

# City Council considers landfill, recycling options



**By Nicholas DeMarino**

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Rawlins City Council eyed a contract with Casper on Tuesday that, if implemented, would raise landfill fees by 50 percent, expand the city's recycling program and facilitate the hauling of municipal waste to Casper's Regional Solid Waste Facility.

"We are running out of room," Mayor Ken Klouda said of the Rawlins Landfill. "Our best estimates are probably eight years maybe 10 (before we're full)."

Klouda said the results of multiple studies show it would be cheaper for Rawlins to transport its trash to Casper's landfill than to create its own.

"The cost of transport to Casper is going to be based on a tonnage rate of about \$28 a ton. If we build our own landfill ... the cost to the citizens would be \$90 plus a ton," Klouda said. "Is your landfill cost going to go up? Yes. Is it going to go up as much as if we did it ourselves? No."

The proposed 50 percent increase in landfill fees would increase the flat monthly fee from \$6 to \$9 and per-100-pound fee from \$3 to \$4.50, prorated after a minimum of 100 pounds.

Klouda said the landfill fees were last adjusted August 2005, and did not account for the capping of landfill well sites, an upcoming issue.

Any change in fees would go into effect 30 days after the passing of a resolution by the City Council. The council is scheduled to vote on the agreement at its March 16 meeting.

Finance Director Dan Izzo said the proposed expansion of the city's recycling program to employ four part-time workers would help mitigate the increased costs of transporting Rawlins' municipal waste to Casper. If passed, the budget associated with solid waste would total an additional \$488,104 each year. The proposed hires would cost \$43,044 annually.

"What we're presenting is a possible full-cost proposal for converting our present landfill operation into a trash transfer station," Izzo said in a letter to the council. "(This includes) a push by the city in making recycling more efficient to reduce the amount of municipal waste being transported to Casper."

City Councilor Steve Kovachevich said he thinks the council needs to keep pushing for recycling.

"We're going to need to recycle more and more," he said. "It's going to come to a point where it's going to be more expensive to throw it away than to recycle it."

### By the Numbers:

If implemented as presented, changes to landfill fees and recycling would be the following:

- A 50 percent increase of the flat monthly fee from \$6 to \$9.
- A 50 percent increase in the per-100-pound fee from \$3 to \$4.50, prorated after a minimum of 100 pounds.
- An increase in the city's municipal waste budget of \$488,104.
- The hiring of four part-time Rawlins Recycling Center employees.
- The creation of a larger drop off point at the current recycling center.
- The creation of a mobile drop center for recycling.
- An increase in the city's recycling budget of \$43,044.

Klonda expressed a similar sentiment.

"Recycling, composting ... those are places I think we're headed," he said. "It's going to take a whole new attitude from everyone involved."

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