

Sanitation fee in Austin increases by \$5 per customer

Written by Marty Randall

Wednesday, 02 August 2017 07:08 -

August billings for Austin sanitation service reflect a \$5 increase voted in by a majority of the Austin City Council at their special meeting on Wednesday night, July 26.

The first reading of the ordinance to increase the fee was conducted on July 10. The specially-called July 26 meeting covered second and third readings of the ordinance. Three public readings are required by state law.

Additionally, each year the collection fee in Austin will increase 25 cents per customer with the August billing cycle.

Councilman Johnnie White voted against the measure in both votes taken at the meeting. Councilwoman Staci Mullins could not attend the special meeting. Those who voted for the measure included Council President Brandon White and Councilmen Greg Goodin and Joe Smith.

The majority of the Council felt that adding \$5 per month to the sanitation fee should relieve the utility of some financial strain and allow it to save money toward the purchase of a new packer, estimated to cost upwards of \$175,000.

Other fees that increased by \$5 per month include:

- \$45 per month for trash collection from dumpsters no more than two cubic yards in size;
- \$50 per month from dumpsters no more than three cubic yards in size; and
- \$65 per month for trash collection from dumpsters more than three cubic yards in size.

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Each year, the dumpster fee will automatically increase \$1 with the August billing cycle.