Curbside Contract Reviewed Tonight

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Diana Gish/KMXT

When the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly meets in a work session tonight, one of the topics on the agenda will be a contract for curb side waste pick up. KMXT's Diana Gish has more:

If the contract is awarded at the next regular assembly meeting, it will go to Alaska Waste which is run by Jeff Riley. At a work session last month, Riley gave a presentation on his proposal to assembly members and several members of the public. Since the idea was first introduced, a firestorm of controversy about curb side trash pick-up has been raging in Kodiak.

Director of Engineering and Facilities Woody Koning said that resistance to the idea was not a surprise.

-- (Curbside 1 "Absolutely. I knew ... proposed solution.")

Koning said that the problem the borough is trying to solve is a collection system that is inefficient, broken and costly. He said that the way things now stand, there is both curb side and residential dumpster service in the city. That, he says, has resulted in a lot of abuse of the system including the disposal of large bulky items such as mattresses, and even snowmachines in the dumpsters which are meant for residential trash. He also said there is a large amount of construction waste that's going into the dumpsters, which is illegal and is filling the landfill too quickly.

Koning says that because residential customers sometimes put their trash out for pick-up and at other times, skip trash day and take their garbage to the dumpster, there is a very large fluctuation in the amount of trash that needs picked up. That fluctuation is a problem since the trash collectors never know when to expect high volumes of trash and when not to.

-- (Curbside 2 "He's got to ... to the customers.")

The desire to cut costs and control trash problems has led the borough to seek other solutions.

-- (Curbside 3 "What we realized ...of our waste.")

The study determined that the baler the borough is currently using to bale trash for the landfill is a good choice. It also indicated that a "pay-as-you-throw," user-fee system would be better than the current "no trash limit" system. Another goal of the study is working toward diverting more waste away from the landfill through recycling and other efforts. Once the study was completed, the borough requested proposals and selected Alaska Waste as the waste contractor.

-- (Curbside 4 "Which just happens ... collecting solid waste.")

And then there are the issues: bears, weather and icy driveways. Koning said that he has confidence that the contractor is committed to addressing and solving these and other problems that arise. There are provisions in the contract for flexibility for senior citizens and people with handicaps.

The proposed contract will be discussed at tonight's assembly work session which will take place in the conference room of the borough building at 7:30 p.m.