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Hastings Highlands council discusses costs of curbside garbage pick-up

By Sarah Sobanski

Beaumen Waste Management Systems Ltd has presented Hastings Highlands council with a solution to its garbage conflict ? and it isn't curbside pick-up.

Beaumen's president Andrew Shouldice presented council with a comparison of costs and efficiencies for curbside garbage collection during a special meeting Nov. 2. He estimated implementing pick-up could cost the municipality $3.3 million over five years. He suggested implementing a load bin collection system could cost $861,829 instead.

Shouldice suggested Hastings Highlands was a very large area. It is three times the size of waste management company's largest collection customer ? Whitewater Region. Beaumens uses two full size recycling packer trucks and one small packer truck four days a week for collection in the region.

?The question becomes what are the effects of scales and what is the maximum one truck can drive,? said Shouldice, explaining he based his estimates for Hastings Highlands off of his service for Whitewater. He also suggested that as a chartered accountant his numbers were reliable.

Shouldice estimated Hastings Highlands would need an additional small packer truck, an extra workday and five new municipal employees for curbside collection. He suggested the capital costs of restoring curbside collection would be over $1.5 million, with an annual cost of $640,747. He told council this was a best-case scenario and based on a population of around 2,000 households.

Another option would be to place eight-yard or six-yard bins within the municipality for locals to drop off their garbage.

Shouldice told council these bins could be bear proof and would require truck servicing less frequently reducing costs. He estimated over five years the municipality would save $2.4 million in comparison to a curbside collection system, however dollar values and costs associated with the bin system were not provided. He also suggested that the bin system would allow the municipality to move to a central landfill site and close its remaining landfills.

Council asked the waste management company to return at a later date to provide a delegation to the public on his findings. Many councillors agreed it would the public should know of the eight-yard bin system option before it moved forward with its area poll on whether area locals want curbside collection returned.