CITY OF TUCSON
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ESAC)

WASTE DIVERSION, COLLECTIONS, AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 3, 3:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting

Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes
Approved on [*]

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1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kris Yarter at 3:02 PM.

Those present and absent were:

Present:

Kris Yarter, Chairperson	Representative, City Manager's Office
Margot Garcia	Representative, City Manager's Office
Trevor Anthony Ledbetter	Representative, City Manager's Office
Douglas Jennings	Representative, City Manager's Office
Alfredo "Fred" Araiza	Representative, Ward 2

Absent:

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Staff Members Present:

Pat L. Tapia	Deputy Director, Environmental Services
Frank Bonillas	Administrator, Environmental Services
Robert Urbina	Superintendent, Environmental Services
Brittany Aldrich	Staff Assistant, Environmental Services
Nadia Ispiani	Executive Assistant, Environmental Services

Both Subcommittee members and staff attended the meeting virtually via Zoom.

2. Chairperson's Report

No report.

3. Deputy Director's Report

Pat L. Tapia, Deputy Director, reported on the following items:

Mr. Tapia provided an update on the approved rate changes resulting from the cost-of-service study. He reported that residential customers would receive a $0.75 rate increase and that the $3 Clean City Fee had been approved. ESD was developing a plan outlining the use of the Clean City Fee funds, which would support activities including illegal dumping removal, homeless encampment cleanup, graffiti abatement, the Homeless Work Program, and Team Up to Clean Up neighborhood initiatives.

Mr. Tapia reported that ESD was coordinating with Tucson Water to implement the new rates and ensure accurate billing. He also provided updates on Chapter 15 fee changes, noting that landfill rates, special handling fees, and other service fees were updated after approximately 15 years without adjustments.

Mr. Tapia provided updates on service agreements with South Tucson and Winterhaven. He noted that the IGA with South Tucson did not require modification, was renewed for five years, and it will allow ESD to make appropriate route changes. For Winterhaven, ESD was working with the neighborhood association regarding adjustments to the additional trash collection and brush and bulky services.

Mr. Tapia reported that landfill disposal rates would increase by $3 per ton, with adjustments applied to commercial customers as existing agreements expire. He also noted that the Clean City Fee would allow ESD to hire additional staff and restore brush and bulky crews that had been redirected to address illegal dumping and homeless encampment cleanup. The Brush and Bulky appointment pilot program would end, and citywide scheduled collection services would resume.

Mr. Tapia explained that implementation of the Clean City Fee would take time, as ESD would need to recruit staff, acquire equipment, and build operational capacity. He emphasized that improvements would not occur immediately upon implementation but would require several months to be fully established.

Mr. Tapia noted that ESD would update its website to provide public access to current rates and fees to improve transparency and allow residents and other municipalities to easily access fee information.

4. Safety Update

Robert Urbina, Superintendent, reported on the following items:

Mr. Urbina presented safety incident data from March through May 2026, covering vehicular accidents, property damage, injuries, and hot loads across all lines of business, including residential, commercial, roll-off, and landfill operations.

Mr. Urbina reported that property damage remained the most common type of incident. He also discussed oil spills, explaining that they were typically caused by trucks operating throughout the day, resulting in overheating and, in some cases, mechanical failures. He emphasized the importance of operators conducting routine vehicle inspections, checking their mirrors, remaining alert, and walking around their vehicles before returning to service to identify any potential mechanical issues or conditions that could lead to a breakdown.

DRAFT

Ms. Garcia asked what types of injuries had been reported and example on non-preventable property damage. Mr. Urbina responded that the injuries primarily involved trips and falls caused by uneven surfaces or while exiting vehicles, and for an example of non-preventable incidents in which property damage occurred due to conditions or actions beyond the driver's control, such as containers being tied to the fence with hidden wires.

5. Waste Diversion

Brittany Aldrich, Staff Assistant, reported on the following items:

Materials Recovery Facility Report

Ms. Aldrich reported that total material received at the MRF about 1,800 tons while presented the April 2026: Tons Delivered to the MRF, commodity pricing, and cost of processing slides. Audit was conducted recently and 21% contamination rate was reported, because of that access residue surcharge has gone up from $0.50 to $1.80/ton.

6. Public Outreach Update

Brittany Aldrich, Staff Assistant, reported on the following items:

Ms. Aldrich presented Recycle Coach user analytics, including engagement metrics, impressions, clicks, app downloads, and participation rates. She reported that overall user engagement and time spent on the platform had decreased compared to the previous month. However, the number of app users continued to grow, with more than 73,000 users. She also reviewed participation statistics by service area and noted that additional clarification would be needed regarding how the data is categorized by collection zones.

7. Landfill and Compliance

Frank Bonillas, Administrator, reported on the following item:

Mr. Bonillas provided an update on landfill gas compliance and the status of the Notices of Violation (NOVs) issued by PDEQ and EPA. Mr. Bonillas reported that the City continues to comply with the Order of Abatement by Consent (OAC) signed in August 2025. As part of the Environmental Mitigation Plan, ESD conducted an assessment of the landfill gas collection system, which is being completed in two phases.

During Phase 1, ESD completed a comprehensive assessment of the landfill gas wells, collected operational data, and evaluated the gas collection system. ESD also installed four new gas extraction wells and identified several existing wells that required replacement, resulting in a total of nine new wells being installed as part of Phase 1. The Phase 1 report was submitted to PDEQ on March 13, 2026. He also stated that Phase 2 is currently underway and includes additional system evaluations, landfill gas modeling, well density analysis, and assessments of the blower and flare stations. The consultant is developing a Strategic Improvement Plan that will recommend system improvements, including potential installation of additional wells, replacement of piping, and long-term planning for replacement of the aging flare system. The Phase 2 report is due on July 13, 2026.

Mr. Bonillas also reported that the City submitted its initial response to the EPA's Findings of Violation (FOV) on May 28, 2026, while additional historical data continues to be evaluated to support a final

DRAFT

response. He also noted that following a March 17, 2026, follow-up inspection, PDEQ issued a letter of substantial compliance, identifying no additional violations or deficiencies.

8. Collections

Robert Urbina Superintendent, reported on the following items:

Mr. Urbina shared that Waste and Recycling Workers' Week would take place during the week of June 15 and run down events for employees and proclamation that will be conducted at LRSC.

He also reported that the Environmental Services Department (ESD) participated in 18 Safe City deployment operations, addressing 80 encampments and removing approximately 50 tons of debris.

For the recruitment update, noting that ESD had 11 vacant Solid Waste Equipment Operator (SWEO) positions. 19 candidates were on the hiring list, with seven having accepted job offers and progressing through the pre-employment process. Mr. Urbina also outlined the department's training program, which includes classroom instruction, up to six weeks of field training with a designated trainer, and a 12-month probationary period. Additionally, he reported that ESD had six Environmental Service Worker (ESW) vacancies. Sixteen candidates were interviewed and placed on an eligibility list. He explained that ESWs support landfill operations, brush and bulky collection, and other field activities by assisting equipment operators, directing customers, and maintaining landfill facilities.

No vehicle updates were reported.

9. Future Agenda Items for Next Meeting dated August 5, 2026

Future agenda items are as follows:

- Equipment Update
- ByFusion Project

10. Call to the Audience – No audience.

11. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 PM.

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