

Village weighing its trash options

Written by MARK JAEGER
Wednesday, 08 May 2013 15:16

New garbage contract likely to offer officials collection system choice

Village of Fredonia officials continued their fact-finding last week in weighing their options when it comes to the community's waste-hauling contract.

Trash has become a hot topic in the village, because the current garbage contract expires at the end of July.

Last month, the Village Board listened to a pitch from a representative of Advanced Disposal — the company which purchased Veolia Environmental Services last year — the village's current contractor.

Last week, a representative of Waste Management — the likely other bidder on the contract — had an opportunity to make his pitch.

While the Advanced Disposal representative said his company's preference is to switch the village over to a cart collection system, Tony Knoeck said Waste Management is willing to work with whatever type of service the village wants.

Specially equipped trucks that use mechanical arms to lift the 96-gallon wheeled carts are preferred by the hauler, because they minimize the risk of employees being injured when collecting trash.

However, Village President Chuck Lapicola said he has heard comments from many village residents who would prefer to continue the current curbside bag collections.

"We don't require carts. We can make anything work," Knoeck said.

"You have the best idea of what you are looking for and what you want for service. We do bags, cans or carts. I know change can be scary."

He said the company would accept a contract as short as one year, but if the village wants to implement a cart system, a minimum five-year contract would be needed to justify the expense.

Some communities have contracts as long as 20 years, Knoeck said.

Whether recycling collection is done every week or every other week is also at the village's option.

Knoeck said "scavengers" quickly learn what a community's recycling schedule is.

"Regardless of what day you do your recycling, you may want to create an ordinance because when recyclables are left at the curbside you will find people picking through items before the truck comes by," he said.

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Knoeck said the company would also include bulk collection days, probably once or twice a year, when residents would be able to drop off larger items that can't be left at the curbside.

Fuel surcharges would also be incorporated into any future contract should the cost of fuel rise over \$4 a gallon, Knoeck said.

Those charges could be avoided if the village chooses to have its waste collected by trucks fueled by compressed natural gas, an alternative energy source.

The village is expected to seek bids for its garbage and recycling contract next month.