

Out-of-county towns will receive options for landfill payments



Seagulls fly around the inside of the bale room at the Casper City Balefill Thursday afternoon. (Tim Kupsick, Star-Tribune)

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Communities wishing to ship their garbage to Casper may have two payment options.

The first possibility would be to pay a large, lump sum at the beginning of their use, and then have the same rates as Casper residents. The second option would be to charge out-of-county carriers more per load.

Casper City Manager Tom Forslund told the council in a recent work session that Natrona County paid for most of the landfill enhancements with funding that could have otherwise gone to infrastructure such as streets. As a result, Natrona County residents might question allowing other counties in the state to use the landfill for the same price without having paid into the project.

Natrona County will pay in total about \$16 million for changes to the landfill, Forslund said, which is why the city's solid waste committee arrived at the two options.

Forslund said many of the communities were interested in paying a lump sum to guarantee the same rates as Casper residents. Worried that Casper could unilaterally increase its prices, the communities knew if they were locked into Casper's rates the council wouldn't raise the rates too high on its own residents.

The amount the out-of-county towns pay would be saved and used for future work on the landfill, Forslund said.

It's important to assure the other communities that there's protection from prohibitively high costs, Forslund told the council. Deciding to close their own landfills and haul their waste to a new center is not an easy decision.

Council member Paul Bertoglio said paying a certain amount at the beginning is similar to the way the Central Wyoming Regional Water System works. Cities essentially pay for their share of the system, and it seems to work.

Additionally, if the city of Casper decides to end the contract with one of the other communities, Casper is responsible for refunding the money the other city put into the landfill. If the other community terminates the contract, then its leaders are responsible for the money.

Glenrock, Hanna, Kaycee, Lusk, Manville, Rawlins and Midwest have all selected the Casper landfill as their preferred area to haul their waste. Midwest already hauls its garbage to Casper, and Glenrock and Kaycee plan to in the next couple months, according to Solid Waste Division Manager Cynthia Langston.

Rawlins and Douglas requested to see a written agreement as soon as possible to be able to make their final decisions.

Forslund told the council that city staff members will work to finalize the draft and work with the other communities before the final agreement comes back before council for formal approval.

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