

Garbage Hauler for Citizen Choice
Anoka City Council Meeting
December 9, 2019

Present: Mayor Phil Rice, Councilmembers Elizabeth Barnett, Mark Freeburg, Erik Skogquist, and Brian Wesp; City Manager Greg Lee; Public Services Director Mark Anderson.

City Manager Greg Lee

This actually should be a — well, [unintelligible/00:06] briefing. We do have an open house meeting scheduled for January 23rd, and before moving forward with that, I wanted to put a draft of the PowerPoint presentation that would be presented there. It's almost identical to what we presented about five years ago — we updated the numbers, updated some other things — but I just wanted to run it past you and give you an opportunity to talk about this before we jump into the open house meeting on the 23rd of January.

I also want to make sure that we collect the information and data that you need or you want so you can make the decision whether you want to go forward with organized hauling or not. We're working on a feedback form right now. We didn't have it far enough along so we could put it in the packet, but we're looking at some sort of feedback form where you get information back from the citizens. My question to the Council is do you want to have some sort of like informal vote to kind of gauge where people are at on that feedback form, saying, "Are you in favor of organized hauling; are you not in favor of organized hauling?"

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

[Inaudible/01:03] like last time —

City Manager Greg Lee

Or does that matter, or do you just want to get —

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

If it's going to be like last time, it's going to be [inaudible/01:09].

Mayor Phil Rice

I think the question is are you in favor of saving money? Then let us decide how to help you do that.

City Manager Greg Lee

Uh-huh. So a feedback form could be just to give us your input and not necessarily to be kind of a vote?

Mayor Phil Rice

This is such a difficult — so it shouldn't be. I think the facts speak for themselves, and although I've said it before, it's not a question of if we're going to go to organized hauling. It's just a question of when we're going to do it, because it is the better way for cities to protect their infrastructure and to reduce the cost to the taxpayer. If we have to be building roads, it's a lot higher than they're saving on their garbage bill. So to get into voting, to me, is asking for the [unintelligible/02:09], and so I don't know how to do it, but I do know if you say, "Do you want organized hauling?" they're going to — a lot of people are going to say, "No thank you. I think I can manage for myself pretty well." But they're not measuring in — as Erik said before, you don't even know what the competition is charging. It's all a shell game anyway. To say, "Yeah, we'll charge you \$18 a month for the first, you know, so-and-so and then it will go up after that." And pretty soon they're paying \$35 or whatever. I don't know. So I don't know the answer. I wish I did.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

The citizens want — and I've had some ask me, "We want to decide this." What is that process for the citizens to decide?

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, we've kind of started that, and this open house meeting will be kind of the first step of that, but the first step is really to educate them as much as we possibly can.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I understand that. What I'm talking more is specifically they want it on the ballot.

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, there's only two ways that can happen. The first way is if citizens get together, and it would have to be to sign a petition for the Council to consider an ordinance to go with organized hauling. They would need about 1,000 signatures to do that, but you're kind of at that point right now anyway, and so having that, if they petitioned to do that, that would get you to the point kind of where we're at right now. But they wouldn't be — they wouldn't necessarily vote on it. It just forces the Council to consider that ordinance.

The second way is if the Council makes a decision one way or the other, and then if somebody wants to contest that, then they could file a petition to put it on for a referendum, and that would take 3 percent of the people that voted in the last election, about 300 votes — or 300 signatures to put it onto a referendum. But by that point, the Council would have already made a decision either to go with organized hauling or not to go with organized hauling. You would have had to have made that decision, and then if a particular group didn't like it one way or the other, then they could submit that petition to put it on a referendum vote.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

And the process is very arduous, right? I mean, it's — let's say we as a council decided to go with organized hauling, one hauler, it's going to be seven years before there is —

City Manager Greg Lee

There'd be a single hauler in a neighborhood almost within six months.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

By splitting the city up into areas, is that what you mean?

City Manager Greg Lee

No, if the City Council said we're going to go with organized hauling today, we would sit down, the staff would sit down with the garbage haulers. They will already get together and meet, and what they do, is they divvy up the city among the haulers that are currently in the city, and they do it by market share. And so they divvy it up themselves. They come back to the city and say, "We're going to divvy up the city this way," and then the next step is to determine what the costs are or what the fees are going to be for the next seven years. You know, that's [inaudible/05:15].

Councilmember Brian Wesp

And then at the end of that seventh year, we'd go out for bids.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, it will take seven years to get to a truly free market competitive-bidding situation.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

So essentially, the objective, then, is if it happens that way, then, we are eliminating all the traffic on the city streets, because Ace has this quadrant, and Randy's has this one.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

And I don't even know who the other — BFI or whomever it is.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, it's Republic now, but —

Councilmember Brian Wesp

[Inaudible/05:44]

City Manager Greg Lee

But — so that seven-year transition period, the haulers have six months to come up with a proposal, and so — or six months to implement something after we agree to whatever it is, and that gives them six months to talk with the residents, to switch things around, switch cans around and do all that stuff. And so after that six-month period, it will be a single hauler in all the neighborhoods. You know, your hauler might be Ace, it might be Republic, it might be [Inaudible/06:09].

Councilmember Brian Wesp
Depending on where you live.

City Manager Greg Lee
But everybody — six months after that period, it would be a single hauler almost — well, almost six months.

Councilmember Brian Wesp
So the objective, I think what I'm hearing from this Council is to reduce the amount of garbage truck traffic — multiple garbage truck traffic on our streets, because they do not have any restrictions in the winter and —

City Manager Greg Lee
Spring axle limits.

Councilmember Brian Wesp
[Inaudible/06:36] the springtime, because that's when —

City Manager Greg Lee
Our roads are most vulnerable.

Councilmember Brian Wesp
— the roads are most vulnerable. And then also — well, that's the reason. So we don't have as much traffic, and that goes back to, Mark, what you were saying, and you gave me the example of looking at the cemetery roads or streets and that they don't get —

Male Speaker
I stole that from Greg.

Councilmember Brian Wesp
Okay.

City Manager Greg Lee
That's what really switched my mind, is how do I communicate to the public, you know, that this is really damaging the streets, and it's hard to come up with good examples, because there really isn't any. I know we've got our townhome associations, they have single haulers, but their roads aren't built to the standard that city streets are. Your neighborhood is going to be a perfect example 20 years from now for other cities to see and look what — you know, compare — yours will be a great situation to compare, because it was built to city standards, and you've had — you'll have had the same hauler for 20 years, and then we could do a good comparison. But five years ago, I remember saying — and this is just empirically saying, "Well, you know, it's probably 50 percent of the loading that's damaging our streets. Fifty percent is the weather, the freeze/thaw cycle." And so I was trying to be kind of neutral, in the middle, and that's what I

stated. But then I started looking at our cemetery roads, which were built — no gravel, maybe 2 inches of bituminous on there, and I'm asking myself why are those lasting 60 to 70 years when our other roads that have 8 inches — or 6 inches of gravel, 4½ inches of bituminous are only lasting 30 years? It's the loading. It's really the loading, far more than the freeze/thaw cycle, that's really, you know, beating up our roads.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

And these trucks are heavy, and they stop quick and they take off quick. The tire moves a little bit [inaudible/08:13].

City Manager Greg Lee

The trucks are far bigger than they were back in the 1970s and —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

One hauler and they were teeny-tiny trucks.

City Manager Greg Lee

Uh-huh. Yeah, they were single-axle trucks, they were small trucks. They're huge mammoth trucks now, and we're getting data on the weight of them.

Male Speaker

They seem to like to hide the — what they weigh. They weigh —

City Manager Greg Lee

We're trying to get the information at the weigh station to find out what they truly weigh when they dump their load.

Male Speaker

Do they have to stop there?

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah. Well, they —

Male Speaker

On the way down —

City Manager Greg Lee

But it's all owned by them, and so it's hard to get their data.

Male Speaker

No, but on the way to Elk River, does it — is a garbage truck required to stop at the weigh station?

Male Speaker

The weigh station's [inaudible/08:44].

City Manager Greg Lee

No, it's not on public —

Male Speaker

So they don't —

Male Speaker

I did read they are 44,000 pounds empty.

Male Speaker

Just the vehicle itself?

Male Speaker

Yes.

Male Speaker

That's not loaded.

Male Speaker

And then they — they just generically say 80,000 pounds, you know, loaded, which is of course their maximum load they can be on a DOT road, so we have — I'm [unintelligible/09:06] numbers. I —

City Manager Greg Lee

But even if it's 80,000 pounds — it's probably more than that — but it's 80,000.

Male Speaker

Right.

City Manager Greg Lee

And they're three axles, and so that puts about 12 to 14 tons per axle, when our spring axle weight limit is 5. They're big. They're really beating up our roads.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

So this question is directed, Phil, to you and, Mark, to you. Is it 2015 when you went through this debate before? Does that sound about right?

Male Speaker

Yeah.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, what was the — what did you guys do? You know, what brought that up? What was the methodology, and what made you stay at where we are at now?

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible 09:42], they were just so adamant about being dictated to.

City Manager Greg Lee

Taking away their freedom of choice.

Male Speaker

Based on those surveys that you took?

Mayor Phil Rice

I think that, plus the Council was a bit divided. Not everybody was onboard with it, and so there was some dissension, even among our Council, and then there were — there are some citizens who are quite vocal about it. I think —

Councilmember Brian Wesp

You mean meaning, “We want choice”?

Mayor Phil Rice

Uh-huh.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

“We don’t want you to take that choice away from us.”

Male Speaker

Yeah.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Yeah, the heck with the roads.

Male Speaker

Well, they’re going to pay one way or another.

Mayor Phil Rice

Well, that’s what I’m saying. You can pay me 10 bucks an hour. I’m going to [inaudible/10:25]. Which would you —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Well, if we don’t implement a single hauler [inaudible/10:29], why don’t we just then put a fee on everybody, 10 bucks a year or something, [inaudible] the roads.

Male Speaker
A franchise fee.

Male Speaker
Yeah.

Male Speaker
You know, something.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

For me, when I'm looking over this, just in terms of — I think the initial question is how do we present this to — how do we run this meeting? Obviously, having the opinions and the hand-out cards and everything soliciting those types of things at the end, once they've had the opportunity to digest, but when I'm looking through here, I'm just missing — my analytical side is screaming at me, saying, "There are no numbers in here," and so this is all just talk. Like it may be less, it may be more. Some studies say that it's directly related; some say that it's not. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, they said the reduced road maintenance could potentially save each of Roseville's 9,400 single-family households \$20 to \$40 a year. So if I take that number, that's not as impactful, but I'm not seeing any numbers in here, so — or, you know, how —

City Manager Greg Lee

Staff is still working on some of the numbers. Part of — one of the best numbers we're coming up with, and, Ben, you just came up with the number — we spent over \$62 million on our infrastructure in the last ten years. Absolutely amazing for a city of 18,000 — unheard of. But of that \$62 million, \$48 million or \$47-something million? About \$47 million had been spent on our streets. Now, there's been a study that was done by [Unintelligible/12:12] for the City of Fridley about five years ago that says with multiple haulers, that it reduces the longevity of the streets by 17 percent, so I can just take 17 percent and times it by we've already spent \$46 million. That's what we've lost by having multiple haulers. So there's things like that that we can do to kind of quantify it.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg
Yeah, [inaudible/12:34].

City Manager Greg Lee
But it's real hard to quantify it; it is.

Mayor Phil Rice
But if you use that formula, and then you just divide it by the number of households —

City Manager Greg Lee
It's costing us — you know, just in the last 20 years, it's costing everybody X.

Mayor Phil Rice

It seems like too much. It seems like, well, that number can't be real because it's so many dollars.

City Manager Greg Lee

Uh-huh, but that's based on a study and based on what we've actually spent.

Male Speaker

Right.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

In addition to that, I would also like to see or hear something in terms of — when I look back at the February 2007 survey, it says that the top — the most important thing for our residents was the pick-up cost, and so I would like to see in X, Y, Z organized and consortium single haulers, how much on average did some of these cities save? So we can actually tell a story.

And then, secondly, customer service seems to be on the top as well, so not just — you know, if we do move to a consortium, what the first concern is typically is, “Is my customer service going to lag?” but then if you can get something that says, you know, Blaine City has shown an approval rate of 65 percent, 80 percent, 90 percent, just some kind of number or some kind of point of feedback to say once you're in those organized positions, that customer service has not lagged behind.

And then lastly, if I may, I think another question that would be wise, maybe not on this initial kind of opening, but would be if we do move to organized in some form, what is going to be important to the residents in that negotiation? So is it the ability to also have yard waste? Is it the ability to have the waste haulers bring back the cans for the elderly? Is it the ability to opt out if you so choose to, if there's no need to —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Like curb service?

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Yeah. Yeah, so there's a lot of different negotiations that go into this consortium, and so I think knowing upfront what's really important for our residents there would make people say, “Okay, maybe I'm not willing to look at open — or, you know, I live in the world of open,” but it's kind of making them shift over to say, “Okay, if I did accept organized, then what would be important to me?” So just kind of flushing that conversation out a little bit more [inaudible/15:92].

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, I think you're right about customer service. It's interesting, in Blaine, as I understand it, now, they're a single hauler.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yes, they've been single hauler for a long time.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

For a long time, '60s. So I'm curious as to, well, maybe it's hard to pinpoint it, because they don't have a lot of old streets like we do, but how much they've spent, if they have spent, plus they might have a lot more area than we do, so it might not be a relative comparison. But their customer service is — do they have problems with their customer service? And, secondly, if we did go, is there a way that the city would be able to collect the garbage hauler fee, let's say the \$35 a month we pay for garbage, and hold that, if there is customer service issues with a hauler, so we have a little leverage?

City Manager Greg Lee

That will be all part of our negotiations with them when we come up with a contract for them for that seven-year period. After the seven-year period, we can write the specs however we want to and get exactly what we want.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Okay, because it sounds to me like we're taking away a freedom, if you will, of them — of the citizens to choose, and that's what I — as I read through the survey, that's basically what I hear was, "Keep government out of it," et cetera, things of that nature.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

But they can't choose who they [inaudible/16:28].

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, no, but — I get that part, but that's not the point, though. The point is this is what they're telling us, and we have to be able to say, "We know we're taking this option away from you, but here's what we're going to do to help leverage that by taking that." If you called — I'm just going to use Ace, I don't know, I'm just going to use them — if you called Ace Sanitation and you found out you have trouble, we have some leverage. Is it — what leverage would we have as a community, as a city to say, "Look, we're getting multiple complaints," blah, blah, blah? "You're not picking the garbage up, you're whatever," I don't know. But I think for some, the idea to the community, number one, you put a number upon them and say, "Look, our streets have cost us this much. We believe it's because of this reason, you know, the haulers, the multiple haulers that we have, the fact that they don't have restrictions on their trucks, the fact that they speed up and slow down — everybody sees them do that, we know it — and that has cost our citizens X," because the more you put it in their pocketbook, that's the way you sell it.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Uh-huh, and to start it out, you've got to have these statistics. Back in the '60s or '70s, there was one hauler and you —

City Manager Greg Lee

That's exactly what I was going to say. For over 100 years, Anoka has had one hauler since its inception, all the way up till 1991, and in 1991, we opened it up to multiple haulers. Nine years later, we had to start a street program, because our streets were falling apart. I know I'm trying to link those two together a little bit, and it's probably a coincidence, but —

Mayor Phil Rice

Oh, yeah, because they didn't [inaudible/18:09] sewer and water in.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, but up to that point, we had a single hauler, up until 1991. And we had a single hauler for recycling, and no one's been complaining about that. We've had a single hauler for recycling for —

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, you know, that is a good point to bring up, actually.

City Manager Greg Lee

But you don't have a choice on your recycling hauler.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

You don't have a choice on your recycling, and I have never had any issues whatsoever with recycling. And I don't know of any —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible/18:39] your cardboard and paper or your leaves.

City Manager Greg Lee

Carboard and paper — Republic.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

[Inaudible/18:45] pizza boxes, you know.

City Manager Greg Lee

But that's kind of a good reminder, to say the world isn't going to stop spinning if we go to organized hauling. We're doing it with recycling, and it's worked out really well.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, it isn't, and I think we have to position it — because that's my biggest hang-up, is I don't want take choice away from people. I don't like doing that, but you're right, we do it with —

Mayor Phil Rice

So the analogy, I think, is we don't want to take this freedom away from you, but in the sight of saving our roads, we won't let a cement company deliver cement in March. We just don't do it because it would ruin our streets. Well, we're letting the garbage trucks do that.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

So that's got to be the message.

Mayor Phil Rice

And so we don't do that for a reason. That's the very same reason why —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

The whole city and state, I think, have road restrictions on how the [inaudible/19:37].

City Manager Greg Lee

Garbage trucks have exempt — got exempted. They've got a great lobby.

Mayor Phil Rice

Yeah.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

I think that's important [inaudible/19:44].

City Manager Greg Lee

They've exempted themselves from that.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Well, and they have to. I mean, you can't not pick garbage up, you know, you have to.

City Manager Greg Lee

But they don't need to be 50 tones either.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I agree.

City Manager Greg Lee

They could go smaller loads during that spring axle weight limit time.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I just think that if we do this, that message has to be clearly communicated. The reason that we're doing this isn't because we want to take a choice away from you. It's because —

Male Speaker

No, we don't want to do that.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

But they don't have a choice as to where they get their water from and where they get their sewer from.

City Manager Greg Lee

Or electric, yeah.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

That's a — in the city's case, it's electric.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

And their gas or whatever you want.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

And not many people complain about the fact that our electric utility puts half a million dollars into our budget to help offset the burden that the taxpayers have, so that's different.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

But that's — if you're asking me, and I'll be in Florida that week, so —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

There you go.

Multiple Speakers

[Inaudible] /20:40]

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Well, we know who our scapegoat is that week. No problem. It's Brian.

Male Speaker

And just make [inaudible/20:49].

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/20:50] cold —

[Laughter]

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

Do we know where you live?

Councilmember Brian Wesp

They know where I live. No, but I — that's my concern, is it protects the city streets.

City Manager Greg Lee

I was really trying to go the angle of it's going to ultimately save the citizens money, because, intuitively, picking up at every house, you can do that far more efficient than picking up at every sixth house, which is what they're generally doing now. And so, theoretically, the cost should be far less if they can pick up at every house, but the data that we're getting now from Blaine and Champlin and other cities that have single haulers, is it's not really showing that. And I'm kind of disappointed.

Five years ago when we did this, it did — Blaine was like a third less than everybody else, and I brought that up to the garbage haulers to say, "Well, look, if you go with a single hauler, they're at a competitive bidding process, they get the lowest bids, and they get it far cheaper." It was \$10.50 for a 90-gallon can, when everyone else was paying \$20 or \$18 at that time, and then the garbage haulers said, "Well, [Unintelligible/21:53] is hauling it to this dump, and that's why they're able to charge less." And, you know, I don't know. I'm not an expert in the field, so I can't refute where the garbage is going.

Male Speaker

How often does Blaine go out for bids on it?

City Manager Greg Lee

I don't know, probably not that often, probably five to seven years. And if we ever get to that point, I recommend we wouldn't do it every other year, because once the garbage hauler's in, I mean, there's some major investment on their trucks, cans, and stuff like that and getting it organized. And so you want to stick with that for a fair amount of time, but seeing that the lobbyists, the garbage hauling lobbyist extended this transition period from five years to seven years, they're making a lot of money during this transition period. Why else would they have done that? There's no reason for it other than it's a good deal for them, and they can — right now they're driving over the whole city and picking up X amount of cans. Now they can drive a small part of the city and pick up the same amount of cans, and they're probably going to charge just as much as they're charging today.

Mayor Phil Rice

And I think another consequence of that is you have some haulers that are hauling very few cans in the city, and they're just going to back out. And I don't think they're going to stay through this process. I don't think — once they realize, well, my market share can't grow, and it's not worth it for me to come in here and do 5 percent of the city, and so the bigger companies who do control the lobby also make that argument, because they know they're going to pick up that extra 5 percent of the business.

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah. What we're — what I've seen with — once you get to the — past the seven-year period and you get to true competitive bids, it puts the little guy at a perfectly even playing field with the big guys, because you don't have to advertise, you don't have to have anything. You just

have to submit a bid. It puts them at an even playing field with the big guys, and so the big guys, that's why they want to extend this period out as long as possible.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Just one quick thing, Mr. Mayor, if I could. Brian talked about the customer service aspect. When I was calling around at different ones before, I don't know when it was, this spring, I talked to the guy in Blaine, and he was telling me that all of their complaints went through him. Like if you had an issue, you'd call this guy in Blaine, and he deals with, I guess there was Waste Management that they have right now. And his opinion at least at that point, was, "You know, I get very little complaints compared to most people. I'm really shocked." And when I asked about the RFP, I don't know how theirs is structured, I think it maybe ran out, and he was like, "You know, we might go out for bids. I don't know, probably not." So they must have had some contingency, if you're happy and everything's good, you can just ride it out for a while longer. But Champlin — and I don't know where your Champlin went, but they have the zone thing going on over there, so —

City Manager Greg Lee

Are they in the process of changing?

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

No, they are organized, but they have — well, are they in the seven-year or five-year, do you know?

City Manager Greg Lee

No, I'm not sure whether they're in that period, but having zones, that doesn't benefit the city at all. I don't even know what the benefit of that is.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Well —

City Manager Greg Lee

So you have more haulers in your city if you have different zones. I would recommend a city of our size —

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

Well, they have the organized hauling, like where they divvied it up, I think. I mean —

City Manager Greg Lee

Yeah, and we would have that for a seven-year too, but once you're past the seven-year period, there really isn't a logical reason why you'd continue to divvy up your city. All you're doing is inviting more trucks into your city when you could have just one hauler do the whole city.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I was just curious on the customer service side of things, since they maybe went through this a little while ago, just to kind of get maybe the two of them. Because that is one of the big complaints, is people worry about, you know, that was an issue in St. Paul and —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

What can go wrong with somebody picking up your garbage can?

City Manager Greg Lee

Very little.

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/25:28]?

City Manager Greg Lee

Again, after you're through the seven-year period, the city has 100 percent control over everything. It's just like control over contractors doing our streets. We have 100 percent control over that through the spec process. We can put the specs any way we want them, to have them do whatever we want. We'll have full control in seven years, but during that seven-year period, you have to negotiate that with the haulers.

Councilmember Elizabeth Barnett

So I just want to make sure that as we present this information to you that we're not — I know there's a fine line of trying to sell something and almost being offensive, like we're on one side, when we really invited the community to comment and to speak and to know there are pros and cons and to give weight — to try to give some equal weight and time to addressing both the pros and cons to be fair to both sides so we can get some honest feedback. I don't want to just come and sell try to sell them on somethings, because I feel like they'll fight any newness more.

City Manager Greg Lee

That's a very good point. In fact, I was going to mention that to Council. More than likely I'll be the one presenting the PowerPoint. We haven't talked about that in detail, but I'm going to be as neutral as I possibly can. I know I've got some personal biases that might be showing through a little bit here, but I want to be just completely neutral on this and just present the facts. Five years ago, that's kind of where we were at. In fact, I was kind of muted five years ago on purpose. I was told to stand down on some of these things, but I'm going to be very fact oriented and be very neutral and give the pros and cons and just get the information out there without trying to let any of my personal biases or the Council's biases at this point show through. So I'm going to try to be very neutral unless you say otherwise.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Well, we're going to come across [inaudible 27:09].

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, we're just going to present the facts.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

I feel like we want to convince them that this is the right thing to do.

City Manager Greg Lee

That's not my intent at this point at the neighborhood meeting. It's just to present the facts, the options, and just give them the information. The point of the neighborhood meeting is to give them the information without trying to persuade them one way or the other, unless you tell me differently, but that was my intent is just to —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

So this will be multiple meetings, then, if we're going to give them information and [inaudible/27:37].

City Manager Greg Lee

It could be.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

And then you have another meeting and —

City Manager Greg Lee

We would have this open house meeting on January 23rd. We'd have a feedback form. We'd collect information at the meeting, plus we'd have a feedback form. Those will have to be turned in by February 14th. We'll consolidate that information and present that back to the City Council at a work session, probably in March. And then from there, you can decide where you want to go or if you want to have more meetings, more education going out to the citizens, or where you want to go based on the feedback that we get.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I just think we should be transparent about it and let them know what we're thinking and let them tell us what they're thinking.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Well, the information that you give them is going to be slanted towards one hauler, because we're going to be telling them how bad garbage trucks are.

City Manager Greg Lee

Not necessarily. This is —

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

You're not going to tell them how — I mean, the damage they do by starting and stopping, and they're way overweight and —

Male Speaker

Some of that.

City Manager Greg Lee

Just [unintelligible/28:32] where this is almost the exact same presentation that we gave five years ago. This presentation was reviewed and approved by the haulers, and so they got a lot of leverage five years ago, they were given a lot of leverage on their involvement on the city's process. And so this whole presentation was reviewed by the haulers. It was mainly Ace, because it was Chris DeLaForest [phonetic] from Ace who — and I'll state this — he was state legislator that introduced these bills that make cities go through all these hoops, and now he's working for Ace. Connect the dots.

Mayor Phil Rice

So does this City Council or any city council make decisions based on values, beliefs, information? I can't think of an analogy to use, but there have to be 101 of them about us making decisions on behalf of the city for the better of the city, that we don't care that the people know we're biased. We are biased because our bias is what's best for the city. And this is just another example of — that's the only passion that I have here, is that we're spending — when I sat in that meeting, I don't know how many weeks ago, and we spent \$6 [million] or \$7 million in one meeting, and I think the single greatest contributor to this cost are garbage trucks, and how are we going to keep them —

Male Speaker

Out of all of it.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

And how are we going to keep that up? It's going to be a continuous spending as these roads continue to break down because of the use.

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, based on the studies that [Unintelligible/30:14] did for Fridley, they're going to break down almost 20 percent faster than they would have if you go to single haulers.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

Something broke down last winter in March of 2019, because you were busier than a one-armed paper hanger out there, and that probably didn't have anything to do — I mean, that probably had everything to do with winter, but it probably was exasperated [sic] because of traffic. I mean, traffic as whole in this community is gummed up. And we're faced — we have to fix it, and a lot of times the traffic through this community isn't even — it's just passthrough traffic, high volumes of it.

Mayor Phil Rice

Mark, what's the cause of a pothole?

Male Speaker
[Unintelligible/30:59].

Male Speaker
Right?

Male Speaker
Yeah.

Male Speaker
A crack in the road, water gets in, the water freezes, and it pops the tar.

Male Speaker
Uh-huh.

Mayor Phil Rice
Absolutely, and so what's the cause of the cracks in our roads?

Male Speaker
[Unintelligible/31:10]

Male Speaker
Weight?

Male Speaker
It has to be weight.

Mark Anderson
If \$48 million is the number that we spent on the roads for [unintelligible/31:20], that was just roads and then you said, Greg, it was —

Male Speaker
Ten years.

Mark Anderson
Seventeen percent of that equals \$8.16 million over that period of time, if that was —

City Manager Greg Lee
So we essentially lost \$8 million?

Mark Anderson
Yeah.

Male Speaker

He said over ten years.

City Manager Greg Lee

Over 20 years.

Mark Anderson

Taxpayers or garbage — you know, properties with garbage. I don't know what that number is that it would have done that math, but —

City Manager Greg Lee

We're trying to protect the investments that the city is making.

Councilmember Brian Wesp

I mean, you're right, Mr. Mayor, the decision is — we're charged with the decision, our council is, but it's something that is as charged as changing [inaudible/32:05] or whatever. I just — I want the people to be able to have the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Councilmember Mark Freeburg

Well, maybe now — I mean, everybody in Anoka has driven on [inaudible/32:16]. Just send them up and down Fifth Avenue and [inaudible], but, I mean, maybe people's opinions of roads has changed in five years, because you drive Miller Street before we fixed it, and it didn't take you too long to be a believer.

City Manager Greg Lee

Right. I truly believe the writing's on the wall. I think, Mr. Mayor, you said it right, that it's not a question of if we go to organized hauling, it's a matter of when. I think all cities are at that point because it makes so much sense if you're going to be there to protect your investments.

Mark Anderson

So it's an interesting process and get them to — you know, for that lightbulb to go off on their own —

City Manager Greg Lee

But just by giving them the facts and just giving them the information and —

Male Speaker

Okay, we're good.

City Manager Greg Lee

Well, good luck to you. I got the easy part.

[Laughter]

City Manager Greg Lee

I got the easy part.

Male Speaker

[Inaudible/33:14]

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

I'm just going to mention one small typo thing I noticed in here. It said the results for 2014, and then it says 2007. Was it '07 or '14?

City Manager Greg Lee

It was '07.

Councilmember Erik Skogquist

It was, okay.

Multiple Speakers

Closing out discussion.

[END OF MEETING]

Njo/1-26-20