

PRESS RELEASE

Grand Haven Charter Township
13300 168th Avenue
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
William D. Cargo, Grand Haven Township Superintendent

Phone: 616.842.5988 (ext. 324)

Fax: 616.842.9419

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Trash Collection Proposal Dropped

Grand Haven Township, Michigan, November 15, 2007.

Five months after completing a survey showing wide support for a single waste collection concept, the Grand Haven Charter Township Waste Collection and Removal Committee instructed staff to discontinue any further work on the proposed EverKept contract and return the \$100,000 bid bond to EverKept – the company that offered the least expensive service.

“Good customer service and an opportunity to save residents money led the Township to examine a unified waste collection contract,” Trustee Steve Karell said. “But, since a large segment of the residents have expressed deep opposition toward the proposed contract, good customer service means that we should now drop the proposal.”

Unlike some decisions of Township government, there is no provision under state law allowing for a “referendum election” on the proposed trash collection contract. This means that the Township was very limited in trying to determine the level of support or opposition. As a result, direct face-to-face contact, such as the recent public forum, become the major mechanism for understanding residents’ opinions.

“The Committee considered the possibility of completing a scientifically valid survey to gain a representative cross section of the Township,” Clerk Sue Buitenhuis said. “However, regardless of the survey’s accuracy, we believed that the results would not be viewed as legitimate by many of the residents. Unlike an election, surveys never reach the entire population and are held suspect by those who may disagree with the conclusions,” Buitenhuis explained.

“Although the process has been contentious and difficult at times, I believe that some very good outcomes emerged from this process,” Karell noted. “For example, many residents have more closely examined their waste hauling bills and found they could save money by changing companies. And, although this might be a coincidence, the largest waste hauler has promised to expand the materials they collect under the recycling program and to provide more options under the yard waste program,” Karell said.

“The Township will return to a program of licensing those waste haulers that can meet the minimal standards of the Township,” Trustee Tom Jenkins said. “Hopefully, EverKept will decide to provide waste collection service within the Township with rates that will step up the competitive pressure on the established waste haulers,” Jenkins concluded.

END