

TOWN OF FLORENCE
INFORMATIONAL GARBAGE COLLECTION MEETING
NOVEMBER 13, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Board of Supervisors Town of Florence held a public informational meeting immediately following the regular Town Board Meeting on November 13, 2023 that began at 6 p.m. This meeting was to allow residents to express concerns, ask questions and receive information as the town transitions to an “automated refuse collection” service. Board members present were Chairman, Tim Bomberg and Supervisors John Holbrook and Shane McLain.

Those attending were asked to sign in with eighty-three signatures received. Bomberg reported that the industry has changed and is requiring refuse collection to be automated to reduce injuries, workers comp claims and to address other safety issues. The town became aware that the change was coming in 2022. Green For Life, (GFL) who is the towns current contractor, provided an initial proposal on April 12, 2023 and negotiations began. Contractors for refuse collection charge by the number of stops and GFL proposal included them to provide each resident a 95-gallon cart. GFL stated the pricing was based on 400 stops. Green For Life met with the town board to discuss the proposal. The town believed that 400 stops was not an accurate number especially from May to September when part time residents return to their lake homes/cottages. The town board also knows how many full-time residents claim a lottery credit on their primary home, which is approximately 800 properties. After negotiations and concerns, the board agreed to seek proposals from the 3 contractors in the area. Green For Life, Republic Service and Waste Management.

Proposals were received from Republic Service, which did not provide a proposal that included “town owned” carts and came in significantly higher than the original GFL proposal and Waste Management declined to submit a proposal, asking the town to wait 6 months and request proposals again. Green For Life did submit another proposal dropping the collection per stop from \$15.65 to \$12.55 – with the town owning the carts. This price is based on 1,100 Ninety-Six gallon carts.

Bomberg went on to explain that to keep costs down, the town is proposing that residents share carts, adding also that the town is looking at eliminating some roads to reduce the mileage traveled by the contractor, which also lowers the cost. Bomberg stated that approximately 1,800 properties were identified as to be “able to produce” refuse by looking at the “improvement” values on the tax roll. Bomberg explained that only a portion of the refuse collection expenses will need to be collected thru a special charge on real estate tax bills. The sale of stickers will no longer be needed, but to regain this lost revenue, a special charge will be necessary. Bomberg stated the charge would be approximately \$65-\$75/year, and adding that this charge would go on the 2024 tax bills that are payable in 2025. Bomberg stated that the proposal was a 5-year contract which estimated that a maximum CPI of 5% each year, but added that CPI is currently trending less than 5%. Bomberg stated to those present, that it is against the law to burn garbage, so if there are those present who do this, you might not want to state that in an open meeting.

Bomberg opened the floor for questions and comments. The following is a summary of the comments.

- Opinions expressed that they are not here all year and feel they shouldn't be charged the same as a full time resident and others don't use the service and don't feel they should be charged at all
- Others stated they have means to get rid of their refuse and shouldn't be charged.
- These decisions were made without in-put from residents, which is wrong.
- Why don't we have a collection site where residents can bring their refuse
- We don't want people to throw refuse along woods roads and town roads
- I have more than one piece of property with improvements, will there be charges on those parcels

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- Statements that the charge is reasonable and would be 3-4 times more expensive if residents contracted directly with a contractor
- The board contacted several townships in WI and this is how the charge is being assessed
- Thank you for keeping costs down
- The automated system is the future for the refuse collection industry – for safety

Bomberg asked those in attendance to please be patient as we transition to this service and to please reach out to the town if you have additional concerns or if you see something that we need to address. Bomberg added – during the snow season these carts must be brought in off the road ROW after refuse collection, we are asking the community to assist us with this. Neighbors will need to communicate with each other and that if a bin is full, go find another bin, reminding that the people do not own the carts. The town does. Bomberg stated, that he feels that this board decision is best for the community as a whole and added that the town has heard from approximately 2% of 1,800 residents notified of this change, may be against this “special charge”.

This informational meeting began approximately 6:15 p.m. and ended at 8 p.m. Those attending received updates dated 10-25-23 and 11-13-23 and were informed to visit the town website at www.townofflorencewisconsin.com for updates and where than can request to receive updates when posted.

Submitted:

Shelly VanPembrook
Clerk/Treasurer