

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
AND PUBLIC MEETING**

**OCTOBER 13, 2022
5:30 P.M.**

The members of the Marshall City Council met for a Work Session and Public Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, October 13, 2022, in the Municipal Court Room of the Municipal Court Building, 5 East Eastwood, Marshall, MO 65340, with the following members present: Mayor Dewey Hendrix, Council Members Leon Thompson, Robert Ashford, Tim Reeder, Dan Brandt, Steve Cook and Drew Green. Council Members Craig Thompson and Charles Guthrey absent. City Administrator JD Kehrman, City Counselor Josh Taylor and City Clerk Julie Lewis also present.

Mayor Hendrix welcomed everyone in attendance and said the purpose of the meeting is to discuss curbside refuse and sanitation collection with residents.

City Administrator JD Kehrman gave a brief background of the City's current sanitation services. In an effort to resume all services the Council is looking at a contract with RTS Waste Services. The City has recently purchased two trucks and residential cans; a contract with RTS would allow RTS to purchase those items from the City. The contract would also provide for a lock of current monthly rates for 36 months with a 3% increase cap thereafter.

Maintaining in-house sanitation services would mean a potential increase in monthly rates and the issuance of 96 gallon cans to each residence. Curbside brush and recycle pick up would no longer be available. Driver retention is also an issue the City is facing.

Cody Painter, resident of Ward 3, inquired about an exploratory committee to get feed back from current drivers regarding retention and general work environment. He also asked how the Street department is being impacted.

City Administrator Kehrman explained the largest pool of drivers is in Sanitation. If a contract with RTS is approved, those drivers would transition into the Street department. Municipal Services Director Bill Anderson will become a Projects Manager and be focused on street work projects. The City is currently working on a pay scale for drivers however it is difficult to compete with private industry pay rates.

Council Member Green said the City should raise the pay for the employees and keep them here. The City has not done what we said we would do and that is manage the employees. The Council had discussed the purchase of GPS trackers but that has not happened yet.

Carol Wolfe, resident, said they care about the size of the trash cans because 96 gallons is too big to handle.

An audience member who is a resident inquired about the ease of use of a 96 gallon can.

City Administrator Kehrman said the smallest can that can be picked up by the automated trucks is 48 gallon. All cans will have wheels for transporting to curbside.

Mr. Kerhman explained residents will have no changes to what they are doing now with services provided by RTS, no cans will be issued to residents.

Mr. Charles Avilez, resident, asked about the disadvantages of going with RTS. He does understand that resources could be funneled into other good things.

Council Member Green said the disadvantage is there is a lot of bad press regarding services provided by RTS. The residents he has spoken with in Ward 1 want to keep the service in house even if it costs more.

Council Member Leon Thompson said the residents he has spoken with in Ward 1 don't care who picks up their trash. They do not want to pay more and get less service. He discussed the lack of a true plan, there has not been a step rate study. He feels there are several advantages to the RTS contract including stable rates and reinstating services such as brush and recycle pick up. Several cities use RTS and feel they are doing a good job.

Mr. Thom Ward, resident, feels that the city would be losing local control and would pay more down the road. Having the service with RTS would be subject to issues. He suggested putting the Sanitation department under the control of Marshall Municipal Utilities.

Council Member Ashford stated the contract would lock in rates. If kept in-house the rate could be at \$30 per month after the first year and the cans are rated to last approximately 10 years with replacement to be the responsibility of the resident.

Mr. Ward asked if the City took written bids for the sanitation service.

Mr. Kehrman said negotiations have been with one company.

Council Member Reeder said he has spoken with MMU and they are not interested in managing sanitation services.

Mr. Ward expressed his displeasure with the potential outsourcing of city services and feels the citizens should vote on the subject.

Council Member Reeder asked for a show of hands of those in attendance who would like to keep services in-house. He also asked for a show of hands of those in attendance willing to contract the service to RTS. By way of a show of hands, the majority indicated they would like to keep the service in house.

A representative of GFL asked about the offer from GLF to lower rates if services are kept in-house.

City Administrator Kehrman said the offer was based on extending the contract. He is willing to renegotiate with GFL, but not to extending the length of the contract.

An audience member indicated he had been a Council member in the past and feels that if you give the service away, you will never be able to get it back. Pay the city employees the same as MMU employees.

Council Member Green said the City needs to invest money into the employees.

Council Member Ashford said there have been many projects within the Street department that have not been completed due to lack of labor. If the City were to contract with RTS, the street projects could be completed and our decaying infrastructure would receive much needed attention. No employees would lose their jobs

Council Member Green feels this is a scare tactic. He has seen nothing to indicate how much it will cost to keep services in-house and how many trucks it will take.

Mayor Hendrix said we cannot keep focusing on the sanitation employees without consideration of the employees in the other city departments.

Mr. Rich Maccholz, resident, said this seems like spinning wheels with no workable solution. He suggests tabling the program and reinvestigating what can be done. He understands that it is not easy to run a city and some decisions will not be popular but the Council doesn't seem to have enough information to make this decision at this time. He is not interested in paying more and doesn't want to give up services. He appreciates city employees.

Mr. Mike Harlow said the City will lose control with RTS. How is RTS able to provide at a rate lesser than the City could? It will cost the citizens more in the future. It is not a good idea to give up local control.

Council Member Leon Thompson said the contractor is required to provide a surety bond and there will be other companies ready to step in if the need arises. The contract is good and will allow the city to provide the needed service to citizens.

Ms. Lee Hamilton said the City no longer produces our own electric. How much administration is in the Sanitation department and couldn't those salaries go to the workers?

Aaron Blackerby, Sanitation employee, asked what will happen to the non-CDL employees.

Mr. Kehrman said we still need those employees and the positions were kept in the 2022-2023 budget.

The members of the Marshall City Council made no decisions during the work session.

The work session ended at 6:48 p.m.

Julie A. Lewis
City Clerk