

April 10, 2013

To: Jack Coogan,
Chair, Advisory Committee, Solid Waste Plan 2040

Re: In-put to my question at the Solid Waste Plan 2040 committee meeting, April 9, 2013

The purpose of this letter is to share my concern with the committee and City Staff that we are voting on issues before we know all of the facts. As the old saying goes, the more information we gather before we make a decision, the better the decision.

For example: our committee was asked to vote on (1) maintaining the status quo of residential curbside recycling or (2) offering universal residential recycling to all homeowners.

I thought two current small business owners of residential recycling services in Lincoln made some valuable comments. One company stated that they have been offering universal residential recycling services since 2007 and have spent over \$ 1 million in promoting and educating citizens about recycling. The other owner stated that he could not delineate between voting on the status quo or universal residential recycling services because he felt that was what he was offering now to the citizens of Lincoln.

I asked the consultants, during the meeting, if the cost and impact of universal residential recycling on the City and the homeowners has been discussed. The reason I asked that question is because before I vote, I want to consider the economic impact of this program on the city and the homeowners and I'm feel everyone else would like to know also. I was told that the survey indicated "that the mean cost was \$10 per month for curbside recycling".

I have made some simple calculations on the projected cost of residential curbside recycling, based on City data that have not been presented to this committee.

- At \$10/month for one year equals \$120 per year per customer.
- Starting in 2013 to 2040, 27 years times \$120 per year equals \$3,240 per customer.
- The city staff provided information that there are 72,283 occupied dwelling units in Lincoln. It could be calculated that 72, 283 units in Lincoln times \$120 per year times 27 years equals \$ 234,196,920 for the Lincoln community.

If the projected cost for this proposal for our community is \$234 million over the course of LP 2040 (not adjusted for inflation, nor increased population), then I feel that it definitely needs to be discussed by our committee and that it definitely needs to be a universal program with the option to use it or opt out. This opt out option respects the elderly on fixed incomes, the poor and the frugal.

If this city committee is going to make recommendations committing millions of dollars of other people's money, don't we owe it to the citizens to weigh all of the facts before voting?

In addition, on page 33 of the Needs Assessment, October, 2012 document, the City data states that one half of the Bluff Road Landfill is residential waste, 186,966 tons. It also states that the City recycled 49,581 tons not including commercial recycling tonnage. If you divide 49,581 recycling tons by 186,966 total residential tons, you get a 26% residential recycling rate. If the City's data of 18% city recycling rate for 2011 does not include commercial recycling tonnage, and does not include all private recycling service company's tonnage, and if the decision to vote on curbside recycling legislation is primarily based on this "perceived" low recycling rate, the urgency to pass city ordinances, let bids, and change the existing free enterprise system may not be based on solid reliable data.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call 402-475-8360.

Respectfully,

Steve A. Hatten
City Committee Member