

**HIGH POINT CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
(PRE-BUDGET #5)  
HIGH POINT MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
MARCH 10, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.  
3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR LOBBY CONFERENCE ROOM**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Mayor Bill Bencini; Mayor Pro Tem Golden (Ward 1); and Council Members Cynthia Davis (At-Large); Latimer Alexander (At-Large); Chris Williams (Ward 2); Alyce Hill (Ward 3); Jay Wagner (Ward 4); and Jason Ewing (Ward 6)

**Absent:**

Council Member Jim Davis (Ward 5)

**Staff Present:**

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Budget and Performance Manager; Roslyn McNeil, Budget Analyst; Laura Altizer, Budget Analyst; Jeron Hollis, Communications & Public Engagement Director; Glenda Barnes, Public Services Analyst; Loren Hill, Economic Development Director; Terry Houk, Public Services Director; Robby Stone, Public Services Assistant Director; Lee Tillery, Director of Parks & Recreation; Tracy Pegram, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation; Angela Kirkwood, Human Resources Director; Maria Smith, Deputy City Clerk; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

**News Media:**

Pat Kimbrough, High Point Enterprise

***Note: The following handouts were distributed and will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings:***

- *Parks & Recreation Presentation*
- *Sanitation Solid Waste Presentation*
- *Economic Development Annual Report*

Mayor Bencini called the meeting to order. Greg Demko, City Manager, spoke briefly on the additional information for the budget and background items. He referenced the Economic Development Annual Report and provided each Council Member a copy of the report. Mr. Demko explained the topics on today's agenda included presentations from the Parks & Recreation Department, Sanitation/Solid Waste, and also a discussion on the Residency Requirements request which was sent to the Council and would.

He noted that Tim McKinney, Director of Facility Services, was not able to attend today's meeting, so the presentation for Facilities would be heard at a later date. He then introduced and turned the floor over to Lee Tillery, Director of Parks & Recreation.

### **Parks & Recreation**

Mr. Tillery began his presentation and reviewed their Mission:

*High Point Parks & Recreation provides opportunities for citizens to play, learn, and enjoy. We strive to provide passive and active recreation services, parks and facilities that enrich the lives of all residents and promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles.*

### **System Overview**

Mr. Tillery reported on their System Overview which consists of the following:

- ✓ 10 mini parks
- ✓ 14 neighborhood parks
- ✓ 2 community parks
- ✓ 8 special use parks
- ✓ 4 sports complexes
- ✓ 5 recreation center parks
- ✓ 1,283 acres of park land
- ✓ 300 acres of medians, islands, and right-of-ways
- ✓ 28.16 acres of greenway
- ✓ 2,840 total acres, along with the water

Mr. Tillery reviewed the amenities on the fields such as football, soccer fields, etc. Council Member Latimer Alexander asked Mr. Tillery if we have the right mix of fields available for citizens and noted that lacrosse seems to be an active sport now. In response to Council Member Alexander's concerns, Mr. Tillery advised that he felt High Point does have a good mixture of athletic fields. Mr. Demko asked about occupancy and use of the fields and Mr. Tillery explained the fields are frequently used and when looking at tournament play, and he sees baseball and soccer being the most popular. He advised that they are seeing an influx of lacrosse and pointed out the football and soccer fields also serve as multi-purpose athletic fields to accommodate such sports as rugby, lacrosse, ultimate frisbee and field hockey. He also stated that in a parks and recreation setting, there seems to be more travel teams playing in a travel setting and staff does try to attract the tournaments to High Point as well. As far as the mixture of fields, he also pointed out that we probably have more tennis courts than we need (currently there are 32).

Council Member C. Davis inquired about the sign that is up at the West End Fields that says the fields are closed until further notice. Mr. Tillery advised it was probably due to a maintenance issue and noted staff tries to rotate the various fields in order to perform the needed maintenance. Council Member C. Davis brought this up as a result of the question being posed to her by somebody that called her several times. This person thought there were people playing from across the street on the fields, so they were upset because others were using the fields but they

were not allowed to use them. She asked if the school had leased the field and if the fields were closed during the school season for the school to use.

Mayor Bencini asked about the status of Harvell Park and what it is currently being used for. Mr. Tillery replied there is a baseball area there and they have turned the upper field into a cricket area.

Mr. Tillery proceeded to review the Park Amenities, that include a campsite, 40 playground units with 33 swing structures, and 5 recreation centers (Allen Jay, Deep River, Morehead, Southside, and Oakview).

#### Parks & Recreation Divisions

Mr. Tillery then shared a quick breakdown of their four divisions: Administration; Recreation; Parks; Special Facilities. He introduced Tracy Pegram, the Parks & Recreation Assistant Director. They were able to reorganize this past year and they now have a Finance Department with one person. He mentioned they are one of the very few last departments in the State that employs sworn law officers as Park rangers. He reported that the Special Facilities are all basically revenue generating facilities (High Point City Lake Park, the Complex and everything that is within Oak Hollow, the campground, tennis center, Blair Park Golf Course, Marina, Piedmont Environmental Center). There are about 40 employees in the Parks Maintenance Division and Mr. Tillery noted these employees are the front line as far as what they do for the aesthetics throughout the city.

#### Cost Recovery

Regarding cost recovery, Mr. Tillery shared the revenues over the past three years which has been pretty consistent around \$2.6-\$2.7 million. In anticipation of warmer weather, he expects the revenues to increase to around \$2.9 million this year. He then reviewed the Capital line items of and noted they are bringing in roughly 25 percent of what it costs to run the Parks & Recreation Department, which is our cost recovery practice. Mayor Bencini inquired about fees charged for bank fishing. Mr. Demko advised as staff develops the budget, additional information could be brought back for consideration. Mr. Tillery reiterated that most of their revenue comes from use of the golf courses, City Lake Park and Oak Hollow Park.

He shared some of the department's Infrastructure needs. He pointed out they have not replaced any of the parking lots in about 20 years within their facilities. Mr. Tillery displayed some deterioration photos of parking lots near the marina, golf course, and City Lake Park. He explained they prioritize the needs based on the condition/use and rank them in the CIP. He stated some of the parking lots have deteriorated where something will have to be done. Mr. Demko solicited and welcomed Council's guidance in these areas. Council Member C. Davis commented that it should be Oakview for sure.

#### Tennis Courts

Mr. Tillery then reviewed the tennis courts (32 courts in system; 4 indoor, 8 outdoor clay courts, 20 hard courts). He advised that the tennis courts at Armstrong Park were converted to four pickleball courts to meet a growing demand of pickleball in our senior citizens. The tennis courts at Oakview Recreation Center have been totally reconstructed and now the courts are

being used all the time. Deep River, next to the Tennis Center, is the most popular venue for people to play tennis. He shared some photos of the current conditions which showed a lot of cracking. He advised that Deep River is in need of some major reconstruction and has gotten to the point where it cannot be patched anymore based on its current condition.

Council Member Hill posed a question about how many of the 32 tennis courts that are actually random courts (mentioned Parkwood/Pinehurst/Mohawk Park) because she felt these would least likely draw people. Mr. Tillery explained Mohawk is such a small, unique park, but there were two tennis courts there, two at Oakview, etc.... He then reviewed the location of the 32 tennis courts.

### Playgrounds

Mr. Tillery reported that a new playground structure was recently put up at Southside and shared some pictures. The city has 29 parks with playground amenities (25 composite structures, 15 stand-alone, and 33 swing structures). He pointed out if maintenance is deferred and these playgrounds are not replaced, they deteriorate quickly and are expensive to replace. Since 2013, staff has tried to get some of the older units out. Council Member C. Davis asked if all the wooden structures have been replaced; Mr. Tillery replied that there are no parks with wooden structures.

### Park Signage

Moving forward, Mr. Tillery shared some photos of existing signs that identify the various parks. He advised these signs are really old, inconsistent and do not bring High Point any type of positive identity. Staff is looking to erect some new signs to identify the parks and be proud of what High Point has to let people know what facilities are maintained by the city. He remarked this would really build the city's image and put a major emphasis on the pride the city takes in its parks and facilities. Council Member C. Davis asked about the cost of the signage. Mr. Tillery noted it really depends on the size of the sign, and estimated the larger signs to be around \$5,000. He pointed out the signs to the various parks/facilities would vary in size, but the goal is to be consistent with the branding, image and colors so people will associate the signs with the City of High Point.

### Infrastructure Park Maintenance Needs

While reviewing the Park Infrastructure Park Maintenance Needs, Mr. Tillery reviewed the following items that also need to be maintained:

- Trash receptacles
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- Shelters (36 total)

### **City Lake Park:**

Over 230,000 people visited City Lake Park in the past year.

- Train
  - Currently 50+ years old
  - 45 days lost due to service last year
  - No longer make parts for replacement
  - Increases in maintenance and repairs budget

- \$180,000 to replace train

Council Member Alexander asked if the train was not previously purchased by one of the local civic clubs. Mr. Tillery advised that it was and informed Council that staff has reached out to some of the local civic clubs, but there was not much interest.

### **Carousel Replacement**

- \$300,000

### **Old gymnasium that is not being used**

Mr. Tillery reported that City Lake Park is an expensive park to maintain due to deferring a lot of maintenance and purchases that should have been made within the last 10-15 years. He advised that some improvements have been made: replacement of boat docks, replaced restrooms on the Camp Ann side, etc...

### Improvements/renovations to Old Gymnasium

Council Member Wagner suggested that City Lake Park has more potential than what it currently is. He mentioned on the river side, there is an amphitheater, but he was not sure if this is in use any more. He felt this area has a lot of unrealized potential and noted it would be a good venue for a music festival. He mentioned the large seating area on the backside of the gym away from the pool with a stage. He suggested that he would be in favor of doing more of an in-depth study to see what it could be utilized for. Mayor Bencini mentioned the boxing events that used to be held in the gym. Mr. Tillery agreed with the potential, but pointed out there needs to be a Master Plan in place that identifies how to move forward. Council Member Ewing asked about any adjacent acreage that could be acquired due to the parking that would be needed. Council Member Wagner suggested for large events, parking off-site would be a possibility.

### Council Street Park

Mr. Tillery suggested the fencing be removed as well as the tennis courts, and noted this park could be set up like some of the other neighborhood parks, but it would take some money. He explained the park presently serves no purpose and needs to be cleaned up to encourage more use. He noted High Point Friends School is next to the park and they may have a vested interest in working with the city on a collaborative effort. He suggested removing the tennis courts here

### Westchester Park

He noted a Master Plan for this park was developed in 2013 as to what the park would look like and the amenities that would be put in once the money was available to do it. This was estimated at \$4.6 million, but now it would be closer to \$5 million. He shared that there is still room for growth with some parcels that could be purchased. Mr. Tillery suggested that the city should not build anything that could not be properly maintained, but felt it would be a great amenity with a great location. He mentioned one of the proposed amenities at this park was a dog park and there the park currently has some mountain bike trails.

Council Member Ewing asked if it would make sense to start focusing on a couple of large scaled parks that can cover a broad range of activities versus all of the pocket parks or possibly

shutting down some of the smaller, deteriorating parks that are costly to maintain. Mr. Tillery did not feel the city could actually shut down a park because it would still be the city's to manage. Mayor Bencini pointed out if the city shuts down a park such as Triangle Park and questioned what the land would be used for because it would still have to be maintained. Council Member Wagner felt this was not an option and stressed the importance of parks in neighborhoods. Mayor Bencini argued that a better idea would be to take a big park and do what Greensboro did with a couple of theirs and just let the county start taking care of it.

Council Member C. Davis shared that the people in the Westchester area are looking for this park to come to fruition, but she does understand that the parks need to be repaired, maintained before a new park is considered. She reiterated that the people in this area want something because there is nothing there for the kids to do and with West End Park closed until further notice, there is not a lot for people to walk to and do. She suggested this would at least give them some place to go and ride their bikes. She noted some people don't want the dog park here and would prefer a dog park be put somewhere else and have some playground equipment beyond what has been proposed.

Mr. Demko asked staff did a calculation of how much it would be to properly maintain this park. Mr. Tillery replied that he did, but he did not have those figures with him. Council Member Ewing remembered that most parks were gravel parking lots and gravel drives and all of High Point's lots at these facilities are paved. He asked what the cost breakdown would be to pave versus gravel. Mr. Tillery noted the gravel would obviously be cheaper than paving. Mr. Demko mentioned the on-going maintenance cost and how it could be funded. Mr. Demko suggested one of the things that will need to be watched is the on-going maintenance costs.

#### Dog Park

Mr. Tillery mentioned there has been a lot of interest from the community for a dog park. He noted that he met with an interest group on a couple of occasions who expressed an interest in raising funds for the cost of constructing a dog park if the city can come up with the area. The estimated cost to construct a dog park is approximately \$75,000-\$90,000. Mr. Tillery noted it would need to be a location with access to parking, access to water and he pointed out the maintenance for dog parks is high due to surfacing issues, smell, dogs barking if it is near a residential area, etc....

Council Member Hill asked how much space would be needed for a dog park and asked if a dog park could be put at the Council Street park once the courts are removed. Tillery suggested this may be a possibility and explained it really depends on the size. He noted that it could take a minimum of two acres, depending on the separation areas. Council Member C. Davis felt trees were also an important consideration for a dog park because of the shade they provide. She suggested as consideration moves forward, staff needs to be considerate of the fact that shade is an important part of the enjoyment of a dog park.

Council Member Wagner asked if there has been any discussion about the possibility of converting Armstrong Park into a dog park because of its convenience and proximity to the greenway and a residential area which would allow people to walk to it, and pointed out the ballfield that is there presently is not used much. Council Member C. Davis asked how many

other parks were adjacent to the greenway that could possibly be considered for these same reasons and felt it would be a great idea for re-use to spread the areas out a little bit that aren't being utilized to the full potential. Council Member Alexander suggested the possibility of opening up the area at the bottom of the hill at Deep River which is known as "University Park."

#### Facility Improvements Recreation Facility Needs

Mr. Tillery briefly spoke on the needs to be updated such as older facilities, new bleachers, HVAC systems, flooring, painting/interior/exterior, interior renovations, and recreation equipment so that they can move forward.

#### Senior Center

Mr. Tillery shared some photos of the current Senior Center and advised the two biggest needs in the system is more money for maintenance, and the second biggest need would be the Senior Center. He reported that the Senior Center is inadequate and is not meeting the needs of the growing population. He noted they have about 10,000 square feet and pointed out most facilities in neighboring cities are between 20,000-30,000 square feet as far as what they offer. He predicts by 2030 with the Census that there will be close to 30,000 people, which would equate to about 23 percent of the population as senior citizens moving forward. He stressed this is a real need. Council Member Alexander felt the former mall building would have been an ideal location for a police station, senior center, etc...

Mr. Demko advised a space needs facility study is currently underway specifically for the City Hall, Police, Fire, Administration, Senior Center and the results of that study are expected to be complete within two to three months.

Council Member Wagner noted that the last Council discussed the possibility of doing something at the Morehead Rec Center for the seniors. Both Council Member Ewing and Mayor Pro Tem Golden agreed that Council did talk about possibly doing some additions to it and turning it into a senior center, but no decisions were made. Mr. McCaslin advised that it would have to be part of a bond package more than likely and this was probably why the idea has not gone anywhere. Mr. Tillery noted the senior center is now more focused on an active lifestyle involving fitness, active recreation programs, kayaking, walking, etc.... Mr. Demko pointed out the current Senior Center is heavily used.

Mr. Tillery reviewed the cost of \$188,000 of what the city has typically been investing in capital improvements in the Parks & Recreation Department over the past three to four years. He pointed out this is a reflection of a lot of deferred maintenance over the years. He advised they do have prioritization of all the needed capital improvement projects, but noted it is a matter of funding to be able to do them.

#### Golf Courses (maintenance and equipment)

Mr. Tillery shared some photos of aged equipment that is currently being used for maintenance purposes at the various golf courses. He pointed out one piece of Kubota equipment has 519,000 and shared a lot of the equipment is at least 16-17 years old. Parks & Recreation is proposing to go to a lease program for equipment used at the golf courses at Oak Hollow. This will enable

them to attain a brand new fleet of maintenance equipment through a lease at a lesser price than paying for capital equipment and repairs.

Council Member C. Davis suggested Parks & Rec look at the same lease program and formula that is currently being used by the Fire Department for the fire truck/equipment purchases since parks & Rec provides so many amenities. Mr. Demko agreed and also noted that Mr. Olmedo, Budget and Performance Manager, had been working on some business plans for the various departments for the next year. Mr. Demko pointed out this would allow the city to get fresh, new equipment every three years without the service costs. Mr. Tillery pointed out this cost is lower than what has generally been budgeted for capital equipment in the past.

Council Member Alexander shared that while visiting a park in the D.C. area recently, he observed some paddle boats with fiberglass fixtures over the top; some were swans, dragons, flamingos, etc. He pointed out these paddle boats were very popular and people were paying to use them. Compared to the paddle boats that High Point uses, he felt these paddle boats that look fun would be great for Oak Hollow, City Lake. Mr. Tillery remarked this is something similar to what happened with the canoes and kayaks this past year and noted use of the canoes and kayaks has proved to be in high demand because the revenues have basically paid for them.

Council Member C. Davis followed up on some emails on Parks and Recreation regarding facilities for soccer, lacrosse and some other things and the huge demand for this in the community. She stated she would like for Council to consider this and she brought it up at the Guilford County Parks and Recreation meeting the other night and someone said that they may be able to find someone that may be willing to donate a building. She noted the first question they asked was if the City of High Point would be willing to contribute any dollars to upfitting the building for an indoor facility, along with the County. Mayor Bencini asked Loren Hill, Economic Development Director, if he was aware of any clear span buildings that might be available in High Point that are not leased or used. She also suggested maybe there were some fields that are not being utilized that could possibly be covered with a shell to make them indoor fields. Council Member Ewing pointed out most indoor facilities are more privately owned and operated. Mayor Pro Tem Golden inquired about who manages the indoor track in Winston-Salem because it is full and being used all the time.

Mayor Bencini asked about the programming trends. From an athletic side, Mr. Tillery noted that he is seeing a lot more privatization with Parks & Recreation departments working and managing with these groups. He pointed out that High Point Parks & Recreation does this and works with the soccer association, PSA, but also works with Little League Baseball at the Johnson Street Baseball Complex. He noted his department still runs football and basketball with and managing more groups. The Parks & Recreation Department will continue to run football and basketball programs and will continue to work with the soccer association, PSA. The department will continue to do special programming within the High Point Parks & Recreation Center and in the Special Facilities in and around the lake and hoping to grow the aspect of programming.

### Sanitation/Solid Waste

Robby Stone, Public Services Assistant Director, shared that this presentation was put together with the help of Terry Houk, Public Services Director, Glenda Barnes and several of the Superintendents within the Solid Waste Division. He noted that Solid Waste consists of four different divisions:

1. Environmental Services
2. Material Recovery Facility
3. Kersey Valley Landfill
4. Ingleside Compost Facility

He noted that High Point has been collecting solid waste since the 1920s. The MRF operations started in 1990 as a “dirty” MRF and transitioned into a single stream in the mid-1990s. The Kersey Valley Landfill started collecting trash there in 1993 and Ingleside Compost Facility was implemented in 1993. He shared the mission of the Solid Waste Division is:

*Collecting, processing and managing the waste our City generates is everyone’s responsibility. Preserving the environment through collection, processing and disposal is our mission. We are dedicated in advancing Solid Waste solutions in an environmentally friendly way and helping our community become a national model for Solid Waste management.*

### Environmental Services- Daily Operations

Mr. Stone shared this division has played a large part within the overall Solid Waste Division group and consists of:

- 13 automated routes
- 3 yard waste routes with six back up rear loaders due to the Furniture Market; the rear loaders are used downtown to collect the waste
- 1 split route (a 60/40 split where it collects garbage and recycling by one truck)
- 1 special route (a smaller vehicle used in the alleyways, dead animal pick-up, etc...)
- 3 bulk waste routes (with one back-up boom truck)
- 2 front loader multi-family routes (with one back-up front loader)

He noted that several years ago the city decided to transition to the automated routes and purchased a lot of used trucks. The department now has a fleet of 2007-2010 automated trucks, but issues arise because sometimes these trucks need maintenance which results in down time, which can result in delayed collections. He pointed out a delayed collection can also translate into overtime for this group, along with overtime wherever that truck is taking those collections to whether it be to the MRF, Ingleside or the Landfill.

Historically, Mr. Stone reported that this group had collected 400-550 tons of cardboard from the Furniture Market and they have dedicated about 6,000 man hours during this time. They historically respond to over 100+ illegal dumping complaints monthly. The services provided in this division are garbage collection, recycling collection, yard waste collection, bulk waste

collection, multi-family collection, special collections such as the dead animal pick-up and waste collection, Furniture Market and other special events, illegal dumping clean-up, etc....

#### Funding History

Mr. Stone revealed back in FY12-13 this group was funded through the General Fund, then the decision was made to transition Environmental Services into an Enterprise Fund. In FY 2013-2014, a Solid Waste availability fee was implemented at \$5; and in the next year, that was increased to \$8. The current year is at \$11 dollars and to stay on track, next year the Solid Waste availability fee will be \$14 and at that time this group will be fully self-supported, self-funded as an Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Stone compared High Point's cost to collect versus others and pointed out the others are only supplying garbage and recycling and their costs exceed High Points, which indicates that High Point is giving its customer base a lot of service for a very good price.

#### Annual Streets Cleanups

In keeping High Point Beautiful, Mr. Stone shared that they host two annual clean ups:

1. The Big Sweep in the fall
2. The Great American Cleanup in the spring

Their goal is to increase the number of cleanup events and to increase their volunteers from 600 to 3,000 so they can continue to have a better looking community. Mr. Demko mentioned Rebecca Coplin is probably the busiest city employee pitching the event to everybody and getting a great response and getting closer to the 3,000, while targeting businesses like High Point, Inc., Chamber of Commerce, etc... who have been very responsive. He noted a big event would be coming up on April 30<sup>th</sup> and he would like to see 3,000 people from the community working on it with a desire to expand it each month to have 500-600 every month going out to help keep High Point cleaner.

Mr. Stone communicated the Clean and Green event that is held once every two years. It is an in-haul transportation terminal and joint effort between the City and County. He reported that at this event they collect household hazardous waste, electronics, personal and financial documents to be shredded, mattresses and box springs, tires and large appliances. The most recently was this past year with 671 vehicles passing through. Mr. Demko raised the question why this is only done once every two years. Mr. Stone replied that they are looking to have this budgeted to have this done annually \$17,000-20,000 with the joint effort of the County and if we do it on our own it would be between \$25-30,000.

He noted to replace the screener is estimated at \$400,000 and this money has been set aside in the budget. He reiterated that residents could bring stuff to the facility for disposal for free, but there is a charge for commercial. He explained staff would look more into the policy to see how much it might cost to eliminate the fee altogether. Council Member Alexander suggested selling annual commercial permits to those that want to use the facility in lieu of going through the day to day and allowing the non-High Point residents to go ahead and dump.

#### Clean & Green Event

Mr. Stone noted this is an event that is held once every two years at the Mendenhall Transportation Terminal and it is a joint effort between the city and county. At this event, they collect household hazardous waste, electronics, personal and financial documents that are shredded, mattress and box springs, tires, and larger appliances. The most recent event took place this past year which resulted in 671 vehicles to pass through (5.57 tons of paper was shredded, 890 pounds of pesticides, etc...). He pointed out if this event was not available, these items could have possibly made their way into the city's landfill or illegally dumped. Mr. Stone noted that traditionally this even has taken place once every two years, but he would like to see it budgeted annually. It would cost around \$17,000-\$20,000 in conjunction with doing this with the county; and if High Point does it solely on its own \$25,000-\$30,000.

#### Future Environmental Services

Mr. Stone started with Commercial Market and expanded dumpster collection. He noted the routinely get calls from the commercial market to provide dumpsters and noted this is something that staff as looked at. The private market for this service would charge between \$18-25 for a dumpster and the City would probably charge about \$25 for the dumpster if this is a position that the city would like to take.

Regarding the litter programs and the household hazardous waste events, Mr. Stone noted he would like to continue to build an alliance with the Chamber and neighborhood groups and with other groups to soak in this mind set and have regular clean-up efforts. One of the efforts near and dear to the department is to improve the electronics collection. Staff has talked about the possibility of buying an enclosed trailer to be dropped off in the various neighborhoods at a pre-determined time period, for them to put these items in, picked up and properly recycled instead of them making their way back into the landfill.

He mentioned another item is collection cart replacement cycle. Currently, the city has a variety of collection carts (square carts, newer carts, carts that parts are no longer available for, etc...) and they are suggesting to replace these. It would be about 6,000 carts per year at a cost of \$36,000 due to the overtime aspect associated with it. Mr. Demko pointed out currently, residents have to pay for these carts, but believes that it should be part of the service for the fee and that the city replace them as needed.

#### Ingleside Compost Facility (ICD)

Mr. Stone shared the daily operations which consists of processing and repurposing yard waste. He also noted that they have tub grinders, rubber tire loaders and a screener for the operations with the budget a little over \$.54 million (FY 15-16) which serves all of High Point residents and businesses. He also noted that it is considered a solid waste compost facility with an average year processing about 13,000 tons of material.

He then reviewed some the services provided are:

- Leaf and wood mulch for sale at \$17 per ton
- Compost materials for \$22 per ton
- Top soil for \$22 per ton

Mr. Stone reported that staff has talked about the possibility of doing a pilot program to have people drop off items as a recycling option also with an enclosed trailer. He mentioned to replace the screener (FY 16-17) it would be approximately a \$400,000. He continued with the City Policy for residential people to drop off waste at the facility with no charge, but there is a charge for non-residents or commercial people.

Council Member Alexander expressed concerns about illegal dumping and asked what the cost of recovery would be for this area because a lot of private contractors leave debris on the streets. Mr. Stone replied from the sales and from the people that pay to bring materials in, the city is breaking even. However, he pointed out that residents dump for free, but the non-residential fee is \$36 a ton (for commercial vehicles, rental property, etc....). Mr. Stone noted that staff could do some research across the state to see what other municipal compost facilities are doing. Council Member Alexander suggested implementing an annual fee to permit them to dump.

Council Member Wagner raised the question of how we base the price for annual compost. Mr. Stone replied that it had been based on trying to balance the operating cost, intake, and the sale to balance. Mr. Stone noted that staff could do some research across the state to see what other municipal compost facilities are doing. Mr. Demko pointed out the proposed rate increase of \$14 was still \$3-\$7 less than everybody else. He anticipated the city's rate would have to go up \$1.50 to be self-sustaining.

#### Kersey Valley Landfill

Mr. Stone reported that they average about \$400 per day with just over a \$5.5 million operating budget and this facility serves High Point residents, businesses and others. He pointed out the average household produces about 1.66 tons of garbage per year.

Currently the city's fee is \$38 per ton, which includes a \$2 mandatory State tax. In comparison Winston Salem's fee is \$34 and Macon County is \$66 which indicates there is a wide range of fees. The average fee was \$51 per ton (the high was \$80; low was \$31).

Mr. Stone reviewed a map of the city's current Landfill and phases. He pointed out the contractor is currently putting a cover over part of the landfill, so the western face of the slope has been filled to capacity and there will be no more filling or trash going into this location. He noted the city is currently taking trash into Phase 5A. The contractor continues to work on Phase 5B, which is a large area that staff will continue to use. He reported some money was programmed and they are looking at a proposed Office and Education Center to be located there at the Landfill.

Staff is also working with a consultant for the Kersey Valley Road relocation. This project is south of this location, but will also the city to come back in and close Kersey Valley Road. Once the road is closed, it will allow for construction of Phase 6 which will merge the western phase to the eastern phase so the city could continue to take garbage and tie the two mounds together. Once Phase 6 is complete, the Landfill will be full and there will not be any more capacity at the Landfill. Based on some current regulatory information, the chances of permitting a new landfill

are very slim. So, the consultant is currently looking at the possibility of fitting a transfer station on this site. Staff felt this would be a great area to do this because the customers are already used to coming in, the scale house is already there, the customer convenience center is there for drop off of household garbage. He pointed out this site would still have to be monitored and maintained anyway, so the city already has this land, it is already permitted and can move forward with continued collection and drop-off. He noted the only addition would be the city would need a company to haul the garbage off if it is transitioned into a transfer station.

Council Member Alexander asked if he had looked into waste energy. Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager, mentioned that ElectriCities did do a study on the city's Landfill two to three years ago. Council Member Alexander clarified that he was not talking about gas, but rather burning the trash. Mr. McCaslin explained that incinerators in North Carolina were going bankrupt and pointed out being able to bury garbage at \$40-\$50 a ton in a Landfill does not make an incinerator work. Council Member Alexander shared that Covanta has a number of waste energy plants in the United States with three in the D. C. area and he visited one of their plants in D.C. He noted they would build a plant here with no cost, but the city would have to buy power at .08 cents and they were proposing a \$45 tipping fee. He noted the city cannot do this at this time because of the contract with ElectriCities, but once it expires in 2035 it could be an option.

#### Future of Kersey Valley Landfill

Mr. Stone reported from a cost recovery standpoint, there has been no fee increase in the past 10+ years at this facility. City residents currently pay a \$5 closure/post closure fee that is built into the rate; however any other municipality or non-resident bring solid waste to the landfill facility does not pay this closure/post closure fee. They dump at our facility at a rate of \$38 per ton, but the city is not recouping the \$5 closure/post closure fee. He noted the collection at the two other municipalities equates to about \$384,000 that the city could be collecting.

He suggested a quick proposal would be to adjust the disposal fee to \$43 a ton for non-resident vehicles. Council Member C. Davis pointed out people outside the city are charged double to use the city's electricity, and suggested doing the same thing and charge \$10 instead of the \$5 currently being charged. Mr. Demko noted this would be a policy call for Council and advised this would help extend the life of the landfill. He pointed out the city would not be able to build another landfill. He advised if this is a general direction of Council, then staff would work on this as a recommendation in the fee schedule. Council Member C. Davis wanted to see what this looks like. Mr. Stone cautioned Council on doing this and noted that they need to be careful and push people away from using the facilities due to the high prices.

Staff is interested in ramping this up with modernization of the cart appearances. He mentioned the policy restructuring at Ingleside and adjusting the disposal fee at Kersey Valley from \$38 to \$43 or looking at a different adjustment rate to see how it will play out.

Council Member Alexander expressed concerns about when the landfill runs out of capacity and asked about the return on investment for education to do more recycling to extend the life of the landfill. Mr. Stone suggested that one of the things that staff would love to do is to get into the school system to educate the children because they would take it home to their families and felt this would certainly help prolong the landfill. Council Member Alexander suggested dedicating

one individual to just deal with the education aspect and work with the schools, seniors, church groups, civic clubs, etc... Mr. Stone advised that this is a big part of Rebecca Coplin's role and last year she conducted about 80 presentations to various groups. Mr. Demko noted that he would like to increase this in the next year, which may require getting additional support/help for Ms. Coplin.

#### Financials for the Four Divisions

Eric Olmedo, Budget and Performance Manager, shared a plan that includes the \$3 rate increase for collections this year, but does not include any adjustment to the MRF tipping fee. He noted it is structured to maintain a positive fund balance while still meeting all the requirements.

#### Collections Division Financials

The total operating revenue includes the current \$11 monthly fee that the residents pay and the \$3 fee increase for the upcoming year will get us around \$6.9 million for 2017. Also included is the CPI for personnel and operating expenses and the new cart replacement program. On the collection side, the city maintains a positive balance all the way through the projection years.

#### Landfill Division Financials

The top line is the city's operating revenue derived from the \$38 tipping fee. He noted other financing sources is a negative number and explained these were dollars to be transferred over to the post-closure fund and pointed out once the landfill is closed, the city will still have the responsibility of maintaining the site for a number of years. Again, these figures reflect taking out the operating and personnel costs with the modified CPI. The Paygo capital number includes the relocation of Kersey Valley Road, which is estimated to take place in 2020. He explained the city could actually borrow money from the post-closure fund, but it would have to be replenished and would require Council action.

#### MRF Division Financials

The total operating revenue is derived from the tipping fees and the sale of materials. Since Council has authorized the enhancement of the MRF, staff feels like 2017 will be the last year for the \$1,000,000 operating loss. He advised that the MRF will become more efficient, and will process and sell more of the material with fewer labor costs, operating costs in 2017. He noted that although it would still be operating at a loss, it would be a loss and this is the cost of keeping this material out of the Landfill, which extends the Landfill for another 20-25 years.

#### Ingleside Division Financials

Mr. Olmedo reported this was pretty much a break-even proposition.

#### Landfill Post Closure Reserve Fund

The State requires money to be set aside for a Landfill Post Closure Reserve Fund. On an annual basis, money is transferred to this fund from the Operating Fund to accumulate funding for the future projects. Mr. Olmedo advised that the city is currently doing 5A and 5B, which was appropriated in a previous fiscal year.

Mr. Demko advised that staff would be bringing back the yard waste and asking Council how they want to handle that, as well as charges for tipping fees for non-residents who use the Landfill.

Council Member C. Davis brought up some concerns with neighbors who are seniors that have become hoarders over the years and asked how the city could assist to help them with clean-up and removal. Mr. McCaslin advised that there have been church groups in the past that have volunteered to help in situations like that. Mr. Demko also suggested there are private companies that can be hired to remove trash and different avenues that we could direct them to.

### **Residency Requirements (employment)**

Mayor Bencini advised that he received several phone calls from Council Members about an interest in revisiting the issue of the residency requirements for city employees. Council Member C. Davis shared that Council Member J. Davis was out sick, but did want to be part of the conversation. Mayor Bencini asked if Council wanted to proceed with discussion or postpone discussion for a later date. Council Member C. Davis suggested delaying the discussion until the next Council meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Golden questioned bringing this back up again and asked if it should have been brought up within a specific time period. Mayor Bencini explained this was not really a reconsideration, but rather a discussion on whether or not Council wants to make an amendment to the Personnel Resolution that was adopted that included a change in regards to residency requirements.

Council Member Alexander advised that he wanted to get the best candidates possible for the police chief position and noted the first thing a young candidate with a family would do is look at the school performance records that are posted on the internet. Council Member Hill agreed about getting the best candidate, but she did feel that whether or not they were willing to move to High Point should be a strong consideration in the hiring decision. She also felt it was very important to communicate adequately that our schools are more than the numbers on the internet and the current classes are proof that students can get a great education in our schools. Mr. Demko agreed and noted there would be discussion on the 21<sup>st</sup> about some of the same issues about how we do community revitalization and community re-development.

Mr. Demko felt a big piece of it is when we cannot attract people to apply for us to tell the right story to all of them so they can get a different picture is actually the issue. He noted the part of whether they live in High Point or not, it would be someone that would be engaged in the community because that would be part of their job and this would require them to live close by. Council Member Wagner noted the question to him is whether or not Council allows the manager to do his job and go out to find the best possible person while giving him the tools to do that. He shared that he did prefer the police chief to live in High Point, but he trusts that the manager will make a good decision. Council Member C. Davis pointed out that Winston Salem has a policy requiring their police chief to live inside their city limits. She also felt the police chief should live inside the city limits and also felt it was very important that the managers, police chief, fire chief, directors should all live inside the city. In regards to the schools, she felt the Say Yes to Education program is also great selling tool for our schools.

Council Member Hill asked if the applications had increased since the change was made to the Personnel Resolution. Mr. Demko advised 15-18 applications were received at the time he brought the issue to Council and ended with 33 applications, but it was hard to say whether the change spurred the increase or if this was just how they came in. He explained they are

currently in the second screening process with the assessments scheduled for March 30<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Pro Tem Golden asked Mr. Demko if it was his thinking that it would not be possible to get someone who wants to live in High Point and be the police chief. Mr. Demko replied absolutely not, and shared that High Point has an internationally renowned police department and he and the consultants expected because of that we would get 50-100 applications but did not come anywhere close to that.

Council Member C. Davis believed that we have a good interim in Larry Casterline, which allows time to reach further without being rushed in selecting a candidate that is willing to live inside the city limits. She felt he certainly has the qualifications and has been with the department for a very long time.

Council Member C. Davis shared while Council was in D.C., they did have a positive plug about the police department and the fact that they have been asked to go around the country to sell their plan. Mr. Demko added that the police department's domestic violence program is the model for grants and we were recently featured in Governing Magazine. Mr. McCaslin mentioned there was also one other issue associated with this and this was the internal applicants and if there was somebody because of the city's policy has lived in the general area, then they would be required to move inside for an internal promotion. He felt this was a tough argument. Council Member C. Davis pointed out there have been others that wanted to be considered for promotions that had to move inside the city limits and felt if it is policy for one, it should be policy for all.

Mayor Bencini proposed to continue this discussion to the next Council meeting so that Council Member J. Davis could participate in the discussion. He noted that it will be on the agenda as continued discussion about Residency Requirements for Employees. Council Member Alexander pointed out requirements have already been extended regarding the police chief and felt it would be hard time to change it mid-stream. Mr. Demko noted it was changed as to his judgment of a hardship and it was not like it was no restrictions. Mayor Pro Tem Golden asked Mr. Demko if he has determined what he would consider a hardship. Mr. Demko replied that it would depend on the situation.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

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William S. Bencini, Jr.  
Mayor

Attest:

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Maria A. Smith, Deputy City Clerk

DRAFT