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Sustainability Advisory Board
THE CITY OF KEY WEST

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To: City Commissioners, City Manager

Date: June 5, 2014

Re: 2-1-1 Trash Pick Up

The Sustainability Advisory Board feels very strongly that a return to a 2-1-1 pickup schedule every week will have a number of negative impacts.

First, by adding a second trash pickup we will be increasing the impacts of the trash trucks on our streets by 33%. This will also increase their greenhouse gas emissions by the same amount. This is a major step backward with regard to our commitment to reduce our emissions.

This is especially true when we all know that one trash pickup a week is sufficient and has been working smoothly. The 1-1-1 model that significantly boosted recycling rates has resulted in a reduction of garbage volume, and no one spoke for 2-1-1 at the City Commission meeting during the contract discussion.

What hasn't been reduced is yard waste, which still consists of ~25% of all our non-recyclables. The Board is concerned that more yard waste will be thrown into trashcans if the option of a second trash day is presented. We specifically do not want this waste burned and that is what will happen with the second pickup. It will contain yard waste and re-cyclables in addition to the trash.

2-1-1 will also put those trashcans out onto our streets and sidewalks twice as many times per week, creating an eyesore as well as their attendant parking problems as they spend more time in the street.

The second impact, of course, will be to our taxpayers in the form of higher residential rates. All taxpayers will be subsidizing the vanishingly few who want or need more frequent trash pickups.

Perhaps most importantly, the rate increases that begin immediately will be a hardship on many of our residents. The first year alone rates will increase over 10% to as much as 17%. They will continue from year to year making basic residential trash pickup less and less affordable. What will happen later when the costs of operating the transfer station increase? The rate escalation will continue.

Mindful of these negative impacts, the Board strongly recommends not returning to the outdated and wasteful 2-1-1 pickup schedule. We have spent years of Board time, staff time and consultant time on these issues and have no doubt that once per week is enough for trash pickup in Key West.

Thank you,

Michael Larson, Chair
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