



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: December 10, 2013

Prepared By: Shaun Auckland & Keith Coburn **Phone #:** (512) 854-4496

Division Director/Manager: Jon A. White, Director, Natural Resources & Environmental Quality Division, TNR

Department Head: Steven M. Manilla, P.E., County Executive-TNR

Sponsoring Court Member: County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE: Discuss and receive update on third and fourth quarter, FY 2013 Countywide Recycling Implementation.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

On January 8th, 2013, the Commissioners Court approved funding for a major expansion of single stream recycling for all Travis County facilities. One-time funding was approved along with a request that TNR report the status of recycling implementation and results on a quarterly basis. This report represents the third and fourth quarter, Fiscal Year 2013, which are the first quarters of implementation. This report focuses on the single stream recycling of paper, cardboard, aluminum, plastic, and glass, the materials handled by Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) and Texas Disposal Systems, Inc (TDS).

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Exhibit A shows third quarter results and Exhibit B shows fourth quarter results. The results show the total of cardboard and single stream recycling in the third quarter had strong participation with a total of 51.56 tons (Exhibit A graph 2) and grew to 64.14 tons in the fourth quarter (Exhibit B graph 2). The waste volume decreased by 3,304 cubic yards in the fourth quarter compared to the third quarter, due to the reduction in several trash dumpsters and due to the seasonal drop in visitation at county parks (graph 4). As shown in both exhibits in graphs 2 & 3, Travis County continues to receive revenue for baled cardboard that is recycled and continues to receive recycling services from TFC for no cost.

The report provide a snapshot, shows the elements that we propose to continue reporting, and a base line from which to show trends over time. The reader is cautioned not to draw many conclusions from this initial implementation. Trends and accomplishments will become evident after further implementation occurs.

TNR recommends that subsequent reports be provided to each Commissioner quarterly, within 60 days of the end of each quarter. Plus, at the direction of any of the Court Members, TNR would be pleased to further brief individual offices on implementation or initiatives or come back to Court to present future reports.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

There are many staff members at County facilities who are willing to put forth extra effort to make recycling a more comprehensive program through their interest in the Green Leader Program. Presently, there remains an opportunity to divert more waste from landfill disposal based on observation of practices throughout County facilities. The Commissioners Court has directed TNR to request and facilitate more departmental participation in the recycling program. Program participation is expected to increase with the approval and execution of an inter-departmental memorandum of understanding (MOU).

County staff continue to implement best management practices that conserve resources in a fiscally responsible manner. TNR's Conservation Coordinator has initiated plans to implement two additional recycling programs - to divert County-generated battery and fluorescent light bulb waste streams from landfill disposal to recycling. Most of the batteries the County purchases for use are alkaline single use batteries. In October 2013, 463 were purchased from Office Depot. These batteries are thrown away at the end of their life cycle. The metal casing and precious metals can be recycled. Regarding light bulbs, glass can be recycled as well as the mercury contained within some bulbs. The county currently uses up to 13,000 light bulbs per year for its operations.

There are challenges that are encountered with County recycling efforts. The scope and quantity of tasks assigned to TNR's Conservation Coordinator limits the time and focus that can be expended on data collection and reporting. Further, it is beyond the ability of TNR and possibly beyond the design of the SAP system to adequately track procurement of commodities of interest to the Court. For instance, we believe we can identify how much paper the County as a whole purchases and how those quantities or rates of usage might change; but looking at departmental patterns may not be possible. The SAP system does not have the ability to report individual commodity purchases such as batteries. As time allows, TNR will continue to collaborate with certain departments to find solutions to these data gaps.

TNR can likely provide the Conservation Coordinator summer-only assistance using a temporary intern assigned to helping with the recycling program. This past summer there was an intern who spent 20 hours a week focused on the physical implementation aspect of this job. This includes switching out recycling carts to right-size, providing new containers for locations, and related duties.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

One time funding was approved from the allocated reserve to fund the TDS contract for its 1st twelve months. Ongoing funding was proposed by TNR in the FY 2014 preliminary budget. However, PBO recommended and the Court approved one-time funding for only FY 2014. TNR agrees with PBO's suggestion that TNR come back with a request for a full program and ongoing funding starting in FY 2015, at which time the success of the program can be better measured from the reporting.

In Summer, 2013, the Intern was also charged with evaluating County waste generation and single stream recycling. Potential cost savings from this data gathering came to a total of over \$35,000 annually, largely by right-sizing of waste containers and reducing the frequency of trash pickups. Further study of these results may lead to implementation and savings, after further coordination with certain departments.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit A- 3rd Quarter Recycling
- Exhibit B- 4th Quarter Recycling

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Cynthia McDonald	Financial Manager	TNR	(512) 854-4239
Steven M. Manilla	County Executive	TNR	(512) 854-9429
Jon A. White	Director, NREQ	TNR	

CC:

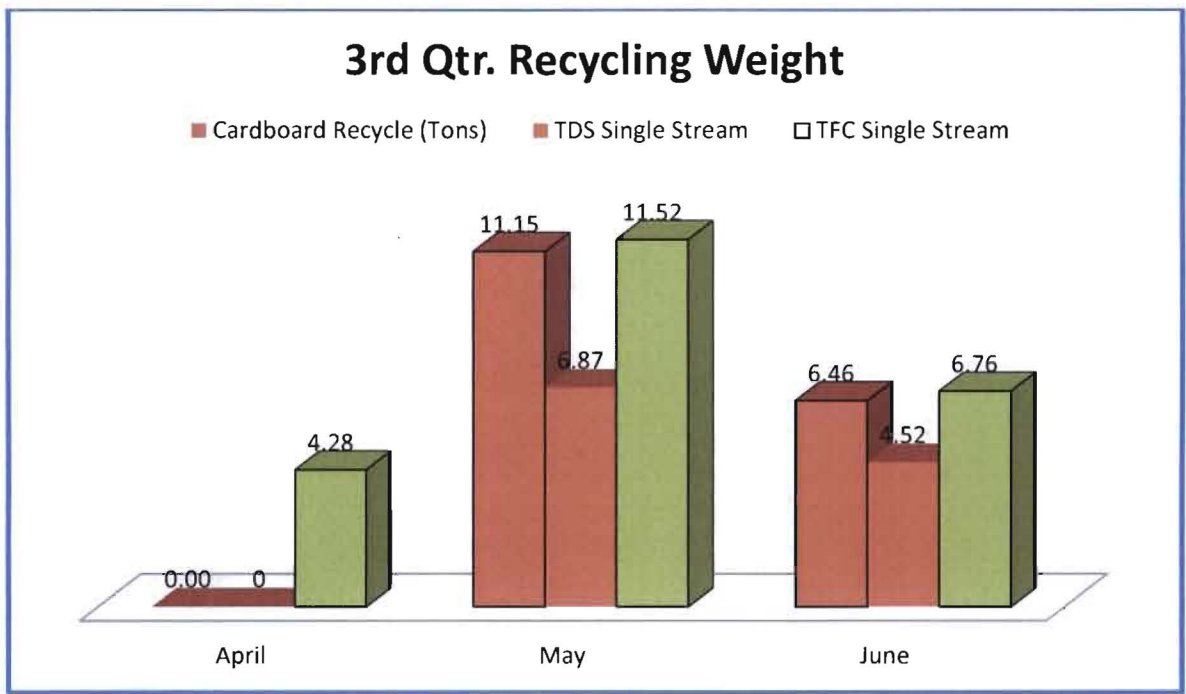
Alan Miller	Budget Analyst	PBO	
Thomas Weber	Environmental Program Mgr	TNR	
Keith Coburn	Environmental Project Manager	TNR	
Shaun Auckland	Conservation Coordinator	TNR	

Exhibit A

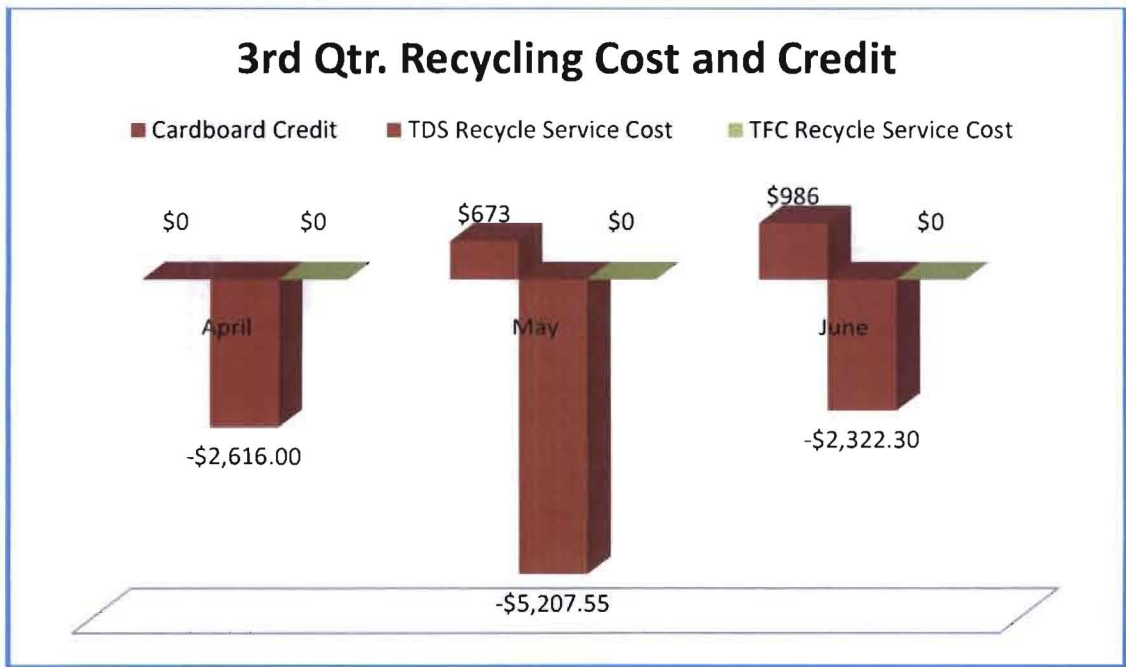


Figure 1. All non-downtown locations were provided containers in May by the hauler for pick-up of recyclables.

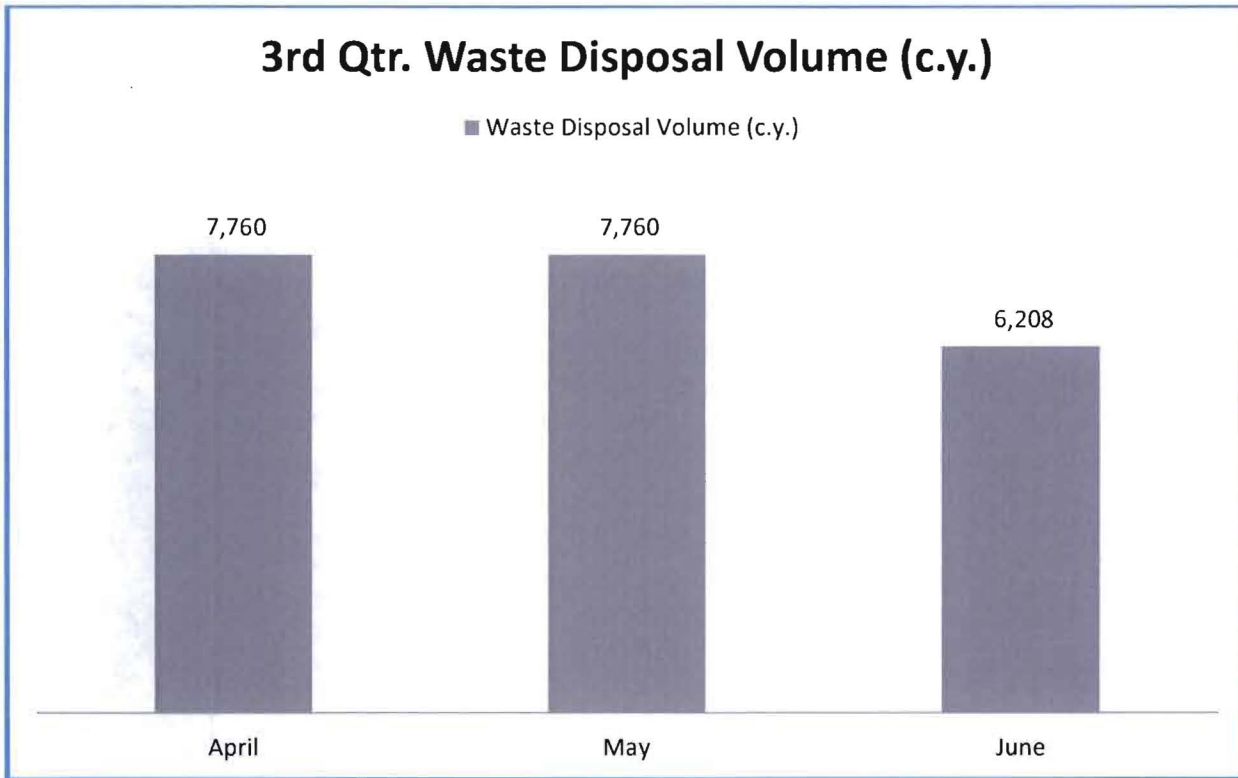
Graph 2. A graph presenting third quarter recycling single stream and baled cardboard weight in tons.



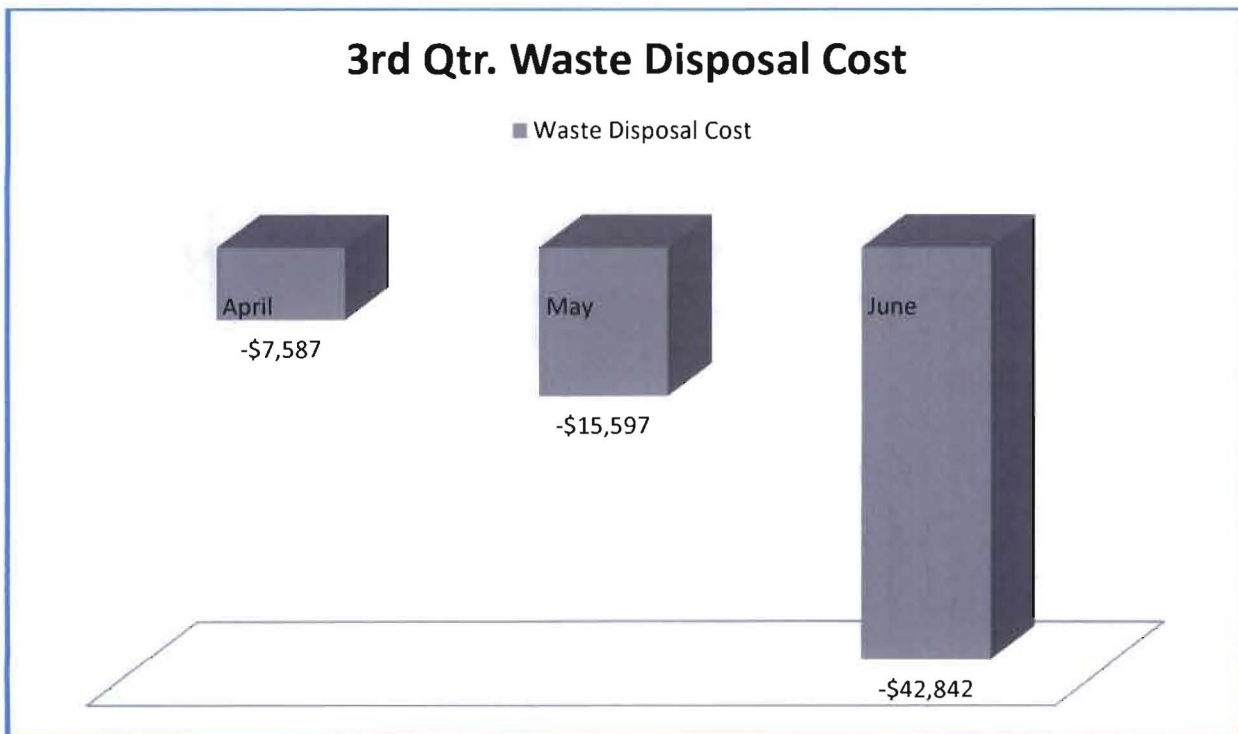
Graph 3. Third quarter recycling service cost and baled cardboard recycling credit.



Graph 4. Waste disposal volume in cubic yards in the third quarter.



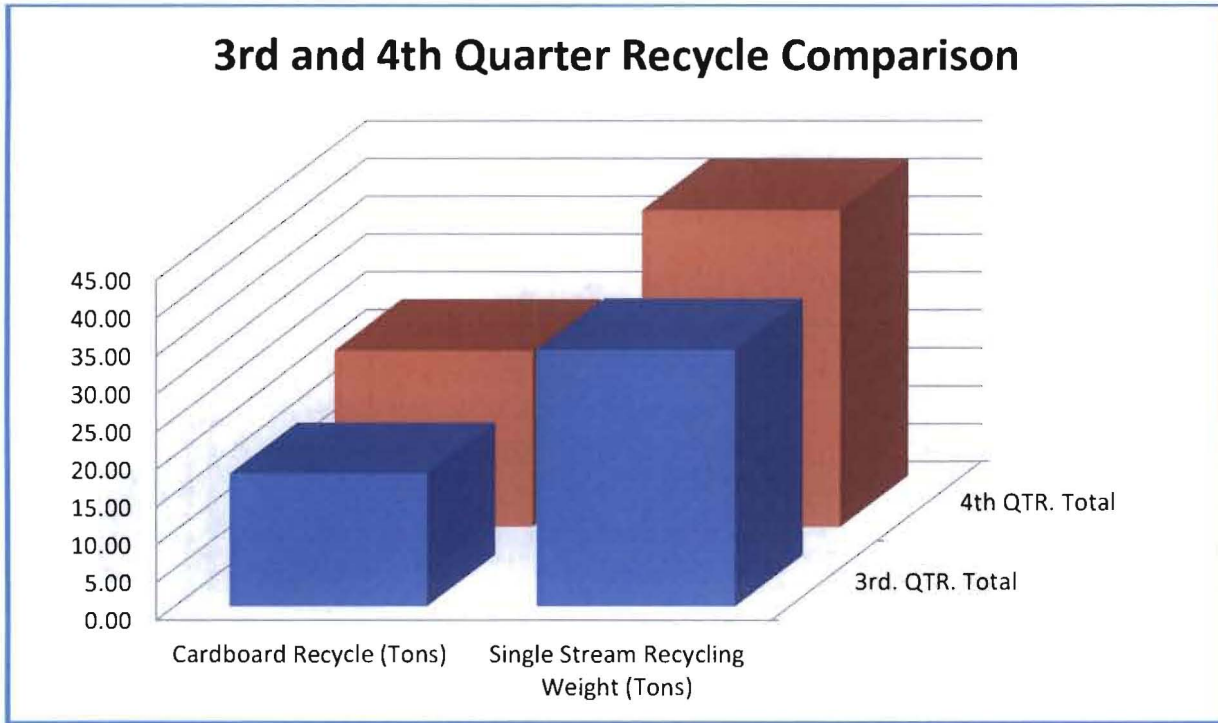
Graph 5. Third quarter waste disposal service cost.



	Months	Cardboard Recycle (Tons)	Single Stream Recycling Weight (Tons)	Single Stream Recycling (c.y.)	Total Recycling Amount (tons)	Waste Disposal Volume (c.y.)	Cardboard Credit	TFC Recycle Service Cost	TDS Recycle Service Cost	Waste Disposal Cost
3rd. Qtr	April	0.00	4.28	772	4.28	7,760	\$0	\$0	-\$2,616	-\$7,587
	May	11.15	18.39	772	29.54	7,760	\$673	\$0	-\$5,208	-\$15,597
	June	6.46	11.28	618	17.74	6,208	\$986	\$0	-\$2,322	-\$42,842
	3rd. QTR.									
Totals	Total	17.61	33.95	2,162	51.56	21,728	\$1,659	\$0	-\$10,146	-\$66,027

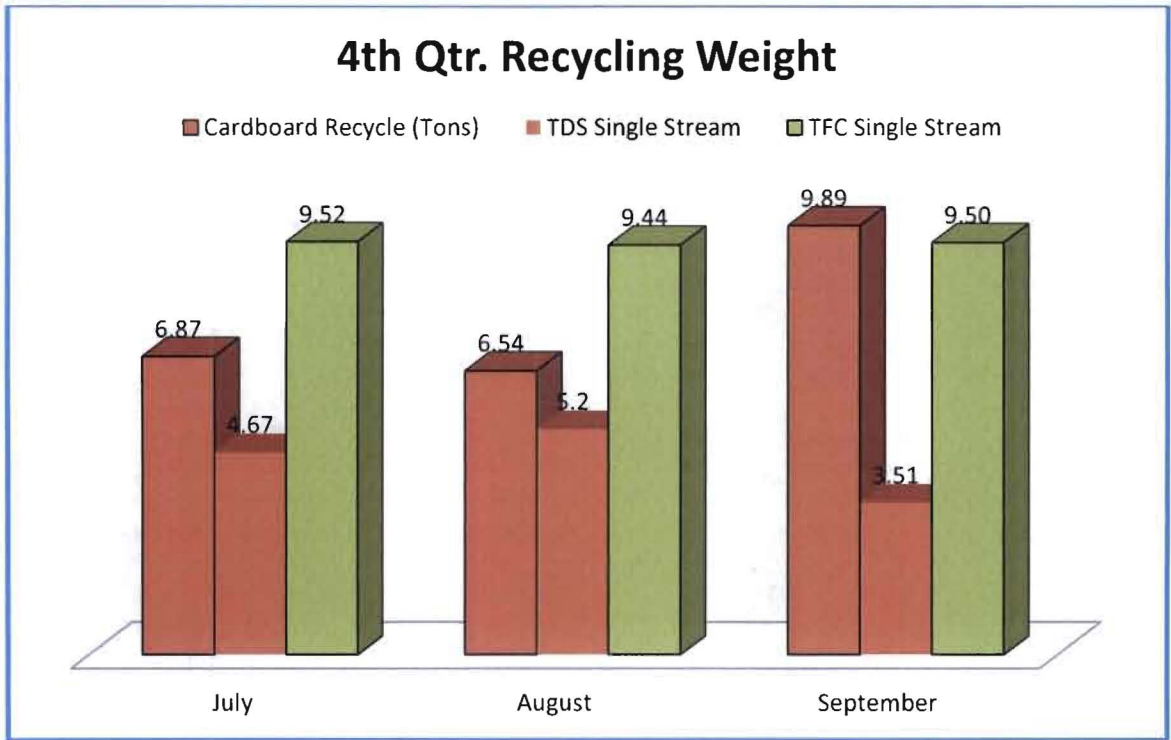
Table 1. Travis County third quarter operational recycling services and disposal total costs and volume totals.

Exhibit B

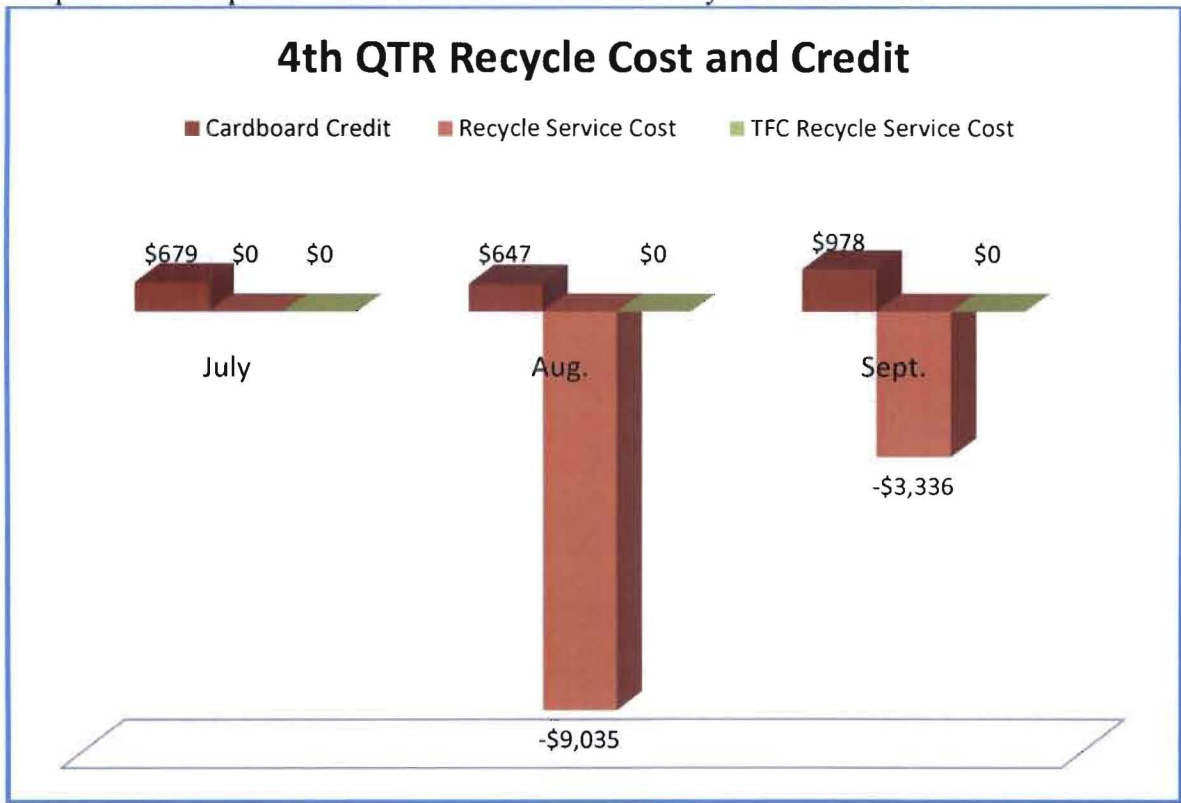


Graph 1. Third and fourth quarter single stream and baled cardboard recycling rates comparison.

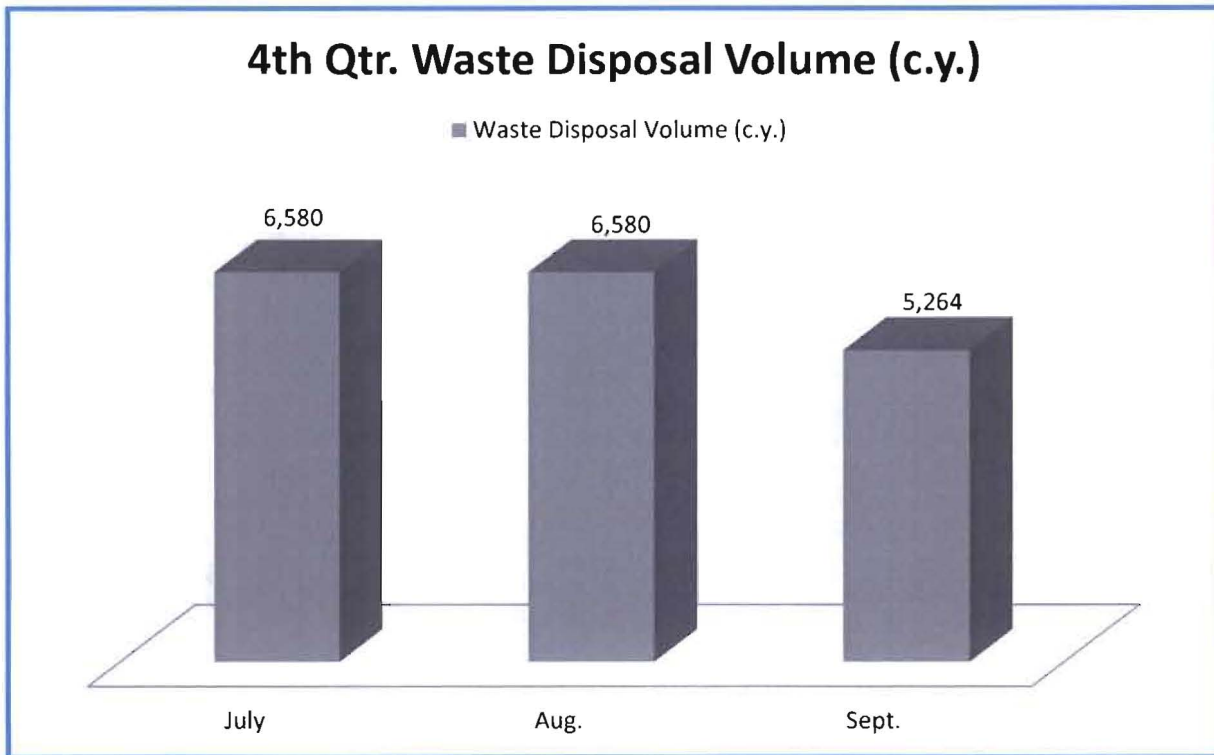
Graph 2. Fourth quarter baled cardboard and single stream recycling weight in tons.



Graph 3. Fourth quarter baled cardboard credit and recycle service cost.



Graph 4. Fourth quarter waste disposal service volume in cubic yards.



Graph 5. Fourth quarter waste disposal service disposal cost.

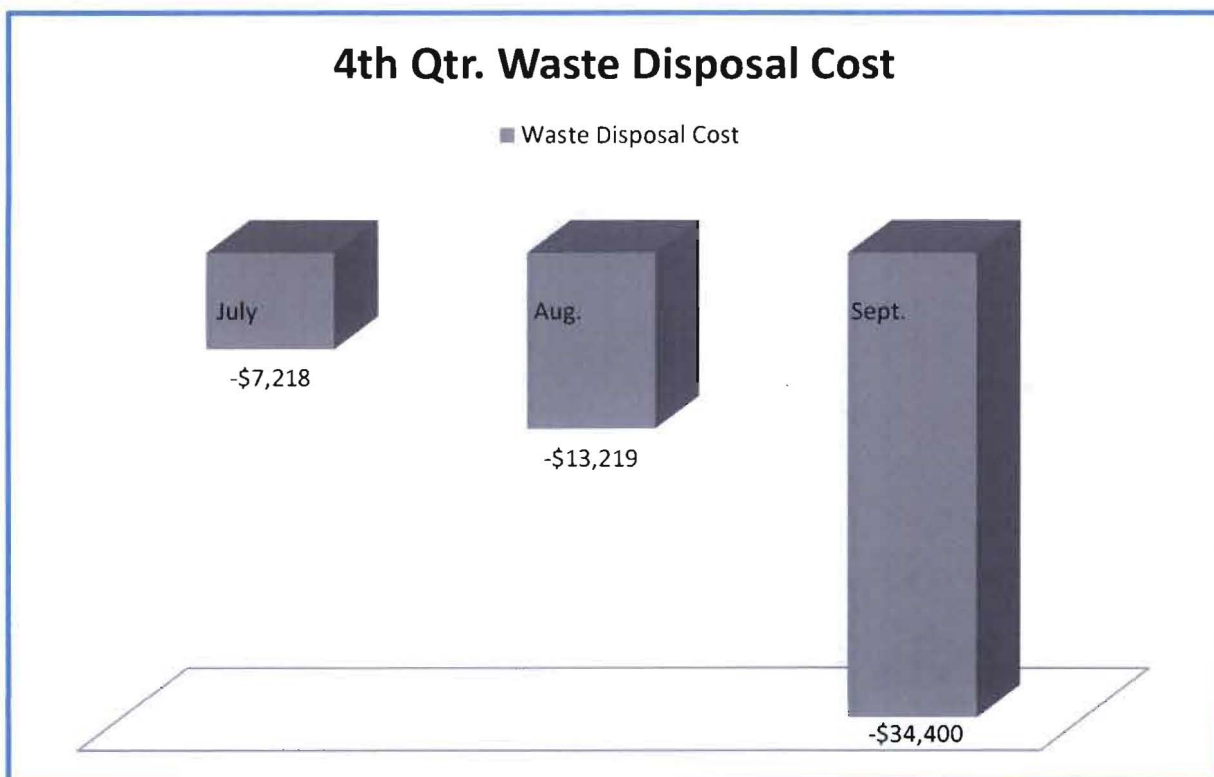


Table 1. Fourth quarter data of July, August, September recycle weights/volumes/costs and waste volumes/costs.

	Months	Cardboard Recycle (Tons)	Single Stream Recycling Weight (Tons)	Single Stream Recycling (c.y.)	Total Recycling Amount (tons)	Waste Disposal Volume (c.y.)	Cardboard Credit	TFC Recycle Service Cost	Recycle Service Cost	Waste Disposal Cost
4th. Qtr	July	6.87	14.19	772	21.06	6,580	\$679	\$0	\$0	-\$7,218
	Aug.	6.54	14.64	772	21.18	6,580	\$647	\$0	-\$9,035	-\$13,219
	Sept.	9.89	13.01	618	22.90	5,264	\$978	\$0	-\$3,336	-\$34,400
Totals	4th QTR. Total	23.30	41.84	2,162	65.14	18,424	\$2,304	\$0	-\$12,371	-\$54,837