

LETTER FROM MAYOR JUSTIN HANSON, CITY OF COVINGTON

Dear friend,

Many of you have asked about the changes to our curbside pickup ordinance. Therefore, I wanted to further explain the “why” behind these revisions.

When I took office in November 2014, I asked for an audit of our gas, water, sewer, and sanitation funds. The results showed the city was in the red in the area of sanitation, meaning we were losing money.

In an effort to stop this, we began to look not only at how our curbside was structured but also the fee structure associated with the curbside pickup. Under the old ordinance, we quickly realized crews were picking up everything on the curb, despite the fact the existing ordinance said not to do so. Under the old ordinance, crews were not supposed to pick up any curbside debris unless utilities were connected at that address. Also under the old ordinance, grass clippings were required to be bagged rather than simply blown into the street for crews to remove.

Under this new ordinance, grass is still required to be bagged. Public Works Director David Gray realized this blown grass was causing a much bigger problem with drainage all across our city. So now, we are beginning to enforce something that’s been on the books since the early 1980’s – the bagging of grass. However, we will still pickup leaf piles at the curbside from October 15 – February 1. This hasn’t changed. Leaves placed at the curb outside that window of time must be bagged. We are also asking you to now cut branches to a length of 5ft. or shorter and no more than 12in. in diameter. Even though I’m working to replace our aging public works fleet, we have to do everything we can to take care of the curbside pickup trucks we have and not damage them with large debris. We also have to take care of the crews picking up this large debris. A lot of manpower goes into this pickup, and crews sustain injury when these large items are lifted. When it comes to bulky items like appliances, furniture, etc., we kindly ask you call Covington City Hall at 901-476-9613 within 24 hours of pickup. Simply give us a heads up that these kinds of items are curbside, and we will remove them. The city incurs additional costs to dispose of furniture and appliances and if that cost is not passed on, the city continues to lose money.

You can view our entire curbside ordinance on our website at www.covingtontn.com. We also have copies here at the office (200 W. Washington). If you’d like one, just stop by and we will give it to you.

Change is difficult, but in this instance, some revisions were necessary for improvements. Like I said, we have an aging fleet and were losing money in a vital service we provide. I was faced with either raising taxes or adjusting some fees and the way we do work. I firmly believe taxes must be the absolute last thing increased.

I very much appreciate your patience and understanding with these revisions, and I also appreciate being your mayor.

Most sincerely,

Justin Hanson

My mission is to provide productive and positive leadership that results in ongoing improved living conditions for all citizens of Covington, Tennessee.