

# Residents may have to pay Tribune 2/3/12 all or part for trash collection

by MARIAN  
MCMAHON

**WILLOUGHBY** - Council is considering shifting some, or all, of the cost for trash collection to residents, as other Lake County communities have done. This was one of the recommendations of the city's Fiscal Review Task Force.

"The reason I think we ought to start thinking about it is, as we knew, in 2009 and 2010, we saw our income tax receipts fall by about \$1.5 million a year," Mayor Dave Anderson said at the Jan. 17 meeting. "That was a significant hit to our budget. That's when we commissioned the Task Force to come in and start taking a look at some things. Moody's downgraded

our financial outlook from stable to negative at that point."

He said the city has reduced expenses by \$1.2 million since then, and income tax revenue then increased by \$600,000. Moody's upgraded the city back to stable.

However, the state then cut \$1.2 million from the city's Local Government Fund and the estate tax, which generates about \$700,000 annually, is being eliminated in 2014.

Now, the city needs to cut some service and the mayor suggested they look at non-safety forces services first, one of which is trash collection.

Chris LeGros, a vice president with CT Consultants, reviewed the available options.

If the city contracts with the hauler directly, it can likely arrange a better price. The city could either bill and collect from the residents or leave that to the hauler. The city could continue to pay the full bill, pay part of it or have the residents assume the full cost.

If residents are allowed to select their own hauler, they will likely pay more, but could arrange for additional services such as seniors having the hauler bring out the tote if they are unable.

If the city handles the contract, it would also carry more weight when dealing with resident complaints.

Adding curbside recycling would be another option. Some cities have one price and the residents must pay

for recycling whether they participate or not, while others allow residents to decide whether to pay additional.

No action was taken at the meeting.

## **In other business:**

• Another item discussed at council's Committee of the Whole meeting was a County Land Bank Proposal. This would have the county start a land bank which would acquire certain private properties, which are foreclosed upon, condemned or abandoned and make them usable by refurbishing structures or demolishing them.

Law Director John Wiles reviewed the authority, proposed benefits and funding of the proposed county land

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bank.

Councilman Jeff Black said he did not like the idea of government forming a private corporation.

Council did not take any action about participating since it had too many questions about whether it would actually benefit the city.

(Watch the Lake County Tribune for future coverage of the proposed County Land Bank.)

• Council permanently tabled a resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with the law firm of Wiles and Richards for legal representation relative to Gregory B. Williams, et al. v Deborah F. Comery, Clerk of Courts, et al., Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Case No. CV11768450, and declaring an emergency.

• Council adopted the following after suspension of the rules:

• A resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with the law firm of

Reminger Co. LPA for legal representation relative to Gregory B. Williams, et al. v Deborah F. Comery, Clerk of Courts, et al., Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Case No. CV11768450, and declaring an emergency.

Wiles said he believes it will take about six years for this suit to be settled.

• A resolution accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the Budget Commission, authorizing the necessary tax levies, certifying same to the Lake County Auditor, and declaring an emergency.

• A resolution congratulating Tom and Sue Roseum as joint recipients of the Willoughby Rotary Club "2012 Distinguished Citizen of the Year" award.

• A resolution congratulating Lake Health Volunteer Services as recipient of the Willoughby Rotary Club "2012 Distinguished Civic Organization of the Year" award.