CITY OF SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA
AGENDA AND NOTICE OF MEETING

Regular Workshop Session of Monday, May 1, 2017
Library Conference Room – 5:30 p.m.
601 South Washington Avenue

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. DISCUSSION
A. Ameresco Project Update
B. Composting Program Presentation
C. Others

III. ADJOURNMENT

Office of the City Administrator
Todd Prafke

TP/bal
TO: Honorable Mayor Zieman
    Members of the City Council
FROM: Todd Prafke
    City Administrator
RE: Visit from Ameresco

ACTION/RECOMMENDATION

None needed. For your information and discussion only.

BACKGROUND

Members may recall a couple of previous presentations by Ameresco on a series of potential energy savings projects. Our interest in this has centered on a few major project components and a few minors components. Ameresco and Staff have been through an extensive process to come up with projects that can have an impact on your customers and provide and use our energy savings to pay the debt service. This process has been a bit more complex due to the fact that we are our own electric supplier. So savings calculations have tended more towards a comparison to wholesale energy costs than retail costs. While we have focused on energy savings (rather than just cost savings), the issue of reduction of maintenance costs and improvement of service, particularly related to street lighting, are likely the areas of biggest impact to be seen by your customers.

A couple of things of note. Because your cost basis is so low, finding projects that are at a minimum “break even” is pretty hard. Therefore, my goal for this analysis has been focused on improved performance while knowing that saving energy and saving money is not the same thing and maintenance reduction costs add up over time. We have been pretty hard on Ameresco. They have had to really demonstrate everything that they have promised throughout this process.

My goals for your workshop on Monday evening are:

- To have Ameresco give an update on where we are in process.
- To provide a short review of the three primary options that were evaluated and provide some additional focus on the option we are recommending.
- To help ensure that Members know and understand the general scope of the project.
- To help ensure that members are comfortable with a project that, frankly, is not a money maker and is likely to do no better than “break even” from a financial perspective.
- To talk about the next steps

Please let me know if you have any additional questions or concerns on this agenda item.

TP/bal
TO: Todd Prafke  
City Administrator

FROM: Isabel Gerencer  
Administrative Intern

RE: Organics Composting in Saint Peter

ACTION/RECOMMENDATION

None needed. For Council discussion and input only.

BACKGROUND

In the United States there has been a movement toward organics composting. Organics composting would be a good option for Saint Peter residents to keep organics out of the trash stream. Organics is defined as any foods or items that are labeled "compostable" (such as compostable cups, utensils and plates). Organics do not include yard waste (i.e. tree branches, brush, and grass). In a composting system, organic material is brought to a compost site where it is decomposed on a large scale and the organics eventually turn to dirt that can be reused.

There are basically three types of organics composting:

1. Anaerobic Digestion: During this process, food waste is combined with sewage waste and is digested. The waste is ground up, bacteria anaerobically digests the waste, and methane is captured.
   a. Pro: This works well if there is a high volume of food waste and the proper infrastructure to handle an increased amount of solids in a wastewater treatment facility.
   b. Con: Saint Peter does not have this level of infrastructure which makes this type of organics disposal hard to accomplish without considerable work. This method also does not include compostable paper and plastic products. The bacteria in anaerobic digestion can only break down food, which severely reduces the amount that can be composted.
   c. Recommendation: Because of high costs and inefficiencies, this is not a viable option for Saint Peter.
2. **In-Vessel System:** This is similar to what Gustavus uses. It is a greenhouse type machine that grinds and mixes organics, allowing material to compost. Composting takes a week or so to finish and the end product is fresh dirt.

   a. **Pro:** This system works best in small areas, with composting being done on a small scale. It requires someone to fill the system, monitor the system and empty the system. This system is perfect for a school where there is a single source; however, it may also work in a small community like Saint Peter.

   b. **Con:** This system is incredibly expensive and the investment made on the system would not be earned back for years. If organic composting becomes a bigger thing 10 years down the line (which it most likely will), this system will be inefficient as it will not be able to handle large amounts of organics.

   c. **Recommendation:** Although this system, if you ignore the cost, would work for Saint Peter now, as organics recycling becomes more popular in the future, it will become a wasted and inefficient investment; therefore this is probably not a viable option for Saint Peter.

3. **Aerobic Composting:** This form of composting digests and composts organic material the same way an In-Vessel system would, except on a large scale. This type of composting is accomplished in a couple of different ways; the main thing that links them, and separates them from an In-Vessel system, is that composting is done outside.

   a. **Pro:** This is efficient and effective composting. There are already established areas that do this in Minnesota. This system can take everything from paper to food and properly turn products into compost.

   b. **Con:** This does not save money. Composting in general does not save the City money, however, the price of this is less than the previous two options.

   c. **Recommendation:** Go with this form of composting.

There are multiple ways to achieve Aerobic Composting and multiple sites in Minnesota where compost could be taken. Some ideas and options the Council may wish to explore include:

1. **Start a composting site in the Saint Peter area.**

   a. **Pro:** A venue in Saint Peter would reduce costs of transportation, and reduce carbon emissions from transportation. Saint Peter would also get to keep the compost.

   b. **Con:** Permitting for a compost site is hard to obtain and maintain and there is a good chance Saint Peter would not get a permit. Saint Peter would not create enough waste for this type of composting on its own, and would need other communities to donate their organics as well. This would also, logistically speaking, be a huge project and commitment.
2. Haul to Good Thunder.
   a. Pro: Good Thunder is close by; meaning that money and carbon emissions are saved. This is the cheapest option because it is the short distance from Saint Peter. If at any point, the City wants to switch who composts their organics, it would be relatively easy to leave Good Thunder. Good Thunder recently switched management and has had success. It also has the capacity to accept more waste. Mankato Zero Waste uses this site and likes them.
   b. Con: Good Thunder has had issues in the past with permitting. The previous management was closed down multiple times for permitting reasons.

   a. Pro: Their composting methods are highly regarded. They have a high capacity for composting and have not had any permitting problems. They are well organized and efficient. If another composting center opens up, it would be relatively easy to leave the Sioux site.
   b. Con: They are far away, meaning that the price to compost would be more expensive than the price to burn the food. They are close enough that the carbon footprint of travel would not hurt the environment as much as the current process of burning does, however, the environmental gain is not optimal.

To provide for organics composting within Saint Peter, there would need to be a system for compost collection from residents. For this, there are three basic options:

1. Drop site:
   a. Pro: There is no extra expense of picking up at individual houses because residents would be required to haul the materials to the drop site.
   b. Con: Based on experiences in other towns, drop sites decrease the number of participants in the programs. Drop sites smell and attract animals and bugs making them unpleasant to be around.
   c. Recommendation: These sites would not be efficient or appealing to have in Saint Peter.

2. Modification of the existing refuse hauling contract with LJP Enterprises to provide for curbside collection:
   a. Pro: LJP already provides for curbside pick-up of refuse which would make it easy to add organics to their route.
   b. Con: If we were to do a program with curbside pick-up, LJP is more than willing to provide this service for the City; however, with this extra service, they may want contract and pay increases.
   c. Recommendation: This is an acceptable alternative depending on the contract modification with LJP.
3. Contract with another company.
   
a. Pro: Competition for services like this is good and keeps prices fair. There are businesses in Saint Peter that already have contracts with haulers such as Waste Management to bring organic waste to the Good Thunder composting site. Saint Peter could look into contracting with one of those haulers.
   
b. Con: There may not be a contractor or entrepreneur who is interested in doing this hauling.
   
c. Recommendation: If there is a company willing to do this for a less expensive price than LJP, than this is a very good and recommended option.
   
I am suggesting that the City put in place a system that involves curbside organics pick up, either by LJP, or another hauler. This hauler would then transport that waste once a week to the Good Thunder composting site.

In addition, my work included some analysis of the City’s overall refuse and recycling numbers. Based on data that I have reviewed from other communities there may some advantages in going to every week recycling pick-up. The data seems to suggest that it will increase recycling use but whether a reduction in refuse weights is enough to offset any possible contract increase is the next thing to figure out.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns on this agenda item.

IG/
The City of Saint Peter contracts with a local waste hauler to provide residential refuse service to all residents.
To sign up for service or to change your service plan, please contact the City of Saint Peter Finance Department at (507) 934-0664.
For Billing Questions & Refuse Pickup Problems call the City Finance Department at (507) 934-0664.

Service Plans Available:

**Full Service (billed monthly)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>90 Gallon Curbie</th>
<th>$24.22 (includes sales tax)</th>
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<tr>
<td>60 Gallon Curbie</td>
<td>$21.23 (includes sales tax)</td>
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**Volume Based (billed monthly)**

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<th>10-30 Gallon Bags</th>
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Bags are available at the City Hall Finance Department and at the St. Peter Arrow Ace store. Refuse bags are packaged and sold in 10's. At the City Hall Finance Department you may purchase individual bags.

Refuse is billed monthly on your city utility bill and includes weekly pickup of refuse. Recyclables are picked up every other week on your refuse collection day.

Refuse price includes curbside recycling. Recyclables include glass bottles & jars, metal beverage and food cans, plastic #1 - #7, and paper from newspaper, magazines, junk mail, non-coated food paper boxes, small flat pieces of corrugated cardboard.

There is a $5.00 charge to change your refuse service.

Contact the City Finance Department at (507) 934-0664 to setup or change your refuse service.

**Collection Information**

- **Service Collection Days**
- **Recycling**

**Holiday Schedule**
When any of the following Holidays falls on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, your service will be delayed by one day:
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

Frequently Asked Questions

I have too much garbage this week, what should I do?
Purchase special trash bags for the extra refuse. Please stop in the Finance Department at City Hall or at the Saint Peter Arrow Ace Hardware store and they'll gladly sell you some extra bags that you can put out next to your curbie. These special refuse bags include the cost of disposal and are available in two sizes:
15 gallon - $1.09 per bag includes tax.
30 gallon - $1.65 per bag includes tax.
Or you can contact any licensed hauler to obtain information on cost and for a special pickup.

If you consistently have too much garbage you can change refuse service. There is a $5.00 charge to change curbie size. If you already have a 90 gallon curbie you may be interested in a 2nd curbie. Please contact the Finance Department at 507-934-0664 to change your refuse service.

My garbage didn't get picked up today, what should I do?
Most of the time when a resident's garbage is not picked up one of the following has occurred:

1. Your refuse may be picked up a day later if one of the following holidays occurred this week: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day
2. Refuse and Recycling were not put out by 7:00 a.m.
3. The curbie lid can't be closed because the curbie is too full.
4. Unacceptable items are placed in the curbie - NO paints, chemicals, motor oil or filters, car batteries, tires, fluorescent light bulbs, or yardwaste may be placed in your residential trash.
5. The curbie is too heavy.
6. You were inadvertently missed by our refuse hauler. Please call 934-0664.

My recycling didn't get picked up today?
Recycling is collected every other week on your refuse collection day.

What is my collection day?

Have you received a note from your refuse truck driver lately?
We want to remind everyone that the lid on your curbie must close or the driver will not take the excess garbage. Our costs are designed so that everyone pays for refuse collection based on volume. If you put out more refuse than your curbie holds, the City must pay more costs. That's not fair to our customers and that's why we are cracking down on those who take advantage of the system. If you have extra refuse, please stop in the Finance Department at City Hall or at the Saint Peter Arrow Ace Hardware store and they'll gladly sell you some extra bags that you can put out next to your curbie. These special bags include the cost of disposal and that makes it fair for everyone. You also can contact our waste hauler directly to make arrangements for a special pickup if you would prefer.

If you have any questions or need further assistance please contact us at (507) 934-0664.
Collection Information
Refuse is collected once a week.

Recycling is collected every other week on your refuse collection day. Schedule for recycling pickup (pdf)

Holiday Schedule: If New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day falls during the weekday, your service will be delayed by one day. All residential refuse and recyclables must be placed streetside by 7:00 a.m. Trash and recyclables should be placed at the end of your driveway or along your boulevard. DO NOT place your containers on the street. Please keep the recycling curbie and refuse curbie at least three feet apart.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AS TO YOUR COLLECTION DAY, PLEASE CALL (507) 934-0664.

For additional information on Recycling – click here

UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS IN YOUR TRASH

No paints, liquids, chemicals, motor oil or filters, car batteries, tires, fluorescent light bulbs, computer monitors, medical needles or yard waste may be placed in your residential trash.

To obtain information on the handling of these items or any other item, please contact us at (507) 934-0664.
For information on getting rid of hazardous waste, please contact the Regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility and Product Reuse Center. It is open from April – October at 651 Summit Avenue in Mankato. This service is open to Nicollet County residents. They will accept materials at no charge from households. For more information call (507)304-4242, or visit the website at [http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/index.aspx?nid=373](http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/index.aspx?nid=373).

The City of Saint Peter also promotes recycling for holiday light strings, appliances, flourescent light bulbs, electronics, and household hazardous waste. Please watch for collection dates on Facebook, and in our monthly Utility Bill Flyer.


**Questions?**
Please call 507-934-0664
SCHEDULE FOR RECYCLING PICKUP (pdf)

No need to separate when you recycle. You simply put all your recyclable materials into the curbie with the yellow lid. All City refuse plans include recycling.

Recycling is collected every other week on the same day as your refuse collection. All recyclables and refuse must be placed street-side by 7:00 a.m.

Please keep the recycling curbie and trash curbie at least three feet apart.

Plastic #1 - #7
Please remove and discard all pumps, and metal handles. Rinse. Plastic bottles & containers can be crushed to save space. Don't forget to recycle your milk & juice cartons. (Plastic bags and foam products are NOT accepted.)

Glass Bottles/Jars
Rinse. DO NOT break bottles and jars. (Window glass, drinking glasses, light bulbs, ceramics are NOT accepted.)

Metal Beverage and Food Cans
Rinse, no need to remove labels or crush. (Aerosol cans are NOT accepted.)

Paper and Cardboard
Paper from newspapers, magazines, junk mail, dry non-coated food paper box board, and small flat pieces of corrugated cardboard box material are all accepted.

Glass, Cans, Plastics, Paper and Cardboard DO NOT need to be separated - It's simple, just place in your recycle curbie...no sorting required!

Thank you for Recycling! Recycling is good for the environment and helps to keep your refuse costs down.


RECYCLING DROP OFF SITES – Residents of Saint Peter have two drop off recycling sites in addition to the curbside recycling. Click above for more information and site locations.

Hazardous Waste