

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS BOARD ROOM
MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2020 7:00 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: President Hayes; Trustees: Baldino, Canty, LaBedz, Rosenberg, Scaletta, Schwingbeck and Tinaglia

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Padovani

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager; James McCallister, Director, Health & Human Services Department; Sean Freres, Environmental Health Officer, Health & Human Services Department and Kim Peterson, Recording Secretary

SUBJECTS:

- A. Textile Recycling
 - B. Solid Waste RFP Results
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Other Business

Adjournment

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A. Textile Recycling

Mr. McCallister began by introducing Sean Freres, Environmental Health Officer for the Village of Arlington Heights and David Van Vooren, Executive Director of Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC). Mr. McCallister explained how during the Health & Human Services Strategic Report of May 2019, under New Initiatives and Potential Initiatives to Explore in the Future, his Department listed Textile Recycling as one item to review. This also falls in line with the Village of Arlington Heights 2020-2021 Business Plan, Strategic Priority #6: Explore New Sustainability Initiatives.

Mr. McCallister went on to explain how the Environmental Health division recently evaluated opportunities available to residents for textile recycling drop off. The Village currently has nine second hand dealer businesses in our community that accept textiles. Approximately half of these businesses are non-for-profit resale shops where residents can take their used clothing and small household items for recycling. In addition, for residents that would prefer a non-for-profit that picks up

used textiles from their home for charity, there are also services such as Amvets and Purple Hearts.

Mr. McCallister advised another option now available in the Chicagoland region is Simple Recycling. They provide curbside collection of textiles and small household items. Simple Recycling's trucks use the communities existing refuse or recycling schedule to collect textiles residents place at the curb in special bags distributed by Simple Recycling. Mr. McCallister discussed the pros and cons of the program, with the pros being are that it is free, it removes secondhand clothing and small household items form the waste stream and they accept all clothing regardless of condition. Some of the cons are that Simple Recycling is a for-profit business, therefore they cannot provide a tax receipt, and some of the non-for-profit resale shops in town already except all clothing, regardless of condition. There are currently six SWANCC communities that are offering the Simple Recycling Curbside Program to their residents, and in general have received positive feedback from the residents regarding the program.

Mr. McCallister advised that he is looking for direction from the Board as to whether staff should proceed or not proceed with the preparation of an agreement with Simple Recycling for textile recycling services.

Mr. Recklaus stated that this decision is a value driven judgement call for the Board. On the one hand this type of a program would reduce waste, which is good for the environment. On the other hand, residents who would normally go to a local resale shop to recycle textiles, might use this program out of convenience, which would possibly result in a loss of revenues for these non-for-profit shops. Although residents would still be able to bring their items to one of these shops if they chose to, regardless if the Village participates in the program.

President Hayes thanked Mr. McCallister for his presentation and Mr. Recklaus for his comments. President Hayes stated that there are a large number of these types of resale businesses in Arlington Heights and knows of many residents who like to donate items to these non-for-profit shops and therefore would prefer to keep this system in place and not go with this new recycling program.

Trustee Canty stated that she loves the idea of being green, however this program would add trucks to the roads, which may negatively affect the air quality. In addition, the plastic bags the program uses to collect the textiles, if not recycled, may create more problems for the environment.

Trustee Canty is also concerned for the existing non-for-profit and for-profit businesses and how this program could potentially harm them. Trustee Canty asked Mr. Recklaus if the Village could possibly partner with these businesses and help promote them, so residents are aware of these recycling opportunities. Mr. Recklaus stated there are always opportunities to work with businesses and non-for-profits to promote recycling.

Trustee LaBedz is concerned with this type of a program potentially harming the

existing businesses in town. Trustee LaBedz explained how these businesses have chosen to be in Arlington Heights because of the high quality of the goods they receive, which makes them easier to resell. Trustee LaBedz stated that she is not inclined to move forward with Simple Recycling.

Trustee Scaletta stated that he agrees with everything that has been said thus far and wanted to point out that the businesses in town pay property taxes, even the non-for-profits that are part of a shopping center are most likely paying property taxes. In addition, the Village receives sales tax from the re-sale of these items at these shops. Trustee Scaletta thanked Staff for their efforts and stated that he thinks the Board should pass on this concept of having recycled textiles picked up from homes.

Trustee Schwingbeck stated he agrees with what everyone has already said and would like to make a motion.

Trustee Schwingbeck moved, seconded by Trustee Baldino, that the Committee-of-the-Whole direct staff to not proceed with the preparation of an agreement with Simple Recycling for textile recycling services.

The Motion: Passed

Ayes: Schwingbeck, Baldino, Canty, LaBedz, Rosenberg, Scaletta, Tinaglia, Hayes

B. Solid Waste RFP Results

Mr. Recklaus explained how the current waste contract with Groot is a five-year agreement that expires in March 31, 2021. This contract includes once a week pickup with an optional twice a week pickup and the cost is \$12.33, plus a \$6.00 SWANCC/other charges fee, per month. In addition, there is a 15% discount for Seniors and a 50% discount for those participate in the Circuit Breaker program.

Mr. Recklaus advised that in July of this year, a Request for Proposal was issued to eight regional firms. There was a pre-proposal meeting in August and four responses were received in September. Of the four responses, Groot and Flood Brothers were the two lowest, and were within \$0.20 of each other for curbside pickup in every scenario. They were higher and lower than each other in every different service area for the optional services.

Mr. Recklaus explained how Staff didn't find that the initial offerings from the other firms were enough to warrant a change given the positive history the Village has had with Groot over the past 20 years. Mr. Recklaus stated that from his experience with other waste service providers, Groot's service is really top-notch and were therefore approached to refine their proposal to see if they can offer an even better

deal to the residents and possibly include some additional options to the contract that were proposed by the other firms. Groot did alter their proposal and came back with a better deal across the board. The monthly curbside pickup price, not including the SWANCC fee, would be \$11.30 for a seven-year contract, with CPI increases every year. Mr. Recklaus stated that this price is actually lower than the pricing the Village had at the beginning of our current contract in 2016.

Mr. Recklaus discussed the new and enhanced service concepts that were included in the contract, including the disposal of two electronic waste items per week per household, an annual household hazardous waste event, five free yard waste bags in April and an increase in the amount of landscape bags/bundles for those who participate in the subscription program or have a landscape cart. In addition, there is an active military discount savings of 10% and all of the current senior, circuit breaker and fall leaf benefits would be retained.

Mr. Recklaus explained that only 7.6% of current customers have twice a week pickup service, yet the trucks still have to drive up and down almost every street twice a week, which causes additional wear and tear on the roads. Mr. Recklaus advised only two other communities offer twice a week pick up in our region.

Mr. Recklaus advised that Staff is recommending that Groot be retained as the Village's waste hauler for a seven-year contract, with once a week service, and to direct Staff to prepare an agreement for Village Board approval.

President Hayes asked if the active military discount applies to active duty personnel only, which Mr. Recklaus stated it is active duty military. President Hayes advised that this is unfortunate, as it probably applies to only a very small number of residents, and thinks it would be great if it offered to retired personnel as well.

President Hayes explained how he was one of the hold outs for the elimination of the twice a week pickup as he believes it would have been too much of a change for many households. However, now that there has been ample time for a transition period, he is okay going to the once a week pickup, especially because it will help reduce the wear and tear on the roads.

Trustee Scaletta advised that he was in favor of the once a week pickup during the last contract renewal because of the damage the trucks cause to the roads.

Trustee Scaletta explained how he appreciates all of the work that Staff did, and thinks Groot does do a great job, however he is struggling with the whole process and the concept of fairness when it comes to the Flood Brothers. Trustee Scaletta does not think this process allows for anyone new to come into town, specifically a smaller company, and earn the Village's business.

Mr. Recklaus stated that when you do have a good existing relationship with a provider and that provider is continuing to provide competitive pricing, it is more difficult for a new company, whether it be a big company or small company, to compete. Groot's initial proposal was only off by pennies from Flood Brothers, but

Staff wanted to be sure they were getting the best deal for the residents, which is why they went back to Groot to see if they could do better. Mr. Recklaus went on to say that if Groot's service were to drop off or another company came in significantly lower, Staff would definitely take a look at making a change. Groot put together a competitive bid and the Village has had a good experience over the last cycle, according to Mr. Recklaus.

Trustee Scaletta asked about the lifespan of the current garbage containers, which Mr. McCallister stated that he is not sure exactly how long they last, but if a container is damaged, Groot would replace them at no charge.

Trustee Scaletta stated that he is in favor of a seven-year contract and once a week pickup.

Trustee Tinaglia stated that he thought Mr. McCallister and Mr. Recklaus did a great job with this presentation and is happy with the competitiveness of these proposals. Trustee Tinaglia advised that he strongly favors the once a week pickup and given the good work Groot does, he is happy to give them another contract. Trustee Tinaglia stated that Flood Brothers is another good company, however it would take more than a few pennies for him to want to switch.

Trustee Baldino stated that he is for the once a week pickup schedule and is supportive of the seven-year contract. Trustee Baldino advised that building a good relationship with a contractor over a long period is so valuable and is supportive of the Staff recommendation to go with Groot.

Trustee Rosenberg thanked Mr. McCallister and Mr. Freres for their hard work and asked Mr. McCallister if those who currently have twice a week pickup will be notified of this change and offered the opportunity to trade their existing waste container for a larger one. Mr. McCallister advised that he will have to discuss this issue with Groot but believes it makes total sense for these households to be able to get a large container if needed.

Trustee Rosenberg asked if backdoor pickup service will still be offered, which Mr. McCallister stated it would be. Trustee Rosenberg asked what the cost will be for this service, which Mr. McCallister stated it is currently \$23.58 a month, but will go down to \$22.81 a month with the new contract. Trustee Rosenberg asked if there is a price difference between the five and seven-year contracts for twice a week pickup service, which Mr. McCallister stated there is not. Trustee Rosenberg also asked about the new concept of five free yard waste bags in April and how that service would work. Mr. McCallister stated that residents would be allowed to put out five yard waste bags for collection the first week in April at no cost. Trustee Rosenberg advised that there could still be snow on the ground the first week of April. Mr. Recklaus stated that Staff could discuss this issue with Groot as all of the details get worked out. Trustee Rosenberg stated that he really likes the additional features, including the electronics recycling and the household hazardous waste day.

Trustee Rosenberg stated that he appreciates the Flood Brothers proposal but is in favor of going with Groot and the seven-year contract, with once a week pickup.

Trustee Canty stated that she is in favor of the once a week pickup schedule and agrees with Trustee Scaletta regarding the process and how it would be difficult for new contractors to gain the Village's business; however, she does believe a good relationship is valuable to the community.

Trustee Schwingbeck stated that relationships in business are extremely important, as is service. Trustee Schwingbeck advised that he is in favor of staying with a company that gives the community fantastic service. Trustee Schwingbeck asked what would happen to all of the existing Groot bins if Flood Brothers were to be awarded the contract, which Mr. McCallister stated they would all be collected by Groot.

Trustee LaBedz stated that she has always been in favor of the once a week pickup and believes the seven-year contract makes a lot of sense. In addition, Trustee LaBedz stated that she appreciated hearing all of the questions and concerns regarding the process, as she is unfamiliar with it.

Trustee LaBedz asked about the cost per month and if that cost will go up because of the CPI, which Mr. McCallister stated the price is subject to a CPI increase of 1 – 3%, similar to that of the previous contract. Mr. Recklaus advised there is a \$6 SWANCC charge, in addition to the base monthly fee.

Trustee Scaletta asked if the yard waste stickers are going up at the same rate as the CPI, which Mr. McCallister stated that in the current contract, the price of the stickers increased \$0.05 or \$0.10 a year. Trustee Scaletta advised that the price of these stickers is really getting expensive and would like to know the answer to this question. Mr. McCallister indicated the current price for yard waste stickers is \$2.85, however if the Village goes with Groot again for a seven-year contract, the price would be \$2.45, with a \$0.05 or \$0.10 increase each year.

Trustee Tinaglia asked Mr. Recklaus and Mr. McCallister if either one of them could provide an update on recycling and what the future looks like for communities like ours. Mr. Recklaus explained how several years ago China decided that they did not want to continue receiving recyclables, as it was no longer profitable for them. Therefore, they reduced the amount they would accept, which left recyclables with nowhere to go but the landfills. Mr. Recklaus indicated that it is getting harder and harder to recycle items and for companies to make a profit, which is why the Village should lock into a seven-year contract, as the cost of garbage will most likely increase.

President Hayes asked David Van Vooren, Executive Director of SWANCC, if this process is reflective of what other municipalities and SWANCC go through when considering another waste hauler. Mr. Van Vooren stated that the RFP process Staff used where they solicited proposals from the marketplace to review is somewhat of a standard practice by almost all of the communities. Mr. Van Vooren advised he

only knows of one community that went to a straight bid and awarded the contract to the lowest bid.

Ellyn Zimmerman, Arlington Heights resident, asked if it is possible for the waste collection schedule in the Village to rotate. Mr. Recklaus would not advise to do this, as he believes that if any change in the pickup schedule were to occur, there would be as many people upset as there would be happy. In addition, this type of a change would also be subject to the waste hauler's schedule and availability.

Joshua Molnar, Groot Municipal Manager, thanked the Board for the opportunity to have this longstanding relationship with the Village and for the positive feedback regarding the individuals who are out driving the trucks and working hard every day.

Melissa Cayer, Arlington Heights resident, asked how the recycling is going at the apartment complexes, which Mr. McCallister advised that all of the apartment complexes in town are required to recycle and the waste haulers continue to collect these recyclables. Ms. Cayer also asked if the Village has a do-it-yourself yard waste composting process that residents can use at home. Mr. Van Vooren advised there are some home composting videos and information on SWANCC's website. Residents can also reach out to SWANCC, as they can provide additional resources. President Hayes advised the Village passed a composting ordinance, with the help of the Environmental Commission, that lists some guidelines to assist residents with composting.

Ellyn Zimmerman, Arlington Heights resident, referred to her earlier question about rotating waste collection days and indicated that she is not happy with her collection day and would like the schedules to rotate. President Hayes advised that most people don't like change and would therefore be concerned that there would be a lot of unhappy residents if the schedule were to change. President Hayes asked Mr. McCallister if there have been any other requests to change the waste collection schedule, which Mr. McCallister indicated that he has not received any other requests. President Hayes advised that this is something the Board can consider going forward, however he feels there would be more complaints if it changed.

Trustee Rosenberg asked Mr. Molnar if Groot would be able to rotate the collection days if the Board chooses to go with once a week pickup. Mr. Molnar explained that Groot, even with once a week pickup, will still be in Arlington Heights four days a week, which would make it difficult to switch service days. Mr. Molnar indicated he will look into this to see if it's a possibility and will follow up with Mr. Recklaus and Mr. McCallister.

Kevin Flood, President, Flood Brothers Disposal, thanked the Board for the opportunity to bid, however he believes their missing an opportunity to help out a local business and family. Mr. Flood stated that his company has been in the municipal waste business for over 30 years, his family has been in the business for 80 years and two of the owners live in Arlington Heights. Mr. Flood advised his

company can provide stellar service and asked the Board to consider supporting a local business and give them a shot.

President Hayes stated that Flood Brothers is a highly reputable company and if the Village was starting from scratch, things might be different. President Hayes advised that the relationship the Village has established with Groot and the good job they have done are two key factors he considers when making these kinds of decisions. President Hayes indicated that the process was fair and consistent with what other communities do.

Michael Flood, Sales/Business Development, Flood Brothers Disposal, stated that he appreciates the opportunity to put a proposal together, but was hoping the Board would have given them more consideration based upon them coming in with the lowest bid, some of the services they put together and being a local company. Mr. Flood stated he would like the Board to consider Flood Brothers and provide them with the opportunity to talk with Staff.

Joshua Molnar, Groot Municipal Manager, stated that he is very proud of what his company has been able to build in Arlington Heights and he looks forward to continuing earning the Village's business.

Trustee Tinaglia stated that the comments from Kevin Flood and Michael Flood from Flood Brothers Disposal were very compelling, as he is strong advocate for local business, and is now torn.

Trustee Scaletta stated that the one thing he found compelling about the comments made by Flood Brothers is why Staff didn't call them back to see if they could propose a better offer. Trustee Scaletta asked Mr. Recklaus about the comment made by Kevin Flood regarding the condition of the garbage trucks causing the road damage. Mr. Recklaus advised he didn't quite understand this comment either, as he was told by the Engineering Department that 100% of the damage that occurs to the roads is from the weight of the truck and the constant starting and stopping. Mr. Recklaus stated that he is unsure how the vehicle is maintained impacts the weight of the vehicle. In addition, Mr. Recklaus stated that in regards to the process, it is Staff's role to issue a recommendation, and based on the initial submittal, Mr. Recklaus and Mr. McCallister were in concurrence it was not worth the hassle, risk and disruption of going through a change in provider based on a few cents. Mr. Recklaus indicated that there were certain features of some of the other proposals that they both liked and wanted to give Groot the opportunity to see if they would provide these, as the goal is to get the best service for the best price for the residents.

President Hayes stated that he concurs with the Village Manager's comments and strongly favors the Village's existing hauler.

Trustee Rosenberg asked Mr. Molnar about the comments that were made about the trucks causing damage to the roads and if there is anything more that can be done to help the roads. Mr. Molnar explained how Groot owns their own

maintenance facility in Elk Grove Village and all of the equipment is maintained following US Department of Transportation (DOT) standards, so there is zero concern with how their equipment operates. In addition, Mr. Molnar advised Groot is the only hauler with trucks that run on compressed natural gas, which ultimately benefits the Village of Arlington Heights. Mr. Molnar stated he believes the removal of the twice a week pickup will certainly help prevent additional wear and tear on the roads and is willing to meet with the Board and Staff to see if more can be done to protect the roads. Trustee Rosenberg thanked Mr. Molnar for his efforts to aid in this process.

Trustee LaBedz moved, seconded by Trustee Canty, that the Committee-of-the-Whole concur with staff's recommendation that Groot be retained as the Village's refuse hauler for a 7-year contract with once per week refuse collection.

The Motion: Passed

Ayes: LaBedz, Canty, Baldino, Rosenberg, Scaletta, Schwingbeck, Tinaglia, Hayes

Nays: None

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Trustee Scaletta moved, seconded by Trustee Baldino to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

The Motion: Passed

Ayes: Scaletta, Baldino, Canty, LaBedz, Rosenberg, Schwingbeck, Tinaglia, Hayes

Nays: None