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Levy County stops accepting glass for recycling; *Waste Pro and Williston work out subsequent kinks*

By Jeff M. Hardison © Dec. 8, 2017 at 2:07 p.m.

WILLISTON -- Recycling glass is no longer a money-making proposition, Dayna Miller of Waste Pro told the Williston City Council on Tuesday night (Dec. 5).

It is cheaper for companies to create new glass rather than to recycle old glass, she added.

As of Oct. 1, Levy County no longer accepts glass as a recycled item, Miller said. As a result of that, Waste Pro is asking the City of Williston to modify its contract with Waste Pro. The modification results in people putting glass in their garbage can rather than in a recycle container.

The people of Williston are still able to dispose of their glass, she said. Waste Pro is just asking people to stop putting glass in recycle bins. Instead, put the glass in with the rest of the garbage.

Miller's request led Williston City Council President Charles Goodman to ask why the city should accommodate Waste Pro when he did not see a similar level of treatment from before.

After Hurricane Irma left residents with lots of tree debris, Goodman said, Waste Pro only collected the exact cubic footage it had agreed to in its contract. Now that same contract says Waste Pro will collect glass as a recycled item during the period of the contract.

Miller said Waste Pro's assets were stretched to the limit after Hurricane Irma, because it left all of Florida and most of the Southeast United States with plenty of yard waste and other debris. Although Goodman received calls from several individual garbage customers, Miller said she believes the better method might have been for the city to approach the garbage hauler as a city to business rather than as each customer calling.

One person in the audience asked Goodman for an opportunity to answer his question "Why should the city help the company by revising a contract, when the corporation would not revise its contract to help the city with hurricane yard debris removal?"

The "why" question might be answered, the audience member said, by looking at the Students of the Month. Those two children were honored by Mayor R. Gerald Hethcoat for working well with their classmates, for helping others, and for going beyond the mandatory minimum level of good acceptable, and the like.

When Goodman polled the other three City Council members present that night, Councilwoman Marguerite Robinson voted in favor of modifying the contract to allow for disposal of glass in the garbage rather than having an option of people recycling it.

Councilman Kori Lamb voted in favor of modifying the contract to help Waste Pro with its unanticipated dilemma.

Councilman Elihu Ross voted "No."

President Goodman said he wanted to be the "No" vote, but given that would be a 2-2 tie and hence equal a "No" vote, and given the eloquence of the answer as to "why" to help rather than to perform a this-for-that contract action, President Goodman voted in favor of offering a resolution as Waste Pro had sought.

City staff was instructed to create a resolution for possible adoption at the next City

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Council meeting.

The Alachua County Landfill is still accepting glass as a recycle item, even from out-of-county sources. This would cause a significant expense for Waste Pro.

In the meantime, given that there is no agreement yet for the removal of glass from the recycle bins, Miller agreed with Goodman's request not to leave the glass in the bins.

Within the next couple of weeks, however, Waste Pro customers in Williston probably will be instructed to simply throw glass away rather than putting it in a recycle bin.

After Goodman asked Miller about Waste Pro's acceptance of glass as a recycle item from the City of Cedar Key, Miller explained that Cedar Key pays in a different manner than Williston. As a result of that payment method, every pound of Cedar Key trash is designated to one truck and it is weighed and handled separately from other Waste Pro customers' garbage.

As for the Levy County Landfill, it shows that currently "Recyclable items are free of charge, if cleaned and separated. That includes aluminum cans, steel cans, plastic milk jugs, plastic detergent bottles, plastic drink bottles, newspapers, and cardboard (no wax coated)." The website does not list glass as being accepted anymore.

There is NO out-of-county garbage allowed to be deposited at the Levy County solid waste transfer station (landfill).