

Refuse Collection and Disposal*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest
On: Wednesday, March 2, 2022
Members: Packard, Anderson, Merrill, Patterson

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 5 p.m. Thursday, March 3

The Way It Is Now: The City issues permits for and regulates the collection, transport and disposal of residential refuse in San Francisco. Recology, through its subsidiaries, holds all permits for residential refuse collection in the City.

The Refuse Rate Board (Rate Board) manages the process to set rates and regulations for residential refuse collection and disposal. The Rate Board has three members: the General Manager of the Public Utilities Commission, the City Administrator and the City Controller.

When the Rate Board receives an application to change refuse rates or regulations, it first refers the application to the Director of Public Works, who must hold a public hearing on the application and provide a recommendation to the Rate Board. If nobody objects, the recommendation becomes final. If someone objects, the Rate Board holds a public hearing and can modify the recommendation.

The Proposal: Proposition __ would restructure membership of the Rate Board, change the process by which rates and regulations are set for both residential and commercial customers, and rules governing how future changes are made. The Rate Board members would be the General Manager of the Public Utilities Commission, the City Administrator and a Ratepayer Representative. The City Controller would also assume new duties as Refuse Rate Administrator.

The Ratepayer Representative would be recommended by The Utility Reform Network (TURN) or another organization recognized by the Board of Supervisors as dedicated to protecting ratepayers. The Mayor would appoint the Ratepayer Representative subject to the Board of Supervisors approval.

The Refuse Rate Administrator would monitor rates and propose changes to the Rate Board. Public hearings on proposed changes would be held before the Commission on the Environment and the Commission on Sanitation and Streets. The Rate Board would then hold a public hearing on the proposed changes and publish its final decision. Any new rates would be in effect for at least two years, but no longer than five years.

Only the voters can change the Rate Board's membership or its authority over setting rates. The Board of Supervisors may change other parts of the ordinance by a two-thirds vote, if those changes are recommended by the Mayor, Rate Board and Refuse Rate Administrator.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to change the membership of the Refuse Rate Board, how refuse rates and regulations are set and the rules governing future changes.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*