

# Montcalm Township sets recycling public hearings

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**MONTCALM TOWNSHIP** — Recycling and solid waste removal have been a hot topic in Montcalm Township for the past eight months.

At Wednesday night's meeting, the township board inched closer to finding a permanent solution for recycling and waste removal needs by approving language for two public hearings on the issue.

At the Dec. 14, 2016, township board meeting, board members decided to come up with language for the public hearing notices. According to Supervisor Mike Adams, rumors started that the board was going to make a final decision on the future of recycling in the township.

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Daily News/Meghan Nelson

**The recycling and solid waste options the Montcalm Township Board is currently contemplating could potentially change resident's solid waste pickup provider or add recycling alongside regular pick up.**



**Montcalm Township residents attended Wednesday night's Township Board meeting to hear updates on recycling and solid waste collection for the township.**

## RECYCLING

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"All we are doing tonight is approving the letter as a board so that we can inform the public of the hearings and what the options are," Adams said.

Clerk Amy Richards plans on sending the letter to all township residents early next week to give them ample time to respond before the public hearings. The letter will detail how the issue of recycling came up for the township and options to bring it back into the township.

According to Adams, at the July 13, 2016, meeting, the board voted to remove recycling containers from alongside the Township Hall in fear of them being shut down anyway.

"During that same meeting, I promised to find a solution to enable the residents in the township to have access to recycling through exploring different programs used in other communities," Adams said.

Since July, the board appointed a subcommittee to look into recycling options. The subcommittee found limiting traffic to improve safety, reducing the impact on the roads, and providing a higher level of service at a reduced cost to be some of the concerns residents had.

With those concerns in mind, the subcommittee looked into options for recycling service throughout the township. The letter that will be sent out mentions three potential options for recycling in the township:

- Option 1: Allow the township to contract with a waste hauler, making trash and recycling available for every residential home — with an estimated cost of \$16 a month.

- Options 2: Have the township negotiate with a hauler and grant them a franchise as the only hauler in the township — which would cost residents \$5-6 more than Option 1.

- Leave things the way they are, meaning no recycling services in the township.

"(Option 1) would allow the township to reduce your cost by paying the service provider directly while collecting from you twice a year along with your property tax bill," Adams said.

The second option costs more because the quarterly bills are billed by the service provider.

"Even the prices are worst case scenario," Trustee Steve Sprague said.

Several residents attending Wednesday's meeting asked questions and voiced concern about how services would be billed if they were only residents for part of the year or if they preferred to take care of their own waste and recycling.

"By adding it to your taxes (Option 1) you are required to have it," Treasurer Rose Hyde explained, "and the other option allows you to opt out."

Adams said the concerns and questions are part of the reason it is important for the township to move forward with scheduling public hearings.

The board decided to have one of the two public hearings be scheduled during the day and the other during the evening. The final dates and times the board decided on are 1 p.m. March 20 and 6 p.m. March 30.

The letter Richards plans on sending out next week will also include a survey about recycling options. Those who are unable to attend one of the public hearings are encouraged to complete it and sent it back to the township office at 1880 S. Greenville Road, Greenville, MI 48838.

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