



June 7, 2019

Fellow Residents,

The City of Avondale Estates has learned that recently an unsolicited email and social media post disseminated misinformation regarding the City's levy of 2018-19 sanitation fees. The resolution addressing these fees referred to sanitation fees "For the year 2019..." whereas it was the intention of the Board of Mayor and Commissioners to refer to "fees collected during 2018 to pay 2019 sanitation expenses," and the Commission plans to clarify this language by formal resolution as soon as possible.

While it is not City policy to respond to off-the-record communications, in this case several residents were misled because the communication was attributed to a former City administrator. This attribution is highly suspect for the following reasons:

1. Each municipality in the state is required to set millage rates and special assessment rates (such as Sanitation and Stormwater fees) in early summer. The rates must be certified by the county and the state Department of Revenue before the taxes can be levied and collected in the fall. This process was properly followed by the City of Avondale Estates in 2018.
2. The accounting and budgeting procedures followed by the City since 2009 dictate that, since the General and Sanitation Funds share a cash account but must be reported separately on financial statements, a theoretical transfer occurs at the end of each calendar year to balance the books. The amount of this transfer was approximately \$103,000 in 2018 and approximately \$180,000 in 2017. It would be inaccurate to refer to this transfer as a "windfall" or "surplus" because these amounts represent less than three months of operating expenses and the City does not collect any significant sanitation revenue until nine months into the next calendar year.
3. The proper procedure for addressing any perceived errors by the government requires informing elected or appointed officials in a position to correct the error. The email in this case excluded all City, county, and state officials who could have provided remedies, which would seem to indicate that solving a problem was not the motivation of the sender.

Citizens are always encouraged to contact elected or appointed City officials with any questions or concerns regarding sanitation fees or any other issue within the City's purview. Calling City Hall at 404-294-5400 is the best and most reliable way to gather information about City operations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Elmore", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jonathan Elmore
Mayor