



Legislation Text

File #: 22-2952, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Public Hearing for Leaf Mulch Program Alternatives

EXPLANATION AND SUMMARY :

On April 19, 2021, Council held a Conference Session to hear a presentation on the updated draft leaf collection and mulching program evaluation from staff and our consultant.

Background:

For our current leaf collection program, residents rake leaves to the edge of the street. The Town uses three separate crews, each consisting of four employees (driver and three laborers) and a leaf loader trailing behind a tandem truck equipped with a leaf box to vacuum up the leaves. Other employees and equipment such as a supervisor, loader operator and loader are also used.

The leaves are collected until the end of December and stored at the Beulah Road site. We ground about 1/3 of what we collected in January this year and delivered to residents and one out-of-Town business throughout January, February and March. The remaining 2/3 were delivered to Loudoun Composting. In the past, we paid no dump fee. Last year we paid \$9 per ton, and this year the price has jumped to \$30 per ton.

The Town engaged NewGen Strategies and Solutions, LLC to evaluate the Town's Leaf Collection Program and look at costs for the existing program, a short-haul alternative, and a long-haul alternative. The short-haul option eliminates mulch delivery while the long-haul option eliminates mulch delivery and the need to use the Beulah Road site. The report and council presentation will be attached with the public hearing agenda.

The report describes the amount of leaves we collect in cubic yards. One cubic yard is a cube that measures 3' x 3' x 3'. We collected 7,427 cubic yards during the 2020/2021 season. The total volume collected would fill the new gym at the community center 25' deep in leaves.

As a result of this presentation and discussion, the Council expressed the desire to hold a public hearing to hear from all interested residents regarding an alternative leaf collection and mulch program before a decision is made on the way the program is run in the future.

Staff has also met with a town resident, who has offered his time and skills, to collaborate with staff to run various cost scenarios for long-haul leaf collection options. Attached to this agenda is the resident's analysis which Town staff has reviewed and finds reasonable.

Town staff supports the possibility of a motion at the Town Council meeting scheduled for April 11,

2022.

There are three options to consider:

1. Continue with the current program
2. Short-haul Option - eliminates leaf mulch and continues to use Beulah Road site for short term leaf storage
 - a. Under this scenario collected leaves would be hauled to the Beulah Road site as currently practiced; however, there would be no leaf grinding and no delivery of leaf mulch. Once all collections are completed, the leaves would then be hauled from the Beulah Road site to the disposal facility (Loudoun Compost)
3. Long-haul Option - eliminates leaf mulch and eliminate the use of Beulah Road site.
 - a. Under this scenario collected leaves would be hauled directly to the disposal facility (Loudoun Compost) and eliminate the use of the Beulah Road site for leave operations and eliminate leaf mulch delivery.
 - b. Loudoun Compost is in Chantilly, VA (eleven miles from town) meaning a longer round trip for each collection truck than going to the Beulah Road site. To maintain the current collection rate up to an additional two trucks are needed during the heaviest peak collection weeks. We estimate that one additional truck would be needed for nine weeks, and two trucks for four weeks. These would be contracted (rented) which includes the driver requiring no additional staff.

Strategic Plan Initiative: Vienna is an environmentally sustainable community

Board or Commission of Interest: None

Departmental Recommendation : Recommend holding a public hearing for the leaf mulching program.

Finance Recommendation : Recommend holding a public hearing for the leaf mulching program.

Purchasing Recommendation : N/A

Town Attorney Recommendation : The Town Council may conduct a public hearing on the Town's leaf collection and mulching program in its discretion.

Town Manager's Recommendation : Recommend the Town Council hold a public hearing for the leaf mulching program.

Cost and Financing: N/A

Account Number: N/A

Decision Needed by This date:

PROPOSED/SUGGESTED MOTION

“I move to approve Option 1 to continue current operations as presented.”

OR

“I move to approve Option 2 to implement short haul operations as presented.”

OR

“I move to approve Option 2 to implement long haul operations as presented.”

OR

“Other action deemed necessary by Council.”