

\$2 recycling container measure gets OK from finance committee

By Jodi Rogstad
jrogstad@wyomingnews.com

CHEYENNE -- A plan to introduce the \$2 recycling container option moved ahead at Monday's City Council Finance Committee meeting.

Members recommended approval 3-0 vote with no discussion.

Curbside recycling began last month for 9,000 city residents who live south of Pershing Boulevard.

After an outcry, especially from smaller households, council members Patrick Collins and Jim Brown sponsored an ordinance change to allow people to swap out the city-issued 95-gallon containers for 65-gallon containers for a discount. (They proposed a reduction of \$2 a month; the council voted two weeks ago to make it \$3.)

However, to get it, one has to use the smaller-sized garbage container.

Right now, 1,800 residents have opted to use the smaller, cheaper containers.

Sanitation Director Dennis Pino calls it the "pay as you throw" program. Those who produce less trash have the option to pay less.

Afterward, Pino said he didn't expect a great many people to downsize -- perhaps 2,000 citywide.

With the \$3 discount, that amounts to \$65,000 less for the budget.

Collins said offering a discounted container seems like the fair thing to do for smaller households -- and it might go a long way toward getting some of these people to embrace the program.

He pointed out that the city has an interest in getting people to toss out less trash. Tipping fees at the landfill in Ault are \$23 a ton; Denver's Alpine Waste and Recycling charges \$10.

The menu option is not unique to Cheyenne. Fort Collins, Colo. has recently begun such a program.

In the month that Cheyenne has operated the recycling program, Pino said Alpine reports a 2 percent contamination rate. That is the amount of materials that do not belong in the containers.

A low contamination rate saves the city money.

"That's great," Pino said. "That tells me that people are doing an excellent job of recycling."