

Commission pitches outsourcing pickup

New garbage collector being sought

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The Mountain View Regional Waste Management Commission will outsource solid waste collection but aims to find a contractor that will provide the same level of service at a lower cost.

Collection services to be contracted out include: residential waste, organics, recyclables and commercial recyclables, waste and organics, in addition to roll-off bin hauling services and rural waste collection.

The commission issued a request for proposal (RFP) earlier this month, which will close on May 20.

"Although the successful proponent will be selected jointly by all municipalities, the proponent will be required to enter into contracts with each municipality," it reads.

It's an inefficient process, said Coun. Harvey Walsh at the May 11 Olds council meeting, who believes the commission should focus on running the landfill instead of finding a service provider for all member municipalities.

"That's a lot of work and staff time for a commission that's challenged for resources. Everybody has different service levels, different requirements and you're trying to meet everybody's demands," he said. "Just do the landfill thing and let each municipality figure out for themselves who collects it."

Many commissions do exactly that, replied Coun. Mary Anne Overwater, who also serves as commission board chair.

However, the commission sent the RFP for all six members because they believed they could get a better rate, she said, adding savings will depend on what offers come in.

The commission can still decide if members are better off finding their own individual providers, she continued.

Currently in Olds, curbside waste pickup occurs once every three weeks, curbside recycling once every three weeks and curbside compost pickup once every three weeks.

Additionally, the town services residents living in duplexes and fourplexes. All other multi-family sites contract out their own pickup.

Once a provider has been chosen, new service

is expected to begin in January 2016. The contract would run for three years with an option for municipalities to renew for another two.

Of the six commission members, all except for two — Olds and Mountain View County — have sent letters stating their intention to leave.

Carstairs, Didsbury, Sundre and Cremona have until May 31 to withdraw those letters and stay in the commission.

Didsbury and Carstairs do not use the commission's collection service. They have contracts with Can-Pak.

Overwater said those municipalities are currently negotiating with the company on the terms of cancelling their deals.

Bylaws

In addition to the RFP, Olds town council was presented with a draft bylaw for the commission that would replace its current version, which many have called "convoluted" and ambiguous.

Section K lists the financial obligations that withdrawing and or expelled members have: all requisitions and fees in the capital and operating budgets within the year of withdrawal and expulsion, up to the date the member officially departs.

The commission is seeking the approval of all members' councils and Olds passed a motion that the draft bylaw "be accepted for information and comment."

"I don't believe that today would be a good day for our council to send in a motion to the commission saying that we accept these new bylaws," Overwater said.

"What we want to do is bring that back to all the municipalities. They in turn can look it over with their councils, come back with their comments and when we sit back down with the CAOs again, we can go through it, hash it out and come up with a new bylaw, rescind the old ones and go forward with this one."

"If the majority of the municipalities ... state that they are not in agreement to it then we're not going to approve it because we need to work together. We cannot continue the way we have worked in the past."