



## Town to ink waste deal with WM

*Trash to Richmond site as part of 10-year contract*

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Greater Napanee council have passed a staff recommendation paving the way for a 10-year contract with Waste Management.

After providing members with comparative raw data from bids received from WM and Waste Services Inc., town Chief Administrative Officer Raymond Callery said WM's proposal would save the municipality an estimated \$1,033,690 over the current recycling and collection fees, and would introduce an organics program.

With one member of council absent, the recommendation was passed unanimously during a recorded vote.

"I am suggesting that, if council gives me the authority, I will begin drafting a contract to enter into with Waste Management," he said, after presenting a report on the proposal.

According to Callery, if a contract to provide waste collection, recycling and organic collection is approved before Sept. 1, 2010, the new program would be rolled out in 2011.

"Currently the town pays approximately \$400,000 per year for the collection of recycling and waste, using a door-to-door collection program," he said. "The introduction of a door-to-door organics collection program was also recommended by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Should council not proceed with organics collection for 2011 an additional \$443,122 would be saved over the 10-year contract."

He indicated that WM's RFP submission also allows for possible savings to the town of \$596,322, depending on future decisions made by the Ministry of Environment regarding the possible closure of the existing Richmond landfill. "These potential savings are not within council's control and were not part of the staff decision making process," Callery said.

After first requesting RFP bids on a five-year contract, Callery said staff found that those prices were "inflated by introducing an organics program in our community."

"The cost differential was significant, it was about two-thirds more than the existing amount we were paying, to add an organics component," he explained. "On review, one of the possibilities was to allow the companies to depreciate the equipment further over a 10 year period."

He said one advantage of this approach is that it allows the community to have a fixed cost. "In the first year alone we're saving approximately \$160,000," he added. "You have to remember that with that savings it would be the continuation of the existing program, which didn't have organics in it."

A second benefit would be guaranteed prices for the first five years.

"This includes a disposal cost that has been indexed in these prices with the assumption that the Richmond landfill would be closed," said Callery. "The Ministry of the Environment really controls the fate of the existing landfill (and) at any time can close the particular site. No matter that the MOE's decision is, this savings would actually be realized by the community."

Before council discussed and passed the staff recommendation, Steve Medd, a longtime landfill opponent, was added as a deputation.

"I am going to focus simply on one aspect of this, the continued use of the Richmond landfill," he told council. "I just want to remind people that council back in March 2007 passed a motion asking the ministry to order that no more garbage be sent to Richmond, and also to close the site."

Medd also pointed out that, in 2007 council did sign a contract with WM but "made a wise decision" by not allowing garbage to go to Richmond.

"It backed up and gave way to the motion that they made," he said. "I am asking council, if council votes to do another contract with Waste Management, to make a similar arrangement... where the existing site will not be used for Napanee's garbage."

He said this would be justified in light of supporting evidence such as the Environmental Commissioner's report, released last month, which outlined his concerns about the sites geology. "The environmental commissioner stated that this is probably one of the worst sites in Ontario for a landfill, and he also said that it should be closed immediately," Medd added. "His work obviously supports previous work by the town's own Peer Review Team, plus the minister back in 2006 made her decision to stop the expansion."

In his closing remarks, Greater Napanee Mayor Gord Schermerhorn said that the MOE has the ultimate authority when it comes to the site.

He also pointed out that while the Goodyear Tire plant in town pays close to \$800,000 in taxes annually, a one per cent tax increase only nets the town about \$60,000.

"So, to refuse \$1 million is very hard today for council. We have people coming to this council chambers and we are not just a one issue council," Schermerhorn said. "I get a little tired of seeing the same people come here over this one issue. We have people coming here wanting pools and a pool today ladies and gentleman, is going to cost this municipality around \$3 million. Yet we never see some of you people come over that issue."

The mayor said that it seems to him that the garbage issue "is the only issue where we see the same faces."

"It's pretty disappointing sometimes to hear these phone calls that we get," he added, commending council members on using 'common sense' during their vote. "Nobody on this council wants to hurt the environment, to see our water and our air polluted at all, but we do have to be responsible councillors for our taxpayers in this municipality."

Although Medd tried to respond following the mayor's comments, Schermerhorn said he was out of order.

After three attempts, Schermerhorn said he would not put up with it any more, adding, "We let you speak tonight already, sorry."

Medd responded, "Your comments were unfair Mr. Mayor. Unfair," before he and two other members of the public walked out of council chambers.

The motion to approve Callery's recommendation was made by Deputy Mayor Gary Hodson and seconded by Ward 4 Councillor Bill Pierson.