

Memo

To: Andy Pouncey
From: Joe Nunes
CC:
Date: 6/25/2012
Re: After Action Report – Solid Waste Collection

Purpose: What did we set out to do? What was supposed to happen? Is there a process or procedure in place?

The goal of the solid waste collection RFP was to provide enhanced collection options to the Germantown residents at a competitive price. Ideally the process is completed about 5 months prior to start of the new contract. In order to take advantage of any new collection equipment, a decision was made to utilize the competitive sealed proposal process.

There is a procedure established by the purchasing department and this was followed. The Board approved the use of the competitive sealed proposal in September, 2010.

A consultant was utilized to assist in the preparation of the proposal specifications and the analysis of the proposals received. The consultant contract was also approved by the Board in September.

Executive Summary: What actually happened? What worked well that needs to be sustained? What did not work well and needs to be changed?

Proposal: The competitive sealed proposal was out on the streets on March 8. This was behind the original schedule. Ideally, this would have gone out in January. The delay was due to various items but the key is adding extra time for the fine tuning of the specification language, along with the purchasing and legal review process.

One note, in the next proposal/bid, we should include the requirement of GPS on all trucks and demonstration of a routing software package.

Implementation: Once the vendor was selected and the process of awarding the contract began, there was an unusual one time situation that involved the purchase of the local assets of the selected vendor Advanced Disposal by Republic Services/Allied Waste. This required the assignment of the contract and added additional legal and Board action along with a delay in the implementation until the process was complete. This was unusual and would not likely impact future actions.

Determining Customer Service Requirements:

Communication. Once a decision was made to provide two levels of service and to pass along these savings to the resident, in order to determine if residents desired curbside service, a mailing was done to all homes in the system. Three options were provided for the resident, return post card, internet or phone. Staff processed over 8,000 requests. This required a significant amount of staff time to handle the additional calls and process the requests. Next time, if a change in service is part of the process, we should investigate the cost of contracting this out to a service that has the phone staff and equipment to handle the volume of calls.

Contractor Implementation: Due to the short time after the contract assignment was awarded, this left little time for the ordering of household trash and yard debris carts. The unknown of the much higher than anticipated number of residents switching to curbside created a challenge in cart ordering. While the contractor (Republic/Allied) acquired the operations, household trash and recycling were existing services provided by Advanced Disposal. Yard debris was a new service and required the ordering and scheduling of equipment. To make operations smoother, a decision was made to delay the recycle cart launch.

Recycle Cart Delivery: The response to the mailing for recycle carts was again greater than anticipated. Without a second mailing, an estimate was made on the number of additional carts to order and this missed the mark. An additional 1,300 carts were ordered and the number of requests continued to grow. Note: next time when we are keeping the list of people requesting the cart we need to make sure that we track their request date so that cart orders can be sorted by request date to ensure that carts are delivered to those that ordered earliest. In addition, we should do a follow up mailing, e-mail blast, etc. to those residents that did not respond initially.

Finance Department Implementation: Well over 60% of the residents opted for curbside service. This required a communication with Finance, the Contractor and the cart supplier. Communication was established early on with Finance and a method for providing the discount on the utility bill was established. Unfortunately, due to the cost for creating a one time program in Sungard, it was decided to update all the records manually. While there have been some homes that did not receive the curbside discount, the number of billing errors appears to be a fairly small percentage of the total.

Lessons Learned: *What can we do better next time?*

As noted above, the process needs to start almost a year in advance and plan for the contract to be awarded five to six months prior to the start of service. If a solicitation of the residents is part of the process then the cost of this service should be included in the budget. This could include the hiring of temporary employees to assist with phone and data entry.

Allow sufficient time for a follow up mailing to those residents that did not respond to the first mailing.

Action Items: List of actions to be fixed – root cause analysis, PATS, Six Sigma? Timelines and responsibilities

Overall, given the significant changes that had to occur, staff including neighborhood services, finance, front line phone contacts, etc did an admirable job in servicing the resident's requests. The main action item will be the development of a better timeline/plan allowing additional time for the items mentioned above.