

Mounting garbage prompts special Council meeting

By Brock Weir

If your garbage has been sitting out on your curb for days on end waiting for a long-delayed pickup, it has not gone unnoticed.

Aurora Council will convene a special meeting at 9 a.m. on this Saturday, January 11, to deal with the mounting problem.

A motion from Mayor Geoffrey Dawe was made public Thursday afternoon calling for an 'immediate review' of Aurora's contract with Green For Life, the company retained to collect Aurora's residential waste.

In his motion, Mayor Dawe cites escalating impacts stemming from last month's ice storm resulting in collection days being delayed or 'missed all together.'

'[Green For Life] GFL reported delays and missed collection due to weather conditions, worker injury and vehicle breakdown,' reads his motion. 'GFL is still struggling to have the Town of Aurora back on their regular collection schedule [and] over the past several months, prior to the ice storm, residents have reported several missed collections by GFL. This is an unacceptable practice that needs to be addressed.'

The motion, which will be up for a Council vote over the weekend, calls on staff to 'undertake an immediate review of the GFL contract to determine if they are meeting the terms and, if not, to recommend immediate corrective action and report back to Council.'

Speaking to The Auroran on Thursday night, Mayor Dawe said residents have not been shy to address their garbage concerns to Town Hall, but their concerns are not entirely new.

'Quite obviously there are issues [with] the ice storm and snow and it has been difficult to get to, but complaints, quite frankly, have been going up since the fall and maybe even a bit before,' he said. 'We need to look at whether or not they are performing.'

'Turtle Island did a pretty good job and we didn't have nearly the complaints with Turtle Island as we do now.'

Saturday's meeting will task staff to go over the contract both from the municipal perspective and the perspective of GFL to determine whether or not they are ticking the right boxes.

Mayor Dawe estimates cleanup and other effects stemming from the pre-Christmas storm have cost the Town approximately \$40,000.

'It is a combination of our staff overtime and additional contract services that we have brought in,' he said. 'The contract services are mostly along the lines of additional crews to clean up branches, chippers, and things like that.'

Saturday's meeting will also address a further motion from the Mayor calling on the Province to be declared a 'disaster area' to be included in Ontario's Disaster Relief Assistance Program to deal with the aftermath of the storm.