

**CUMBERLAND CENTRAL LANDFILL
LITTLE FORKS
Q's And A's**

Q. Where does our municipal garbage go?

A. Our garbage goes to the Cumberland Central Landfill in Little Forks. The facility is operated by the Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority (CJSMA) on behalf of the towns of Amherst and Oxford and the Municipality of the County of Cumberland.

Q. Is it a good facility?

A. Yes, it's a good facility. Standards are set by the province and, for good reason, the standards are regularly updated to ensure that the environment is being protected.

Q. Is there lots of remaining capacity at the landfill site?

A. Different types of waste are handled in different sections of the facility. In one area of the facility, there is 10 years of remaining capacity but in another there is only three years of remaining capacity. Future facility upgrades will be necessary.

Q. What about the environmental permits for the facility?

A. The Department of Environment issued a new operating permit for the Little Forks landfill in the fall of 2020. As was anticipated, the new permit included more demanding standards to protect the environment. The final costs associated with these higher standards has not yet been determined.

Q. What will that mean for taxpayers?

A. The CJSMA does its best to control costs and to find efficiencies. That will continue. But there is a limit to the savings that can be found. Adding to the challenge is the fact that our population has been declining. In other words, looking ahead, higher costs will need to be covered by fewer taxpayers.

Q. Is there another option?

A. Municipal leaders have been asking the same question for the last year or so. To be precise, the municipalities have been investigating whether taxpayers would be better off if the Little Forks facility was sold and operated by a private company.

Q. That would be a big decision? How would the taxpayer be protected?

A. Yes, it would be a an important decision. Before going too far down that road, the municipalities agreed on certain conditions. A private operator would need to meet at least four conditions

– pay cash for the facility; maintain environmental standards; protect existing employment, at least in the short term, and provide certainty that waste disposal costs to taxpayers would be better over the long term.

Q. What about environmental risks?

A. That question was also asked by municipal leaders. It was agreed that, in any sale, the municipalities would need to be relieved of any potential environmental liabilities associated with the site. A community monitoring committee would be created to make sure that environmental and community protection commitments are kept.

Q. What was the next step?

A. Once the municipalities established the key principles, the councils agreed to test the market. A Request for Proposals was issued and three companies responded. Two of the three were deemed to have submitted worthy proposals and negotiations have started with one.

Q. What are the chances of getting a good deal for taxpayers?

A. Agreements like this take time and there is no certainty that an acceptable agreement will be reached. For it to make sense to taxpayers, we will need something like a 25 year agreement with an operator and certainty that “tipping fees” – i.e. disposal costs – would only increase in an affordable and predictable way.

Q. What happens if one municipality doesn’t want to proceed?

A. Any sale would be subject to approval of the three councils.

Q. How are taxpayers being kept informed?

A. Updates are being provided on municipal web sites, through news releases and directly from councillors.

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