



Mayor Morrison Leads City to Narrow Victory on Contract with Republic Services

by Joe Hyde

Jul 1, 2014

City Operations Director Shane Kelton, right, explains the details of the new trash contract with Republic Services. (LIVE! Photo/Joe Hyde) After a contentious debate, the San Angelo City Council voted to move forward with signing a trash and landfill management contract for at least 10 more years with Republic Services.

Citizen comments were running two-to-one in against moving forward. Many, including local businessman and CEO of Mayfield Paper Co.

Stanley Mayfield made spirited arguments that a new contract should not be ratified and signed until the local businesses who were allegedly overcharged are paid back. Mayfield is a co-plaintiff with Acme Iron and Metal on a lawsuit against Republic.

On the other side, Olive's Nursery owner Tommy Olive delivered a spirited defense of Republic and the Council, referring to his service on a local school board. He said he trusted the Council's decision to move forward.

The agenda items 15 and 16 arrived shortly after noon Tuesday. Mayor Dwain Morrison asked the room if their desire was to work through lunch to finish the vote. Unanimously, everyone agreed.

Councilwoman Elizabeth Grindstaff opposed moving forward until all questions on the overcharging allegations were satisfied. "This contract is our only leverage," she said. Councilman Don Vardeman agreed. Councilman Rodney Fleming said that there was no question that Republic won the bid, however he said that his constituents were so angry about the overcharges that he could not vote to move forward until the alleged overcharges were reconciled. Councilman Marty Self appeared to be considering voting against the contract. But Councilman Johnny Silvas gave a spirited defense of Republic and it seemed to sway Self to vote to approve.



City Operations Director Shane Kelton, right, explains the details of the new trash contract with Republic Services. (LIVE! Photo/Joe Hyde)

Morrison had the last comment before the vote.

“Both companies were given equal footing to give their best proposal and to send us an RFP, and send us a contract price. Both companies didn’t,” he said. Raising his voice, Morrison continued, “Republic gave us a very good price. Plus they’re paying for our landfill. There’s many, many millions of dollars involved. TDS [Texas Disposal Systems] did not. Republic gave us the best price for pickup, at a better price than TDS.”

“We have had our hands tied since this thing began. We’ve been called names. There’s been insinuations. There’s been things said that should not have been said against us. And we can’t even call it back. We can’t even defend ourselves,” he said.

“So we’ve sat back and we’ve taken the hits and we’ve taken the names and we’ve taken the things that people have said, and we have not been able to say anything back. And personally, I’m getting tired of playing defense. I’m ready to go on offense. And I’m ready to go forward on this,” Morrison concluded.

When the vote was cast, Morrison, Self, Silvas, and Councilwoman Charlotte Farmer voted to sign the contract. Grindstaff, Fleming, and Vardeman voted against.