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Aldermen discuss proposed garbage pick-up rate hike

A hike in trash pick-up rates could cut a projected deficit next year but one Hoopeston alderman thinks officials should find another way to generate income.

Aldermen John Haughee, Bill Goodwin and Mike Eckersley, along with Mayor Chalmers Flint, met Monday with Vermilion Waste operations manager Ken Samet and general manager Mark Johnson.

The meeting came in the wake of a recommendation that the city increase trash pick-up rates from \$4.75 to \$8 per month. The increase would generate about \$100,000 annually, helping ease a projected \$400,000 deficit in the 2002-03 budget, said Goodwine, finance committee chairman.

However, Haughee believes a 1998 host agreement between the city and landfill that freezes pick-up rates for 10 years means the city should not raise rates, either. "The people are the city," he said.

Haughee said the city has generated between \$2,000 and \$7,000 in excess revenue from garbage rates over the last several years. Saying the city does the landfill a favor by collecting fees, Haughee said "the only way we get hurt is if someone walks away from his water bill" which also includes the monthly garbage fee.

Goodwine disagreed, saying that between the \$4.75 monthly fee and a tax levy that generates about \$60,000 annually, "we come out about even" on the \$169,000 annual fee for trash pick-up. "For years we've charged less than what the landfill charges us."

Also, he said, the city will lose about \$100,000 in tipping fees due to decreased dumping at the landfill. The city receives revenue based on the tonnage dumped each year. If the average rate falls below 12 tons daily, the city gets \$40,000 a year.

Samet said parent company Allied Waste has purchased sites closer to major trash producing cities, eliminating the need to haul as much to Hoopeston.

As for collecting fees for the landfill, Goodwine said the city would owe the landfill \$169,000 each year whether it billed residents or not. "We have a contract with them to provide a service and we would have to pay that," he said. He compared what the city pays for trash pick-up to the cost of any other service, such as hiring a contractor to oversee the sewer plant and paying the monthly electric bill.

While officials could keep the rate at \$4.75, Goodwine asked "do we want to keep things cheap in Hoopeston or do we want to make things nice?" Answering his question, Goodwine said he would prefer raising the rate to maintain services, such as not laying off two police officers when a federal grant expires.

Even at \$8 per month, Hoopeston's garbage rates would be less than many other communities, Johnson said. Danville, Champaign, Urbana and St. Joseph residents all pay \$14-\$16 monthly and, once the host agreement expires in 2008, rates may go up. However, he stressed, the hike currently proposed is the city's doing, not the landfill's.

The city council is expected to vote on the



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 Bowling Scores 			
Senior YABA Standings 2/9/02			
1. Shibby		5. Pin Snappers	23
			29
			25
2. Lopsotoy	36½	6. No Limit Soljuz	
	17½		20
			34
3. Hot Shots		7. Shibby 2	
	3		
	18		
		8. The Simpsons	
4. Lil Bowlers			12
	3		42
	22		
			39½
	31		

Obituaries

ALKIRE—Geraldine Alkire, 92, of Hoopeston, died at 4:10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, 2002 at Hoopeston Community Nursing Home. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Friday. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be 6-8 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to Hoopeston Community Nursing Home, 701 E. Orange St., Hoopeston, IL 60942.

JOHNSON—Charles R. Johnson, 82, of Hoopeston, died at 7:20 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, 2002 at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Tuesday at St. Anthony Catholic Church. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation was 5-8 p.m. Monday, with a prayer service at 5 p.m., at Brown Alkire Funeral Home. Memorials are suggested to the American Cancer Society or Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital.

KAAG—Funeral services for John William “Billy” Kaag, 48, of Hoopeston, will be at 2 p.m. Tuesday at Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be noon to 2 p.m. Tuesday at the funeral home. Mr. Kaag died Saturday, Feb. 9, 2002 at his home.

Police News

Police are investigating a hit-and-run accident reported Sunday in the 200 block of East Main. An unknown vehicle hit a parked 2000 Infiniti owned by Chad Bruens of 707 N. Third St.

A Social Security Administration registration card was found Sunday in front of Hollywood Video. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

A Hoopeston man received minor injuries in an accident at 8:50 p.m. Sunday at 223 W. Main.

Jerry L. Lindsey, 31, of 512 W. Penn, was treated and released from Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital.

Police said Lindsey jumped from a 1990 Ford driven by Iva S. Hollis, 33, of 512 W. Penn, as she was westbound. Lindsey later complained to police that he hurt his right leg.

Hollis was ticketed for operating an uninsured

Weather

Cloudy, chance of afternoon flurries today. High 40. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 22. Tomorrow, sunny. High 38, low 22.

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