



Text File

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Decision

Agenda Number:

Wastewater Transfer Stations and Wastewater Overstrength Charges from ARROW Utilities

Proposed Motions

1. That Council approve the implementation of a mandatory requirement for GPS on all private users of the County's wastewater transfer stations as presented.
2. That Council approve restricting all non-residential wastewater from disposal at the Stony Plain and Villeneuve Wastewater Transfer Stations.
3. That Administration be directed to present a summary report to Council with the data collected using the GPS system and recommended user fees to recover all overstrength charges from ARROW Utilities in Q4 of 2024.

Administration Recommendation

Administration supports the proposed motion to proceed with the implementation of mandatory GPS requirements for users of the County's wastewater transfer stations and to present a summary report and recommendations back to Council later in 2024.

Administration also supports an amendment to wastewater Bylaw 2020-08 to restrict all non-residential waste from disposal at these wastewater transfer stations unless authorized by a Wastewater Discharge Permit.

Purpose

- Work towards the reduction of the currently estimated annual deficit of approximately \$233,000/yr. for wastewater disposed at the Villeneuve and Stony Plain Wastewater Transfer Stations
- Determine the source of wastewater being generated more accurately and timely in an electronic format
- Restrict non-residential wastewater from entering the wastewater transfer stations
- Finally eliminate or significantly reduce overstrength charges from ARROW Utilities and reduce overstrength charges for holding tank owners emptied on a regular and frequent basis
- Avoid large capital expenditures and on-going operational costs necessary to implement primary sewage treatment at these facilities
- Maintain healthy private sector competition for hauling residential wastewater in the County

Summary

At the Tuesday, June 6, 2023 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, RFD 23-174 was presented that included the background on the costs and concerns with respect to both the Stony Plain and Villeneuve Wastewater Transfer Stations. The proposed motion that Council support an increase to \$11.50/m³ for both transfer stations was defeated. Currently both

wastewater transfer stations user fees remain at \$10/m3.

Since June, 2023, the following activities have been undertaken by Administration:

- The overstrength charges alone from ARROW Utilities is projected to reach \$520,250 for 2024
- Met with ARROW Utilities to review their rationale and financial model that determines wastewater overstrength charges for members.
- Discussed with other rural municipalities their own situation with ARROW Utilities.
- Finalized a pilot GPS study using a current private hauler to determine the feasibility of introducing GPS on all users of the wastewater transfer stations.
- Finalized an engineering report by MPE Engineering which looked at options for dealing with the high wastewater overstrength charges from Arrow Utilities.
- Hosted a Teams Meeting with all current users of the wastewater transfer stations to present the GPS study results by the GPS provider and to discuss any concerns.
- Taken tours of Leduc County's modern Nisku wastewater transfer station and EPCOR's Poundmaker wastewater transfer station at 10810 186 Street which does not charge for overstrength.
- Looked at other options to help reduce the current deficit of operating the transfer stations and reduce overstrength charges to holding tank owners.

ARROW Utilities has increased their base rate of \$1.50/m3 to \$1.85/m3 and their overstrength charges have increase 10% from last year. The quality of the wastewater being disposed of has also increased in overstrength parameters which points to increasing industrial and commercial waste rather than strictly residential waste. The overstrength charges alone from ARROW Utilities is projected to reach \$520,250 for 2024. Therefore, the situation has gotten worse from the initial presentation to Council in June 2023.

To reduce the total wastewater overstrength charges, administration recommends amending Bylaw 2020-08 to restrict all non-residential wastewater from disposal at the Parkland County wastewater transfer stations unless authorized by a Wastewater Discharge Permit. To ensure compliance and accurate manifests, administration also recommends the implementation of mandatory GPS for all users of the County's wastewater transfer stations.

Should Council not wish to implement GPS, then Administration recommends hiring an additional FTE for approximately \$75,000 per year to assist with administering a program to monitor the use of the wastewater transfer stations, follow up with enforcement of paper manifest requirements and individual hauler testing and other Bylaw requirements in addition to assisting with a program to ensure responsible holding tank owners do not pay wastewater overstrength charges.

Strategic Plan/Policy/Legal/Staff Implications:

Responsible Leadership - To strive for organizational excellence in delivering County Services and programs to residents, businesses, and community groups

Financial Impact:

Source of Funding: Approved 2024 Budget