

Councillor says garbage policy stinks

Thu Mar 20, 2008

By Jillian Follert

OSHAWA -- The City's new policy for special garbage collections took effect this week and some councillors aren't impressed.

Ward 6 Regional Councillor April Cullen came to Tuesday's community services committee meeting armed with a list of concerns about the changes -- including the fact that council had no say on some of them.

As of March 17, it costs \$25 to have large garbage items, like couches and appliances, picked up at the curb.

The service used to be free but limited to two collections per year.

Now it is unlimited, but with a few twists.

In addition to the \$25 fee, which the City expects will raise more than \$200,000 in revenue in 2008, residents are now required to provide a detailed listing of their junk when they call to book a collection, then go to the City Hall or the public works yard to pay for stickers to affix to the items.

"This is not user-friendly," Coun. Cullen said, pointing out council only approved the fee, not the use of stickers or the 12-item limit, which she said she learned about from a media release.

The 12-item limit could create problems if people illegally dump their junk with someone else's paid-for pile, she said. That may mean residents could end up paying for two collections.

The councillor also questioned the logic of the stickers and the convenience of having to go pick them up.

Councillor Tito-Dante Marimpietri said people will expect better service if a new fee is attached.

"If the City is imposing what in my mind is a new tax in order to generate further revenues on user fees, then it must provide a much more simplified and convenient user-friendly, large item special pickup process for residents," he said.

City staff said council wasn't consulted on some of the changes because they were administrative in nature.

They're planning to take another look at the policy, see what other municipalities do for their large-item collections and report back to the community services committee.

To book a pickup or for more information on the new rules, call 905-433-1221.
