill.
- This will also have a direct impact on safety and Workers Comp claims (ex.: cuts, punctures, back injuries, and slip and fall injuries).
- There will be no excuse for not having or using a can.
- Trash will still need to be bagged and tied to prevent blowing litter into the street.
- Provisions will be made for the disabled. There will be an application process.
- The City will provide the service via 2 side-loader trucks and a satellite rear loader, the latter which will serve as a backup to the side loaders.
- This should reduce the number of code violations.

Over the course of the meetings, the following was also discussed:

— The current fee of \$22 would stay the same, however, if there is a need for an additional trash bin there would probably be an additional charge, though the amount for an additional can was not discussed.

— Trash cans would belong to the property owner, and the property owner would be responsible for the can.

— Sanitation employees who do not retain their job within the department would have opportunities to move into other City departments.

— There would be an application process for those who are disabled or have a hardship to have their trash cans taken from outside of the home to the curb and back by City employees. Wilson said the City can create their own application but noted the City of Jackson requires a doctor's statement to go along with their application.

— The City of Dyersburg and the Sanitation Department would still have full control of operations. River City would only lease the trucks and provide maintenance, with the exception of brakes and tires, which would be the City's responsibility.

— The Sanitation Fund is an enterprise fund and is separate from any of the other funds and budgets within the City. Any costs and potential savings would have to come from and go into the Sanitation Fund only.

Prior to adjourning on Nov. 10, the committee voted to approve the proposal from River City with a target date of beginning on July 1, 2022.

B. Dyersburg Discusses Curbside Garbage Pickup

On Monday, following the reading of the November 10th committee meeting minutes, Chair Hopper motioned to approve the contract proposal with River City and move to curbside pickup with a second from Alderwoman Vanedda Webb.

With a motion on the floor, the item moved to discussion.

“I have gotten a lot of calls. The other day at the Veterans Day parade I was cornered by a lot of those veterans,” said Alderman Baltimore. “They want to know what are we going to do with the money if it is a savings, how is it going to be a savings, and they are against us doing it. They were asking me if it would be possible to have a public hearing before we make a decision that big and allow the citizens of Dyersburg to speak. One of the things they were concerned about was the elderly – what is the age of elderly?”

Hopper said she dropped off the bullet points from the Nov. 10 meeting into Baltimore’s mailbox, however, he said he did not see it.

Mayor Holden then reviewed the aforementioned bullet points.

Burks added, “Summarizing this, the City currently uses 3 rear-loader garbage trucks with 4 employees per truck to service approximately 5,700 homes each week. In the past, we’ve had some older trucks, but the maintenance had almost gotten up to about \$5,600 a month, over \$200,000 a year. What River City Hydraulics, Inc. in Memphis, and they are not affiliated with Red River Waste, they proposed the City enter into a lease of a buyback program for 2 automated trucks with 2 employees per truck that could serve approximately 1,600 homes per days and cover the City in approximately 3-4 days. Each truck would be on a 2-year lease buyback for \$6,000 per month or \$72,000 per year for a total of \$144,000 for the 2 trucks – they would be under warranty for 2 years and we would just have to be responsible for tires and brakes. It will still be City employees picking up garbage and running the trucks. In addition, we would lease 2 additional smaller single-axel satellite rear loaders that would be used to access areas the larger trucks couldn’t get into. These trucks would be on the 2-year lease buyback for approximately \$2,500 per month or \$30,000 a year for each truck (\$60,000 total annually). You [Wilson] hope after 2 years, you’re able to go down to 1 [single-axel satellite rear loader]. Each home will also receive a 96-gallon rolling cart with a 10-year warranty that River City would have to set up. The City would have to purchase those. Each cart will have a serial number with each address on a jump drive that will be given to the City. Residents will continue to pay \$22 a month for the once-a-week garbage pickup, curbside now. The savings will remain in the solid waste fund, which is an enterprise fund and is standalone from other funds, and be used to offset the cost to open the next cell at the landfill. I think Steve Anderson was quoted in one of the articles as saying in 5 years the estimated savings will be approximately \$1.4 million.

“Nobody is going to be for this because you’re paying the same, but the savings in future years is going toward the next cell,” Alderman Burks continued. “The savings can’t be put into another fund since this enterprise fund has to stand alone.”

Alderman Baltimore asked if there is a need for an extra trash can would there be an extra \$15 fee.

“Nothing has been said about \$15 a month,” said Burks. “It was said that it would cost extra.”

“Can I also remind the board that the first thing we did as aldermen and alderwomen is go on a bus, go around the City, and look at the mess that is all over town,” Hopper stated. “It is not my ward that’s the problem – it’s Poet’s Corner, it’s Milltown, all of the high-rental areas that are causing the main problems. Greg Wilson and Codes Enforcement can speak to that.”

“There’s a misconception, I think, out there with people that this is going to make trash worse in our City,” said Alderman Hammond. “I know there are concerns about that, especially as

Chair Hopper mentioned in my ward, but that is not what we have been discussing over the past 5 or 6 months.”

“I don’t believe that,” replied Wilson. “I think this can only be a positive impact on cleaning this city up. What we’re doing now is not working. It’s not everybody, but we have a big majority of this town where it not being taken care of.”

Hopper asked Wilson to address the dangers - such as needles, feces, and urine – Dyersburg sanitation workers face while on the job.

“It is terrible. There are some people that don’t have respect for what we do out here. Needles are a huge problem. I’ve had several people get stuck with needles, cut with broken glass, and there are people who throw knives in their trash. My guys get cut. This can only improve our situation when it comes to Workers Comp claims. I don’t know if you all realize when someone gets stuck with a needle it’s not 1 trip to the doctor – it’s a minimum of 3. We can only get better as far as I’m concerned, and I firmly believe this is the way to go.”

Alderman Baltimore asked what happens to the employees who would no longer be part of the sanitation department if the City did not have a place for them to go.

“We’re having trouble now hiring people. We’ve had a tremendous challenge like everyone else looking for workers,” said Mayor Holden. “We’re going to try our very best to incorporate these folks into other departments.”

Wilson estimated the number of employees moving from the sanitation department to other departments at 6.

“I’m not trying to say anything against the Mayor or any of you all,” said Baltimore. “All I’m trying to say is we want to make the best decision for the taxpayers, the people who voted for us. Dyersburg is a clean city...”

“No, it is not,” interjected Hopper. “It is not a clean city.”

“The taxpayers want to know what age is elderly?” Baltimore asked.

“It’s not an age. If you’re capable to bring it to the street, then we expect you to bring it to the street. It’s disabled or hardship,” said Wilson.

“On the list we have it is disabled, a medical condition, or a hardship,” replied Mayor Holden. “It is a modified garbage pickup. We talked about it last week that it is an educational process for folks that can apply for that. Sitting here, we are one of the last few cities that does the backdoor pickup. We’re talking about cleaning up the community and things like that. I’ve talked to a lot of mayors and cities around West Tennessee about this. It’s hard for me to believe that all of these other cities have been doing this for years and years, yet we’re hesitant to do it because it’s not going to clean our city up? I can’t imagine those folks continuing to do that, such as Lexington for 6 years now and their city not be clean. It’s a change for us, and I think there’s a misconception as well that we’re not going to be in control. We are. We are not farming it out. We will still manage it, Greg will still be over the department, we will still have employees, and we will still look for employees. I think it is a positive move for the City.”

Alderman Cole said the City needs to educate the community about what is going on.

“I fuss about this a lot. Don’t tell me to go to a website or to Facebook,” he stated. “The majority of people in my ward do not have Facebook or have the newspaper. What that means is if we want this to get out, we’ve got to knock on doors.”

Referring to the modified garbage pickup application, the cost of additional cans, and the other concerns he had shared, Baltimore asked if the board could work out everything prior to voting.

“We have had meetings, Mr. Baltimore. We’ve had lots of discussions about it,” said Hopper.

“I’ll vote for it if all of this works out,” Baltimore stated.

Burks asked how long would it take to have the trucks delivered.

“In order for this to happen in a timely manner, we can’t keep pushing this off,” said Wilson. “It takes a long time to order trucks, get them here, and get all of the pieces in place.”

“What’s a timely manner – today, tomorrow?” asked Baltimore.

“I need answers tonight to get trucks by the middle of next year,” stated Wilson.

In a roll call vote, the motion passed 7 -1 with Hopper, Burks, Hammond, Gilbert, Moody and Mayor Holden voting in favor, while Alderman Baltimore voted in opposition. Alderman Cole opted to pass.

C. Bids – Greg Williams

There were no bids to discuss.

REPORT FROM ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN

James Baltimore: Alderman Baltimore said resident Lee Strayhorn was in attendance and would like to address the board concerning issues in Ward F.

Mr. Strayhorn was granted access to speak and said he had contacted the local humane society and Dyersburg Police Department concerning animal abuse and dogs barking in his district.

Mayor Holden said he and Strayhorn had spoken on numerous occasions, which resulted in an individual being cited to court.

Mr. Strayhorn said there had been other times over the previous year where he had reported animal abuse and dogs barking and claimed nothing had been done.

“The humane society is in Dyersburg, so there’s got to be someone we can complain to about them not doing their job,” said Strayhorn. “You can’t get any assistance from the humane society or the police department.”

“The humane society is not a city department. We have discussed that. It’s not a county department. The city and county make contributions to their operations. There is a lady there that runs that, a board of directors, and a chairperson. We have talked about it,” said Holden.

“Mayor, if we’re giving money to the humane society, let’s get their attention by holding back on funding,” said Moody. “We’ve passed ordinances on these barking dogs, and the police department needs

to get them – if no one comes to the door, why don't the humane society pick up the dog? This is all over town. If a person is going to have a dog, they need to take care of it.”

Mr. Strayhorn, referring to the report from aldermen, said aldermen and alderwomen should always have something to report.

Edward Burks: Alderman Burks said he was glad to see Mall Blvd. and Parr Avenue finished.

Willie Cole: Alderman Cole thanked Mr. Strayhorn for attending and speaking.

Meghan Gilbert: No report

Ricky Hammond: Alderman Hammond thanked Mr. Strayhorn for speaking and stated, “We may say that we have no report, but a lot of times I will call Chief Isbell myself. A lot of the times when I say I don't have a report it doesn't mean that I didn't have an issue somewhere and didn't bring it to a department head.”

Mary Claire Hopper: Alderwoman Hopper asked for the Local Government Committee to meet soon.

Dennis Moody: Alderman Moody asked Mayor Holden about the leaf pickup schedule and said the City needs to encourage people to not rake their leaves into the street. Mayor Holden said the street department handles leaf pickup, which began on November 8.

Vanessa Webb: Alderwoman Webb thanked all the citizens who attended Monday night's meeting and the prior committee meetings.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

John Holden, Mayor

Scott Ball, City Recorder