

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ESAC)
WASTE DIVERSION, COLLECTIONS, AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Wednesday, August 5, 3:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

**Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes
Approved on [*]**

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
Trevor Anthony Ledbetter
Douglas Jennings
Alfredo "Fred" Araiza

Representative, City Manager's Office
Representative, City Manager's Office
Representative, City Manager's Office
Representative, Ward 2

Absent:

Margot Garcia

Representative, City Manager's Office

Staff Members Present:

Cristina Polsgrove
Frank Bonillas
Jose Montijo
Javier Herrera
Brittany Aldrich
Nadia Ispiani

Management Coordinator, Environmental Services
Administrator, Environmental Services
Administrator, Environmental Services
Public Information Officer, Environmental Services
Staff Assistant, Environmental Services
Management Assistant, Environmental Services

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

2. Approval of Minutes for May 6, 2026, and June 3, 2026

No changes were made to May 6, 2026, and June 3, 2026, meeting minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chairperson's Report

No report.

4. Waste Diversion

Cristina Polsgrove, Management Coordinator, reported on the following items:

Ms. Polsgrove presented the June 2026 Tons Delivered to the MRF, commodity pricing, and cost of processing slides. She also shared the increase in the contamination rate, noting an associated cost increase of \$1.80.

Ms. Yarter commented that she has observed several residents continuing to place glass in the blue recycling bin. Ms. Polsgrove clarified that if the glass reaches the MRF, it can still be recycled. However, because it is often dirty and contaminated, the material generated is lower quality.

5. Public Outreach Update

Cristina Polsgrove, Management Coordinator, reported on the following items:

Ms. Polsgrove introduced the new Public Information Officer, Mr. Javier Herrero, who came to the department from Tucson Water. He will be the presenter for the Public Outreach item moving forward.

Ms. Polsgrove shared plans for distributing next year's informational materials, including the Brush & Bulky (B&B) schedule, recycling calendar, and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) calendar. Her team is currently developing these materials, which are expected to be mailed to residents by mid-November. Additionally, rather than mailing multiple separate inserts in an envelope, the information will be consolidated into a single booklet. This booklet will serve as a year-round reference for residents. Ms. Polsgrove stated that she will share the booklet with the Board once it is completed.

Ms. Polsgrove explained that the Hefty ReNew program no longer has access to all of the end markets it previously relied on and, as a result, the program will be discontinued. Hefty will continue selling the orange bags in Tucson through the end of the year.

Ms. Polsgrove stated that, following discussions with ByFusion, once its facility is fully operational, it will be able to process all of Tucson's material. She noted that Tucson currently generates approximately 10 to 20 tons of material per month, while the ByFusion facility is expected to have a processing capacity of more than 200 tons.

During the transition, residents will be asked to use clear plastic bags and can continue using any remaining Hefty orange bags they already have. Ms. Polsgrove also noted that, once the program is fully managed by ByFusion, residents will no longer be able to recycle Styrofoam through the program. To support the transition, signage will be updated on all roll-off containers, and additional information will be distributed to residents.

Mr. Jennings asked a question regarding the No. 2 HDPE data presented during the Waste Diversion update. Ms. Polsgrove confirmed that the report contained an error and stated that a revised report with the corrected number will be shared to the members.

6. Landfill and Compliance

Frank Bonillas, Administrator, reported on the following item:

Landfill operations, Mr. Bonillas provided an update on landfill operations and outlined several equipment purchases planned for the new fiscal year. The equipment includes a small 308 mini excavator with a thumb attachment to assist with green waste diversion and a larger 325 excavator equipped with a magnet attachment to help recover metal from the drop-off area. Additional purchases include a replacement compactor, a water truck, a trailer for Household Hazardous Waste events, and light-duty pickup trucks. He also noted that additional composting equipment is being evaluated to increase processing capacity.

Ms. Yarter asked about the cost of the new equipment. Mr. Bonillas responded that prices remain high, with the replacement compactor costing approximately \$1.6 million and other equipment costing more than \$100,000, depending on the item.

Mr. Bonillas reported that, since the new green waste fee took effect on July 1, the landfill has received more clean green waste, able to separate and divert more of the material.

Mr. Ledbetter asked about the current green waste fee. Mr. Bonillas stated that the fee is \$30.50 per ton, with \$18 minimum charge for loads under one ton.

Mr. Bonillas reported that, due to the increase in green waste volume, more grinding events may be needed. A grinder was rented in July for one week at a cost of approximately \$25,000. He noted that purchasing a grinder may be considered in the future if the need for more frequent grinding continues.

Mr. Jennings asked whether the weekly grinder rental fee included maintenance costs. Mr. Bonillas explained that the \$25,000 weekly rental does not include damage caused during operation. He noted that the new magnet-equipped excavator will help remove metal from green waste before grinding to reduce the risk of equipment damage.

Mr. Ledbetter asked whether there were any issues distributing finished compost. Mr. Bonillas reported that there is currently a healthy stockpile with no distribution concerns and that demand is expected to increase during the fall and spring seasons.

Mr. Bonillas also provided an update on the ByFusion facility. He reported that construction of the building has been completed and all inspections have been passed. The facility will be turned over to ByFusion once the lease agreement is finalized, after which tenant improvements will begin. ByFusion is anticipated to begin producing ByBlocks around the end of the year or early January. Ms. Yarter asked whether a ribbon-cutting ceremony was planned. Ms. Polsgrove responded that a grand opening will be scheduled after the facility is operational, likely in January or February.

7. Collections

Jose Montijo, Administrator, reported on the following items:

Mr. Montijo provided an update on equipment and recruitment activities. He reported that the department evaluated multiple collection vehicle options and selected Short Equipment as the lowest bidder. The purchase includes six new residential collection vehicles, two front loaders, four rear loaders, and two refurbished units. He noted that refurbishing two existing vehicles will provide cost savings compared to purchasing new ones.

Mr. Montijo explained that nine older curb tender vehicles are currently stored at the landfill. Six vehicles will be removed through the new purchase, and two will be refurbished. Short Equipment will also provide a \$10,000 credit for surplus vehicles.

Mr. Jennings asked about the fuel type and engine performance. Mr. Montijo confirmed that all collection vehicles use CNG and noted that diesel engines generally have longer lifespans due to operating at cooler temperatures.

Ms. Yarter asked about the electric vehicle update. Mr. Montijo stated that the vehicle remains in litigation and is currently undergoing upgrades.

Mr. Montijo also provided a recruitment update, reporting that seven Solid Waste Equipment Operator (SWEO) candidates are in the hiring process and three Environmental Services Workers (ESW) are ready to begin employment. He also noted that the department is recruiting additional Trade Specialists and creating new positions to support expanded brush and bulky services related to the Clean City fee.

8. Future Agenda Items for Next Meeting dated September 2, 2026

Future Agenda Items:

Continue tracking and providing updates on previously discussed items.

9. Call to the Audience – No audience.

10. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.