

Waste Connections



Residents Involved in Positive Planning, Inc.

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June 15, 2009

To: El Dorado County Board of Supervisors  
John Knight, District 1  
Ray Nutting, District 2  
Jack Sweeney, District 3  
Ron Briggs, District 4  
Norma Santiago, District 5

Re: 6-16-2009 BOS Meeting, Agenda Item #20

Honorable Supervisors:

At your June 2 meeting, you made it very clear that the Environmental Management Department's request for a CPI increase for Waste Connections was not approved and that EMD was *not* to come back to you again on June 16 with this request. Please take a look at your agenda item #20 for tomorrow where Ms. Silva is once again asking for the 3.4% CPI increase for Waste Connections. Did something change between the last public discussion and now? If so, it is improper for it to have happened at a venue that was not made public. And if not, why is your very clear directive being ignored?

Here are some additional concerns:

- Agenda Attachment F is a resolution that is prepared to approve the CPI increase and to decrease (but not repeal) the Fuel Surcharge that we've been paying for several months despite lowered fuel prices. We can't help but notice the lack of a prepared resolution to *deny* these requests. Is it the role of EMD to advocate for Waste Connections?
- In regards to the proposed CPI increase, your Legislative File Number 09-750 states:  
Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost: There is no change in Net County Cost. The attached Resolutions indicate proposed solid waste rate levels.

Sadly, this is true. There *is* no cost to the County because it is *all* passed on to the residents of the County as are many other costs that should be business expenses for the hauler including, but not limited to, franchise fees, transfer gate rates, and fuel surcharges. Public tolerance for manipulation by billion dollar corporations has reached its limit, and we urge you to keep in mind the difference between a corporation experiencing record profits and acquisitions and the people in this county who are experiencing job losses, pay cuts, and rapidly mounting costs of living.

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- Fuel prices decreased immediately after the current surcharge was approved. This fuel surcharge should be denied in its entirety and a proration of the amounts overpaid should be returned immediately to the customers.
- Which **Solid Waste Services Agreement** should we refer to? We have noted for some time that both staff and Waste Connections seem to cherry pick items from the various contracts. One of the more recent statements made to us by EMD was that the 1995 contract is the one we should be using and that it's on the County website. It is *not* on the County website and therefore not available to the public as a matter of record. In their March 25, 2009 letter to Gerri Silva, Waste Connections refers to the August 23, 2004 agreement. An earlier letter from them refers to the October 13, 2004 agreement. We have asked staff for clarity on this issue many times and have received many different answers. This dithering does nothing to inspire confidence in either staff capability or forthrightness. In the interest of fairness and transparency to the public that you serve, we formally ask that you address this issue publicly and give a definitive answer to this long-standing question.
- A working committee was set up for the Solid Waste Management Plan. One of our members is on that committee and was told that she will help prepare the Request for Proposal. But we have heard not a peep from EMD since the June 2 meeting. Like the old joke: they never call, they never write. The window of opportunity at hand for planning this the right way the first time closes a little more each day. We suggest that someone light a fire under whoever needs to put our trash issues on the fast track.
- In addition to the many assorted versions, the Solid Waste Services Agreement is of continuing concern because it is so heavily weighted in favor of the hauler. The franchise fees that Waste Connections pays to the County is half of what is customary and at some point was successfully negotiated by Waste Connections to be a pass-through fee to the customer instead of an operating cost for them. It is absurd. In just a little over 2 years the current agreement ends and should go out for bid. In preparation, we would like to see this Board of Supervisors raise the bar for our department leaders.

It is our sincerest hope that there is at least one among you who will be proactive tomorrow and show the leadership necessary to address these issues to the public *before* we do. We will gladly give you the opportunity to do so, however we will be fully prepared in case you don't.

Respectfully yours,  
RIPP, Inc. Board of Directors  
Leonard Stroud  
Laurel Stroud  
Toni Beers  
Becky Long  
John Saba  
Jaimee Saba  
Sally Lyons  
Mike Mueller