

Garbage Haulers for Citizen Choice

New Hope Public Hearing Organized Garbage Collection Listening Session August 7, 2017

Audio File #64

[The meeting began with Mayor Kathi Hemken asking those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed with roll call.]

Council Members in Attendance: Unidentified Female, Andy Hoffe, Jonathan London, John Elder [JE], and Eric Lammle, absent.

Identifications: Mayor noted as M; City staff noted as CS; Audience members noted as AM; Council Members noted as CM.

M: Good evening. This is really fun to see a whole Council full of people. My name is Kathi Hemken. I'm the Mayor of New Hope, and this is a special City Council work session to listen to the residents' comments on different garbage collection options.

I'd like to make a few opening comments and then City staff will make a presentation on this topic. We will then open up the meeting to comments from residents. I'm going to ask that we do a "For" and an "Against" a change —

[Request from audience to speak louder]

Okay, fine. I will. Thank you. [Adjusting microphone] First, I'd like to state that no decision on this topic will be made by the City tonight. The purpose of this listening session is to take info from residents on the subject. We know that there are strong opinions on both sides. The City Council has discussed the idea of an organized garbage collection system in the past, primarily because of the impact of the garbage trucks on our City streets.

New Hope currently has seven licensed garbage haulers, and residents are free to choose their haulers. This means that in most neighborhoods, there are seven different trucks traveling up and down each street on collection day. In 2014, due to the deteriorating condition of many streets, the City adopted an aggressive pavement management plan to rehabilitate or reconstruct more streets each year. The City has spent over \$20 million over the past four years on street improvements. In 2015, the City conducted a professional survey and asked residents their opinion on garbage collection systems. Fifty-two percent supported changing to an organized garbage collection system; 35 [percent] were opposed and 13 [percent] were undecided.

I've been asked to make a comment that all of us have been getting numerous phone calls. I've gotten about 300 in the last couple days. A lot of people called because they weren't able to attend this meeting, and we just want to acknowledge that we are keeping track of those folks that have called us.

In April of this year, the City Council decided to study the issue again and agreed to ask residents for feedback through an online survey that's on the City's website, through surveys mailed to the residents — some of you got them and some of you haven't yet, but you will — they're also available in the back — and by conducting this listening session.

Resident comments from the survey are being accepted through the end of August. All the feedback received will be presented to the Council at the September 18th work session, and the Council may make a decision — I repeat, the Council *may* make a decision at that time as to whether we want to continue to discuss this issue.

Now City staff will make a short presentation on garbage collection options and the advantages and disadvantages of each. After that, we'll be glad to take comments from the residents. Please limit your comments to three minutes and be respectful of the individuals that are speaking. Please, no clapping, no booing, no biting your neighbor, no disruptive behaviors. If you are going to be disruptive, I'm going to have to ask you to leave. What happens is, if a few start talking to your neighbor, the other people can't hear, and we can't hear you either.

So with that, Jeff Alger would you do the short presentation?

CS: Thank you very much, Madam Mayor and members of the Council. Jeff Alger, Community Development Assistant.

This evening we're here for the organized garbage collection listening session. Just a brief overview of how tonight's meeting will work and the steps that will occur after tonight's meeting. We'll be doing a brief staff presentation on the history and background of organized garbage collection in the City of New Hope. Then, as Mayor Hemken said, the City Council will open the floor for public comment. There are surveys available near the entrance to the Council chambers to the left of the door.

Again, the City Council will not be making any decision this evening. The purpose is to allow stakeholders and residents the opportunity to learn more about the topic and offer public comment.

AM: Can I ask something?

M: No.

CS: Surveys were mailed to residents last week and are available online and at City Hall.

AM: [Inaudible]

CS: Is it about the sound out there?

AM: We cannot hear anything. Nobody can hear nothing. We can't hear nothing out here.

M: Bernie, could you direct those people back into the [unintelligible] rec room, then? There's a screen back there and some sound. Thank you.

AM: Jeff, I'm sorry about that.

CS: Surveys were mailed to residents last week, and they will continue to be available online and here at City Hall through the end of the month. Staff — in the meantime, staff will be formulating an estimate on the time and one-time costs that would be associated with implementing an organized garbage collection system. Again, the City Council will be discussing the matter and reviewing survey results at the September 18th work session.

A bit of background. The City Council has discussed this topic a number of times in the last 20 years. The first time was 1996, and the City Council opted not to pursue an organized collection system at that time. The Citizen Advisory Commission, or the CAC, discussed the topic in 2003, at which time it recommended no changes to the City's current system. It was revisited in 2011 at which time the CAC passed two motions, one of which was to establish a pilot project within the City; the second being to reduce the number of licensed haulers in the City. These were presented to the City Council in that year, and the Council opted not to pursue either at that time.

Most recently, a Council member has requested that the City Council revisit the topic, and it was discussed at the April 17, 2017 work session meeting. At this meeting, the listening session for this evening was scheduled, the City Council agreed to solicit feedback from residents and stakeholders in the form of the surveys that were mentioned, and the Council opted to reduce the number of licenses available in the City to seven.

Again, the primary reason for continuing to discuss organized garbage collection over the years in the City of New Hope is the impact of garbage trucks on the City streets. The City adopted an aggressive pavement management plan in 2014 because of the deteriorating condition of many City streets. The City has spent more than \$20 million over the last four years on street improvement projects.

An organized — or, excuse me — an open garbage collection system is what the City of New Hope currently has in place. It's a system where individual customers, residents of one- and two-family properties can select their own garbage haulers. New Hope does require that these haulers be licensed.

An organized garbage collection system, on the other hand, is one for collecting solid waste, in which a specified hauler or member of an organization of haulers is authorized to collect from a defined geographic service area or areas, some or all of the solid waste that is released by generators for collection. This type of system would allow an opportunity for all haulers in the City that are licensed to split the City up into zones proportionate to their existing market share.

In the case of New Hope, that would mean all seven licensed haulers would form an organization and continue to operate within the City; however, no more than one truck would be driving through each neighborhood to pick up trash. There's no cap on the number of haulers in an organized garbage collection system, but, again, the idea is to limit the number of trucks in each neighborhood.

As for the number of cities — the percentage of cities in Minnesota that use an organized collection system, it's in between 20 to 35 percent, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, whereas it's 65 to 80 percent use an open garbage collection system similar to New Hope. Both open and organized collection systems have benefits and drawbacks.

We'll start with the open collection system. The advantages — residents are free to select their hauler based on preference. There's a relationship between a hauler and its customers. There's no administrative costs for the City, and it's more advantageous for smaller haulers and easier to enter the market.

The disadvantages — it's generally more expensive for residents. When you have seven garbage trucks driving down each street, you're going to have some more negative side effects, such as street maintenance costs, the possibility for accidents, noise, emissions, and fuel consumption. There's also often inconsistent charges for services. Garbage haulers can charge whatever they want, where your neighbor may be paying \$10 more or \$10 less than you for the same exact service. And, lastly, it's harder for the City to manage and track this type of system, and enforcing the ordinance that says that all residents must have garbage service is very difficult in this type of system.

As for an organized garbage collection system, the advantages are pretty much the opposite. It's generally less expensive. The City has the ability to request proposals every three to seven years. There's a decreased impact of increased truck traffic, so that's the maintenance, the accidents, the noise, the emissions. Cities have the ability to manage and ensure participation amongst residents, and the standardized service makes public education easier.

The disadvantages — again, residents cannot choose their garbage hauler. The City is now involved, so there are some higher administrative costs. There is a higher entry cost for small haulers, and the opportunities to enter the market are limited to contract

openings. And then, of course, the process of changing from an open system to an organized system is time consuming and obviously very politically charged. Staff is working on an estimate on the cost that the City would incur for going through the process, potentially.

As Mayor Hemken mentioned, the City conducted a communitywide professional phone survey through Morris Leatherman in 2015. The results indicated that residents favor changing from the current open collection system to an organized collection system by a 52 to 35 percent margin, with 13 percent of residents undecided.

Supporters cite less cost, at 14 percent; fewer trucks on streets, at 20 percent; and less damage to streets, at 11 percent as rationale for their response. Opponents based their decision on wanting choice, at 32 percent; liking their current hauler, at 18 percent; and less cost, at 5 percent.

As for licensing fees, last year the City generated \$2,660 from the license fees paid by garbage haulers. That is expected to increase to about \$3,500 in 2018.

As for costs, staff did a survey in February of 2017, contacted each of the haulers in New Hope, and these were the prices that were provided. They range from about \$14.50 to about \$22.00, depending on the size of the resident's container. The average cost for yard waste was about \$120 per year.

If the City were to decide to move forward with this, there are statutory requirements that dictate how that must take place. First of all, the City must give notice to the public and to any licensed haulers that it is considering adopting organized garbage collection. Second, it must provide a 60-day negotiation period, exclusively with the existing residential refuse haulers, to develop a proposal for the collection of garbage and recycling. This would allow licensed haulers, the seven in New Hope, the opportunity to develop a proposal in which they, as members of an organization of haulers, will take garbage from designated sections of the City. So, again, there still could be up to seven haulers in the City. If an existing hauler opts to be excluded, the City may allocate its customers proportionately, based on market share, to the participating haulers who choose to negotiate.

If the City does not reach an agreement with the licensed haulers during that period, they can form an organized collection options committee, by resolution, to study the various methods of organized collection and issue a report to the City Council. The City then must provide a public notice and a public hearing before officially deciding to implement an organized garbage collection system that would be separate from tonight's meeting. Lastly, the City must wait six months after the effective date of the decision before implementing an organized garbage collection system.

So, to reiterate what the Mayor said, we are encouraging residents to provide feedback this evening. Please be sure to record your name on the roster table near the entrance of the Council chambers to ensure correct spelling in the meeting note minutes. We would encourage everyone to approach the podium and speak into the microphone by first stating your first and last name and address. And, again, please be respectful of others, even if you do not agree with their opinion.

M: Jeff, I would like to add something to that. At this session, neither the staff nor the Council will be answering any questions. We're just here to listen to your comments. If you ask questions, we'll just tell you we're not answering them at this time. We're just listening to comments.

I'm going to ask that we try to do comments for those who would like the change and a comment from those who would not like the change, and we'll go back and forth just to keep it more even. So let's start with those who would like to see the change. That would be you, [Unintelligible], if you want to speak.

AM: I'm Lisa Moe, and my address is 8808 35th Avenue North, New Hope. I support this as long as there's yard waste and composting [unintelligible]. And that's all I have to say.

M: Yes?

AM: Are we speaking ultimately in opposition or —

M: Yes.

AM: Okay. My name is Dave Nice [phonetic]. I rise in opposition to this recommendation — and this is not standing still here and --

CS: And your address, please.

AM: 7931 59½ Avenue North.

CS: Thank you very much.

AM: In my observation of the information that was presented to us, both tonight and prior, I don't see a lot of data, and I guess I'd like to see more data. I understand the impact of increased road wear by more trucks and that the trucks are very large and heavy. However, reference has been made to the possibility of more accidents, but no data; the possibility of more consistent service — I suggest that the way we're going to have consistent service is for the free market to decide. If I don't like my hauler, I'm going to get somebody else. If they don't want to be my provider, they're going to — if they want to be my provider, they're going to either be better priced or better quality, so I think if you're looking for good consistent quality and service, that's the way to do it. Consistent

pricing, the free market should reign. I don't know that I care what my neighbor's paying if I'm satisfied with what I'm playing. The bottom line for me is I don't want the government controlling the economy. Set prices never works, the government trying to increase its administration to manage this and manage the quality, it's just the wrong thing to do, in my mind. You referred to the increase in statutory compliance, the increase in administration, increase in time, and increase in administrative costs, and I'm sure I'm out of my time, so I just thank you for the opportunity to express myself. I would ask you to not consider changing.

M: Thank you, Dave. I'm just reminding you again of the three-minute limit.

AM: Sure. Hello, good evening, I'm Jody Tate. I live at 8457 Meadow Lake Road in New Hope, the northern side of New Hope. I've had the same hauler for 26 years, but I'm for the change, because I see this as an opportunity to eliminate inefficient trucking and an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and allow the City to be a part of the solution to the climate change problem that we're facing. But, as long as [inaudible] the opportunity to be creative, to provide a menu of options for best practices residential services — I'll show that in a minute — and being fiscally smart to offer residents rewards for diverting their waste from the waste stream. I'm also the secretary of the Meadow Lake Watershed Association. About three years ago, we got 450 reusable yard waste bags donated to us. We tried to promote this in the community with minimal success, the reason being the perception is that a garbage hauler won't serve folks on the curbside using reusable yard waste bags. We'd like to see that promoted in the change. Curbside yard waste services, there's no one size fits all. Some of us have very large gardens, some of us have done restoration projects along the shoreline. We have large volumes of yard waste that needs servicing. And something that I've done about two years ago, is I started collecting food and organic waste from my garbage stream. I use a compostable bag that I put my food waste in, I store it in my refrigerator using ice cream buckets, and every two weeks I fill my bag, I take it out of the refrigerator, fill my compostable bag with food waste plus paper towels, tissues, pizza delivery boxes, even the lint from my dryer, and I drive it down to the Hennepin County Transfer Station located on Jefferson Highway, and I do this every two weeks. It works slick. I integrate it with my routine trips that I made on the road, and it is absolutely no extra effort. What it's done, it's reduced my trash significantly. If you can see in the photo, there is my trash cart with a small bag of plastic bags sitting on top. That is the garbage that I had for that week. In fact, that's the volume of garbage that I have every week. It would take me probably two months to fill my garbage cart full, and so I don't need trash services so much. If we had unit-based pricing, where we could then apply the volume of various types of materials that we generate to those unit prices, we'd have the opportunity to reduce our taxes that we pay. Trash hauling and disposal services are taxed at 18.75 percent. As we divert garbage from the garbage stream and move that more into the tax exempt stream, such as yard waste and food and organic waste, it's an opportunity for residents to reduce their costs.

M: Thank you, Jody.

AM: I'm James [Unintelligible], 4031 Nevada Avenue. I've lived on Nevada 36 years, and the avenue is in just as good shape today as it was when I moved in. I'm in my 90s. I have Waste Management as my hauler. They're probably the most expensive of all of them, but they have the programs that I need, that I use, because there's — I have some limitations in what I can do. I'm sure there's other elderly people in the City as old or older than I am, and so I am against changes that would take my carrier away from me, because I need that company to handle my yard waste and my garbage as well as the recyclables.

M: Thank you.

AM: Jan Myola [phonetic], 3972 Scotts Avenue North. I would like to see a single hauler. My husband, who's much more articulate, was going to speak tonight, but the neighborhood we live in, we don't just get the seven garbage trucks going down each side, which would be 14 garbage trucks, but because of the curves in the road, they do figure 8's. I've never sat and counted how many times the trucks go by, but for young kids and walkers, it's too many. The carbon footprint is too much, and I like the idea of how you're going to allow people that have market share. I think you'll still get competitive bids, so I'm not worried about the price of my garbage. To me, it's more environmental, and on the emotional side, I'm a big walker, and I hate as soon as snow comes, because I can't get to a plowed sidewalk, so I play human pinball with the garbage trucks on Tuesday mornings. Thank you.

M: Thank you.

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AM: I'm Marie [Unintelligible]. I live on 4069 [Unintelligible] Avenue. You had mentioned how much was spent in the last four years on the streets. That included all the water that needed to be done, that included all the streets that needed repairs. You didn't go back the past years beyond that. Those are streets that had to be done because of the water. Yes, resurfacing is done all over all the time. We've had the same hauler since we've lived here 20-some years. They take any extras we need. If we have a bundle sitting by it, they take it. If we have whatever, they take it. My mom has one hauler in her city, and she hates it. They have it for every five years before they get to redo it, and she's allowed one bag. And what if you have more than one bag? What if you have people for the weekend or that stay for the week, and you have extra cardboard? They don't take it. So she has to send it with someone else. Pricing — I don't care if I pay more or less than my neighbor. I like what my hauler does for me. If they have a problem, then they should change haulers, and if you have to take it down, take it down to four. Give us

four choices to keep the prices competitive for us, not just one and then sign on for five to seven years. Thank you.

M: Thank you, Marie.

AM: My name is Paul Simon, and I'm at 3825 Independence Avenue North, and I've been in the village since 1965. We live on a dead end street, and our street and repairs are not so much to the haulers, but it's from the water and snow removal that we have the damage that we have incurred these many years. They have redone our street twice, and the second time was just last year or — yeah, last year. At the original Council meeting here back many years ago, I sat here, and they set the limit at three licensed haulers. Now, I don't know how the management here in City Hall has drifted to the seven licensed, but at that meeting that I was at, there was three licensed haulers and Randy was the first one. He knocked on my door, and I have had excellent service from him, where I've had run-ins with the arrogant — one of your largest haulers here, and they're one of the highest, Waste Management. I can't even talk to those people. Our individual haulers have, in the long haul, done us many, many favors. A bag outside or what have you, they stop their trucks, they get out, and they throw it up into their vehicle, where many other ones, they won't even get out of the truck. This kind of a survey should be had. And then make your choices, and I realize you were saying that the many haulers are going to be on a timeshared basis, like maybe one month we'll have Waste Management and then the next month we will have Ding-Dong, Inc. I'm not sure the personalities and the way they are handled is all being the same. The type of communications that we have with these haulers and so on is not that good. But I would say that maybe you're on the right track to maybe get a unified all-one-price solve, but do we get the service and the humanitarian attitude to each individual home owner that has different variances and so on?

M: Thank you.

Audio File #66

AM: [Individual did not identify himself] ... we studied this at length and made a recommendation to the Council at that time, and they decided not to do anything. Our recommendation was to proceed with this type of thing that you are doing now, because we studied the weight of garbage trucks, what they were doing to our streets, and they were destroying the streets slowly but surely. We know that, we knew that then. The sound pollution was enormous, and we didn't have as many haulers as we do now. I'm retired now. I wasn't then. I'm home, and I hear these trucks, and I see these trucks, and I'm a walker and a bicyclist in the neighborhood, and I'm avoiding these trucks as they go up and down my street, not just once — twice or even three time — during that same day. And that's just for garbage, and then they come back with a waste hauling truck, a yard waste truck, and the same thing happens. That's because they're doing one pick-up

here, one over here, and one over there, and they have to keep circling, and I'm tired of it, folks, and I know that this City can get decent contracts. I've worked with the people on this Council, I've worked with the City as a manager, and I know that we can get a decent contract, it can be looked at on an annual basis, a three-year basis. We can make our complaints heard if we have complaints. They can redo it, but we need to give this thing a try. It's important to the City. The cost that we are bearing within the City for roads, for everything else — so please give it some thought, serious thought.

M: Thank you.

AM: Bill Smith from Flag Avenue, 4816 Flag. I've lived on Flag Avenue for 50 years, and I always go my way through life, and my whole thing is I get my best price all the time, and that's up to everyone out there, but I've never paid more than \$15 a month, including taxes [inaudible], and I've got papers here from Robbinsdale where I own property, and last month I paid \$36 a month to Waste Management, and I just — that's 20 bucks, and I kind of speak for a lot of the people in this room. We're all senior citizens, or most, and everybody's looking at the dollar, and I just — it's kind of tough to look at here. As far as the roads, our road in front of us was just dug up this last year, first time in 50 years. I think that's pretty good wear and tear. You want to go to Robbinsdale, you drive down any street that hasn't just been done last year, believe me, you can't drive 15 miles an hour. So thank you.

M: Thank you, Bill.

AM: William Jacobson, 4057 [Unintelligible], 27-year resident. My issue's a little different, but I think it needs to be brought up. We compost, and we recycle, my wife and I, Nancy [Unintelligible], and this is the amount of trash that we have for one week, so whatever decision's made in the end, I just hope we're not forced to have a trash hauler and we have to pay for that, because I think, as a tree hugger, I'll be penalized for that. So thank you very much.

M: Thank you, William.

AM: Evening, Don Olman [phonetic], 8408 27th Place North, Mr. Elders' group. One of the questions that I've fought with on this change was the number of trucks that were on the road, and so I have watched it for the last few weeks. Used to teach math, so I — go ahead and check my numbers — but 52 weeks, there are seven companies that are hauling; that's 364 trips a year, but there are also seven companies that pick up the yard waste. They do that 32 weeks a year; that's another 224 trips; and, then, of course, when the recycler comes by, that's every other week; that's 26 more trips. That's a total of 614 trips a year for a truck. The average, if you take it out, 11.76 per week going past my house. Someone in my neighborhood must be doing a business out of their house. I watch and UPS comes by two to three times per day, and they only work on, say, a five-day week, so that's 260 days; that amounts to somewhere between 520 and 780 trips

up and down my street each year. The average of the two is 650. The FedEx comes by there three to four times a week. I guess they're going to have to improve their sales, but that figures out to 156 to 208, or approximately 182. Therefore, between those two, 832 trips, average in a year, where the garbage only comes by my house 614 trips a year. Therefore, if the average per day garbage is — if I can find it here — 1.68 per day; and average for the haulers of UPS and FedEx is 2.28 times a day. Now, are we thinking also if we are going to do this, that we are going to limit the fact that UPS can be the only hauler, because they are the major hauler or maybe that they can only come in on Wednesdays so that it will not be a problem? I cannot see us not having our choice. I have good service, and it seems to be less than most of the people I have listened to. And, by the way, I know you're not going to answer questions, but I would like to know who the Council person was that requested this study be done, so if you could do that.

[Multiple speakers]

You are, sir?

CM: Yes. Give me a call after, I want to contest your numbers.

Okay.

CM: Does that observation— or was that a calculation?

[Multiple speakers]

That was by observation. Well, I haven't sat there all year long and watched the street, no.

M: Stop. Stop. Thank you. We're not going to get to everybody if we have these conversations. Thank you.

AM: Good evening. My name is Andy Ensarah [phonetic] from 4940 Xylon in New Hope. As a licensed civil engineer that specializes in transportation infrastructure, construction and design, I can speak to the fact that we have seven garbage companies; that means we have seven trucks going down our street. We have seven compost trucks; that makes it 14 trucks every Wednesday or Tuesday in our neighborhood in the summer, down each side of your street, plus recycling if it is that week. Each truck weighs approximately the equivalent of 1,300 individual automobiles. Therefore, on an average trash day, your street is now seeing about 20,000 car trips on that street. The UPS truck, that's only a fraction of that weight — or FedEx or your mail carrier; they are the equivalent of a few dozen car trips versus the over 20,000 car trips that your street will see every year [unintelligible] every day for trash pickup. As a lifetime resident here, we've never seen an issue with the City's recycling service. It's organized by the City. It's essentially the same function, it's just one truck every other week, and it seems to work out pretty well.

By running down to just three trucks, our streets will last longer, our sewers, our water lines, our gas lines, which means lower taxes in the long run for all of us. I'm somebody that would like to stay here for a long time seeing our streets and sewers last a long time. That, to me, is very appealing along with those lower taxes, so that's why I'm in favor of this change.

M: Thank you.

AM: Hi, I'm Diane Sankee [phonetic], and I live on 6011 Enson [phonetic], and I've been a community member for 40 years. Now, I've dealt with some of your bigger agencies that, with the political clout that they have, probably would become our [inaudible], and because of one of them, I have a tax — I have a ding on my credit rating, because I called them up, I sent a registered letter, not once, but twice; and they told me they never got it, so they continued to charge for my stuff. And then I had to write out another letter to two different addresses — and it's all certified — so that I could get them to stop trying to collect my garbage. I never had nothing but bad luck with what I call the Mafia-run Garbage Ring. But with the amount of government pull that they can pull, I'm sure that they would probably be our carrier. Now, I've had two other people since them, and I've been happy with both, except one could call me — could give me often little bit lower rates. I compost, so I don't have any foodstuff in there. I compost, and I put it in my yard. We walk our stuff down to the recycle center as far as excess tree limbs or anything like that, so we don't use the garbage hauler for that either. I recycle everything. I have a small garbage can also. Sometimes it gets a little full with the grandchildren coming over, but it's still — you know, I manage to keep that down. I want free trade for people. I want to see where the small guy can still run a business here in America. To me, that's what makes it American, is that we have the right to have our own companies and just service people, and they won't get that if we have this. What will [unintelligible] people collecting? As far as streets, you know what, everything has wear and tear, and things that don't seem to get changed until they're really bad as far as water mains or sewers or any of that. My sewer's gotten fixed a few years back, quite a few years back, because there were [unintelligible], and they had to be replaced, right? So, I mean, but they're fine now, and if you have to resurface a street, tell me a street anywhere that doesn't have to get resurfaced because of cars or trucks or anything else.

M: Thank you.

AM: Good evening, City Council Members and Mayor. Thank you for letting us all speak tonight. My name is John Foreman. I live at 3513 Aquila Avenue North. I've been a resident here in New Hope for the past 12, 13 years. We've stayed in this community, because we have freedom of choice for my sons to attend school. I think we made a good choice. I like the Robbinsdale school district. I don't know about the rest of you. I would just like to call a spade a spade and let everyone know here tonight that this is not about the roads, this is not about traffic, this is not about pollution, this is not about anything else but setting an agenda for bigger government. That's all this is about. I

would propose that we have a question-and-answer session and invite haulersforchoice.com here to the Council chambers so we can go down the list and have a quantified question-and-answer session and have everyone's questions answered. Make no mistake, this is about bigger government. As far as the roads and traffic go, the number one damaging thing to our roads here in Minnesota is what?

Several AMs: Is [inaudible].

It's the weather, ladies and gentlemen, it's the weather. It's not the trucks, it's not the cars. People talk about trucks going up and down their street all day long on garbage day. I have 50 to 90 neighbors going up and down the street all day doing shopping and doing errands. Are we going to tell them no, they can only shop on Tuesdays and Fridays? Where does it stop? Where does it stop, ladies and gentlemen? I ask you that? These trash haulers are family-owned businesses. They live and they work in our community. They are part of the free market system. They deserve to be part of the free market system, as do we, the voters and the constituents of this City. We deserve to have a choice. Thank you.

M: Thank you, John.

AM: My name is Ron Stoffel [phonetic]. I live at 8004 55th Lane North in the new Parkview area. I'm part of the association there of the townhomes, and I guess I have questions that need to be answered regarding — obviously, each individual association member does not pay for their garbage, as it's included in our services. I don't know what this would do to us from that standpoint. We have no waste, because that is all taken care of by our contractor for the lawn services, so, again, this is a unique situation, but I don't think it's unique from the standpoint that other people may have areas that they work on and would not have the one size-fits-all category or even multiple choice. So I think those need to be taken into account as to choice in this whole thing. And I would agree that more information would be necessary to determine how much of this in the last four years [unintelligible] appeared to me what the \$20 million cost was related to — have to do exclusively — if there's any way to determine that with the hauling of waste as opposed to other elements that may have happened over that four-year period. It appeared, based on the information provided by the staff, that it was being looked at or said that that was related majoritywise to this. I'm not sure if that was the intent or if that's actually the facts or not. That would be important, I think, and, again, I think that if people were unhappy with their services, they would change services. Under this system, I have known people who have been, and it's very difficult to change after the contracts are done. The bureaucracy necessary to do that, the additional cost to the City getting involved with this, I think the City has more important things to do than get into the complaint department, because I'm assuming that that complaint department would be here. It wouldn't be with the individual haulers and that kind of thing, so thank you.

M: Thank you. Anyone else?

AM: Hi, my name is Wayne Frederickson. I reside at 7613 49th Avenue North. Mayor, City Council, I am a small business owner, not in the garbage business, but I'm in business. Earlier tonight in your organizational presentation, you remarked that if you were to go to an organized hauling situation, you'd have seven independent business people collaborate together and divvy up. Well, I can tell you right now, in my business, it would be a mighty cold day in Minnesota that I'm going to collaborate or sit down with six of my competitors and give up my customers that I've earned in the City of New Hope to say, "Well, okay, I guess you can have it." I just see a disaster. Lastly, as I've already said, I'm a small business owner. Capitalist? Yes. Environmentalist? Yes. My hauler powers their vehicles using natural gas. It says it right on the side of the trucks, so the greenhouse gas claim, in my opinion, is null and void. I don't want the City of New Hope to get in the garbage business. You've got more important things to do, a lot more important things to do than dealing with three carriers, seven carriers, or whatever number in between. You need to focus on building the businesses here, the small businesses to move into the industrial areas and the safety of the citizens. Thank you.

M: Thank you, Wayne.

Audio File #67

AM: [Individual did not identify himself] . . . here. A lot was said already that was on my mind. I guess I just want to reiterate one more time that less is more. Less government in our lives, more competition. I tried four of the haulers in the 13 years I've lived in New Hope. I've tried — I'm not going to name the names — I've tried them, and I stuck with the one, I went back to the one, the original one of them. I'm happy with that one. Having that competition, it makes it easier for the businesses. It keeps prices low, it makes it easier to deal over the phone with these people, person to person. They take care of your issues as seen fit. As far as the taxes and the infrastructure, yeah, the wear and tear as already said. Taxes are never going to go down, everybody. They'll never go down, will they?

[Laughter]

No matter what happens, they're going to find some way to use it, so just get that out of your head now. Thank you.

M: Thank you.

AM: Hello. My name's Brent Ackerman, 8609 34th Avenue North. Been a resident of New Hope for about 26 years now. That said, I am opposed to this, but I believe the burden of proof is on the City of New Hope to quantify the damage done by these trucks. As you heard Mr. Simons [sic] here say that the weather — it's the snow, the water. The issues

wouldn't change the weather. It really does deteriorate roads. It deteriorates our patios, it deteriorates a lot of things, so I really wanted to see if I could be persuaded just to see proof that these garbage trucks are really doing a great amount of damage besides the weather. And I just want to make one clarification. I get a little technical. You said there's seven haulers. I don't dispute that, but I don't believe there's seven haulers coming around every single street every Tuesday every day — every Tuesday of the year. I'm sure there might be some streets where there's seven haulers, but I think my street might have three or four. So, you know, we've just got to make sure — I guess a little technical on that. So at this point, I just hope the City will really look at the — try to find some really good details and concrete reasons why — or proof that these trucks are really doing damage, and that would offset the costs, because I'm assuming that the City of New Hope would have to hire someone full-time — at what salary, plus benefits — to implement this program and all the complaints and all the challenges, especially early on. I've in business where we have to implement something, and it's always challenging to implement something, and we really — you know, does the cost of that new employee offset the savings on the streets? Thank you very much.

M: Thank you.

AM: Hi, how's it going? You all know me. Most of you probably don't know that I'm the Chairman of the Planning Commission right now. I'm Tom Schmitt. I'm not really here to speak for or against. I really haven't decided yet. I'm kind of leaning in favor toward it, but I don't know. I mean, it's, you know — I mean, you guys have done this for a while. Kathi, you were on the Planning Commission for a long time. You study stuff and figure it out, and then you decide. And in all the years that I've been on the Planning Commission and the Citizens Advisory Commission, the times that we've had the biggest audiences are when there's the most misinformation [inaudible] out. And I think that's what's going on here. I mean, we're not talking about crime or major infrastructure. We're talking about garbage. It's not a huge deal. I mean, there's the choice thing, yeah, but this wouldn't change choice, if it's passed. It would shift where the choice is made, and citizens certainly can have their input. I mean, you guys are really good at listening, but having kind of followed this issue on the Nextdoor website for the past month or so, people who have come in favor of it, usually make a lot of points with information and all of that, and a lot of the people who have come in against it have said not a whole lot more than, "I don't want it to be different." And then when you ask why, they don't have points. And I think that the "No's" kind of get amplified by this election material that's going out in the mail. This is from the — that group that was mentioned earlier — Garbage Haulers for Citizen Choice. This is a letter from my own hauler, and it feels like it's election season when you get this stuff in the mail. And I think it's not that kind of a thing. This is one of those issues where the stuff gets amped up by misinformation, and it gets a little tough for you guys, because you've got to ignore the noise from the misinformation, whether it's from the "for" or "against" side, and make the decision that you feel is best for the City, despite how popular or unpopular it may be.

M: Thank you, Tom.

AM: My name is Charles Buy [phonetic], I live at 3740 Hillsboro Avenue North. I'm a resident ten years, so there has been a lot of comments that I can understand for and against. I would want to ask — I know this is not a Q&A, I understand, but is there a way to represent the stakeholders? So there isn't anybody from our trash industry that's here. If they can make their constitutional advice [sic] on what they've done in building their business and how much they spend on their trucks and the things that they meet in dumping the trash and being liable for what goes into the actual trash dispensaries. You know, if there's anything that happens in that trash as far as ecology or pollution later on, that civil lawsuit will go through everybody that has dumped trash there, and they become liable in that civil lawsuit. So how do we look at where our liabilities are? Those operational fees will be taken out of those businesses that have dumped trash there, so how do we bring the stakeholders in and have a combined decision? So any time you have like a change or change management and you don't have the representation of those that are impacted, you only have a partial decision, much like the gentleman before me said, there is a decision that needs to be made, but we need to have a representation of everybody that's impacted, not just the citizens and the leadership of the City.

CM: Charles, I'm sorry, what street did you say you lived on?

AM: I'm on 3740 Hillsboro Avenue North.

M: And is that a — for the change, or do you want to keep it the way it is?

AM: Well, I would be not for the change. I would be more for the free market.

M: Okay. Thank you.

AM: I'm not for it. I'm [unintelligible].

M: Why don't you just come up here and —

AM: All right. Fine. Hello, I'm Deb [Unintelligible]. I live at 3672 Ensign Avenue North. And I do believe in recycling. I do believe in the garbage hauler, but I worry about my yard waste. I need my yard waste picked up too, and my garbage hauler does that. But it's more about freedom. It's more about my freedom to control the one thing that's left for me. I can't control Excel, I can't control CenterPoint, I can't control my taxes, I can't control my water bill anymore. I have lived here all my life, and we used to get a bill once every three months, and all of a sudden, now it's the same cost for every month that I used to pay every three months, but, for me, it's about the freedom, the freedom of choice, the one thing I have control over. When my driveway got ripped up, I had no choice. I realized the streets had to be done. My driveway was brand new. I had no choice whether it was cement or asphalt. I wanted asphalt, because it was brand new, but

I got cement and I had to deal with it. I want some control over my garbage haulers and my decisions that I make in my property. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

[Applause]

M: No, no, no.

CM: No clapping, please Deb, can you give me your four digits of your address, please.

AM: It's 3672. Thanks.

AM: Good evening. City Council Members, Madame Mayor, my name is [Unintelligible] Goldstein, I'm at 3900 Ensign Avenue North. And shall I take a moment to say to the gentleman who said that should this proposition go into effect, that we're not going to lose choice, with all due respect — pardon the expression — garbage.

[Laughter]

It is written in the documents in black and white that the City Council is going to choose the provider for us, and it's not going to be reviewed until three, four, five, however many years down the road. Now, today, suppose I'm with Randy, I don't like his service, he comes in late, doesn't pick up the garbage, whatever, I can call him up and say, "Do your job, or I'm going to Waste Management." Tomorrow morning he's going to come in, he's going to pick up my trash. The way the documents currently state it, I'm not going to have any way of addressing this until three years down the line when the City Council's going to review that contract and only if the voice on City Council is going to be strong enough to represent my voice. Now, it might come as a shock to you that I'm not totally against this proposition; however, if you were to go ahead and provide a single garbage provider in the City of New Hope — and I'm not asking a question here, I'm stating a demand — what assurances can you give us that the cost of service and the quality of service is not going to change, and should the provider and City Hall not live up to their — to the expectations of the citizens of New Hope, what recourse, short of moving out of the City, will we have?

M: Thank you.

CM: And we would also invite anyone from the back of the [unintelligible] to come up and speak as well.

AM: Hi. My name is Michael Wheeler. I live on 3424 Ensign Avenue North. I'm undecided but, you know, have listened to everyone's comments. I think there's strong arguments for choice, and I do agree that there needs to be less hyperbole on both sides. One thing I do know, I'm very happy with the way the recycling's run. I like the fact that it's just \$5 a month. That's a lot cheaper than my garbage. And, you know, if wear and tear on the

streets really is the critical issue, why do we have seven haulers? Can't we do a competitive bid and [unintelligible] it down to three people. We'll have three choices. That's a compromise, it gets rid of trucks, it gets rid of real wear and tear, but it doesn't completely kill choice, and it still gives people an opportunity to bid competitors against one another to get the best value for their money and the best fit for their needs.

M: Thank you, Mike.

AM: My name is Molly Vulcanor [phonetic], 4648 Oregon Avenue North. And someone had pointed out that [unintelligible] to oppose this didn't come [inaudible] to the table. It goes beyond garbage. It goes to principals. You are my elected officials, and I want you to represent me. It's just hard to do with a group, but when you take away my choice, you take away my freedom, and I'm not okay with that.

M: Thank you.

AM: Well, I'm Lance Kanor [phonetic], 4648 Oregon Avenue North. Let it be on the record that I am strongly opposed to this. I'm concerned about if I get bad service, I want to be able to have some recourse. I don't want to have to go to the City. There's a big difference between being the person who pays and an indirect payer, how it's going to respond differently if I can withhold payment. The City would have, you know, all power. I wouldn't have any. I do like — you know, there's a lot of talk about money and politics and how to kind of control that, and, with all due respect to our City Council and Mayor, I don't like giving up my liberty for — you know, that in the possibility that we do have in the future incompetence or corruption. I mean, that's another favor that can be sold, and I don't like that. Let's see, what else? Oh, and I want more encouragement and more business to come into New Hope. I don't want restrictions in the businesses that can operate here. So I would encourage more business, not less. Thank you.

M: Thank you.

AM: Hi, I'm Lawrence Stegman [phonetic]. I live at 8233 39th Avenue North. I wasn't going to say anything today. I was going to be quiet and just listen. But someone kind of angered me and said people who don't — who are opposing this, they don't have any points — they're "just noise" — and then encouraged you guys to say, "Don't listen to the noise. Do what needs to be done." Well if you aren't going to listen to the noise now, how are we supposed to think that you're going to listen to the noise later when we have issues? The garbage company isn't going to listen to us. They got a three-year, seven-year, whatever year contract. They aren't going to listen. And now someone just told you don't listen to the noise. I'm saying listen to the noise now. It's only going to get worse. Thank you.

M: Thank you.

AM: My name is Chuck Schmidt. I live at 3641 Louisiana Avenue. I've lived in New Hope for 44 years. I've seen a lot of garbage haulers come and go. One of the things that might be considered that I haven't heard yet, is going to bi-weekly garbage pickup, just like recyclings are. That way we would reduce the volume of trucks. I realize that some people might have to get larger containers. I know I've got a 90-gallon container, and it's rarely full. I've also been a customer of Randy's for many, many years. Approximately three years ago, someone came by and quoted me a really low price. I called up Randy's, and I said, "Hey, what do you think about this?" Well, they sliced my garbage bill in half. That was really nice, and I'll tell you, I'm not — I don't have an economic interest with Randy's, but they've done good by me for many, many years. I call them on occasion, questioned — boy, they've been right on the spot, good customer service, and with organized collection, I probably won't have the opportunity to deal with one garbage hauler that I've been satisfied with for many years. Thank you.

M: Thank you, Chuck.

AM: Council, Mayor — Alan Heffner (phonetic), 7860 44th Avenue North. Wow, I had so much to say. I'm kind of late to the podium as far as this whole project, but I've been talking about it, and I went online and did some MnDOT research. There's plenty of information out there. It didn't take me but an hour to zip through the Internet and find something, and I'm not that good. I have a history. I run a business, you know, and people don't like me, they tell me to get lost, they go somewhere else. That's fine. I hope they find what they need. The same with my garbage service. I saw the numbers, 20-some odd dollars. I've never paid more than \$10. Why? Because I'm on the phone saying, "Hey, this guy's going to give me a deal," and I've switched three or four times. That's fine with me. They're good with it, and I've bounced back and forth, I don't know how many times. But I have a background, I was the chairman of the board of a K through 8 school. I was also the secretary for a while, and I learned one thing, especially when I was chairman — start listening to everybody who's speaking out. It's really important. Thank you very much.

M: Thank you. That's why we're here.

AM: Thank you for having this meeting tonight. I'm Valerie Anderson, 9215 41st Avenue North. And we've lived here for 13 years in the City — 14, I'm sorry. And we are opposed to the garbage hauler, but I think everything I've heard tonight is really good. I think we are all looking for more information, you know, are you going to bring information to us on other Minnesota cities that have turned over to a one-carrier service? And are the city residents happy with that? How are the rates going? You know, maybe getting some information from the cities that have already made this change and how is that working for everyone? We have a very low rate as well. We like to negotiate, and we have a few times over the years, and we're very happy with our service and our lower

rate, but, yeah, I think more information would be helpful for all of us and even if they've done studies on how it's saved on the environmental impact, so thank you.

M: Thank you. Okay. You've got to move quicker than that now. I almost cut you off.

AM: Well, I've got to set my timepiece for three minutes so I can cut myself off.

CM: I've got you covered up here, sir.

AM: Oh, okay. Thank you. My name is Ray Wickstrom. I live at 5436 Yukon Avenue North. And I do get my recycling bill every month with the \$5 bill on it, so every three months I pay out the \$15 for recycling. I brought my garbage bill with me. I've got a 50-gallon can. For every three months, I pay \$26.91. If you want to see it, here it is. Now, I'm certain that the City can do better negotiating for everybody in the City than I can for myself, but I had to take a three-year deal to do this price. I'm thinking, you know, five years for the City, nobody in the City should have to pay more than like \$7 a month to have a 50-gallon can pulled every week. But, you know, I'll leave that up to the City for numbers, because, naturally, you know, you're negotiating for thousands of people, one route, one truck, very convenient for the hauler and, of course, convenient for the City, and I'll leave it up to the City to figure out how they're going to beat the price of competition by negotiation. And if you can do that, then maybe we should go to this organized garbage collection. Otherwise, I'm thinking free market's probably not such a bad idea. It's worked for a couple hundred years, and it might continue to work for another couple hundred. That's it for me.

M: Thank you. Ray.

CM: [Unintelligible] a minute and 40 seconds short [inaudible].

[Laughter]

AM: My name is Chris [Inaudible], 4322 Winnetka, and I'm opposed to this. If there's so much trouble with our streets, maybe we'd be better off in making better streets. I've lived on my corner for 40-some years. That street's been done three times, and the only time it's been damaged is when the utility companies have come in with a blade and scraped [unintelligible] the blacktop. It's not from the trucks running up and down. We have semis once in a while [unintelligible] had to back down out onto Winnetka to turn around. I don't — if you build the street right, it's going to last, and I would think that with everything that's available today, we should be able to build better streets if that's our problem. You build a good street, two weeks later the utility company's out there digging it up. Let them replace it in the same condition it's supposed to be instead of these patches that they do. And the garbage haulers, I want the choice where I can switch around. I was with one for years, and I called and complained about the rates, and they did nothing until I called them and said, "I'm canceling it." "Oh, we'll match their rate."

“You’ve had three phone calls, four phone calls before, and you never matched the rate. So now you can do it? No, I’m gone.” Thank you.

M: Thanks, Chris.

Audio File #68

AM: [Inaudible] . . . I live at 9401 Northwood Parkway. Been a resident of New Hope for almost 53 years. Now, in my present house, I’ve lived there 50 years, and my street has been tore up one time. They were putting a storm sewer in, and I have as much traffic on Northwood Parkway as anything except for 42nd and a couple of the majors. I’ve had Randy for all his 47 years of business, plus I believe the company before that was the company that Randy bought. I have nothing bad to say about them. I have a lot of things good to say about them. I’m not being [unintelligible]. You know, if something better comes along, I’m willing to jump. The only thing is, everybody that has, Randy has met their [unintelligible]. Also, as to about my 80 years of age, I’m not out there hauling sticks and things like that. I have my grass cut, and the yard is taken care of by people, and I don’t know who’s going to — when you guys set the bill, who’s going to do it? Are they going to say, “Well, you’re going to have to pay for waste hauling” and things like that? And who’s setting the limits? What are we going to know? We don’t need five people to tell us, I mean, to me, that’s communism. Five people telling us and not giving us the information how much is it going to cost, what are the rates, are we all going to be paying the same rate? You know, you’ve got it coming. As far as it’s \$20 million on the highway — or the road maintenance last year, is that — I know I can’t get answers now — but things should be answered like is that going to be counted money from — all of a sudden, all of this road construction, because we’ve got these shovel-ready [unintelligible], and all this money came in? How many — how much of that \$20,000 is our taxpayers’ money? I mean, the citizens of New Hope. I know everybody’s taxes — well, most everybody’s paying taxes, but I want to know if that \$20 million, is that out of our pockets, New Hope pockets? It is? Okay. I didn’t need an answer, but I want to make sure you said you were going to check this guy’s thing. I’m going to check yours [inaudible]. That’s — we’ve had — you know, New Hope’s been good. We don’t need people telling us what to do. There was also a young man here that mentioned these people getting up and not making points. By God, I heard them making points the whole time I’ve been sitting here. You know, I want to save money. I want to be able to go and get that guy by the scruff of the neck. Okay, am I getting close?

M: Yeah, you are.

AM: Yeah, right. That’s all. Thank you.

M: I didn’t quite get that. Are you for change or not?

AM: Ha-ha. All right, everybody for change, raise your hand. For.

M: [Inaudible] people [inaudible] get their vote.

AM: More people showed up that oppose than [inaudible].

M: [Inaudible] Okay. Does anybody else have anything they want to say? Okay.

AM: [Individual did not identify himself] — Well, I'm against the change. I like to have the choice. I've had yardage hauled for about 50 years. I've been with the same company for 50 years except I left them two, three times, and every time I went back to them. I like the choice [inaudible]. That's what I have to say.

M: Thank you.

CM: Can you give us your name and your address, please, sir?

AM: Steve [Unintelligible], 6125 Utah.

M: Thank you. Okay. I'd just like to remind everybody that there's a survey in the back. If you haven't filled it out, you need to take it home with you and fill it out or do it before you leave, but we really do need to hear from those that didn't speak to us, what you're feeling and how you feel about this subject. So if you fill out that survey, you should be getting something in the mail — you may have gotten it today, but maybe tomorrow — there will be a survey in there for you to fill out. Don't do it twice. And also you can go online if you wish to fill out the survey there.

As always, you can call any of the five of us. We've been getting a lot of phone calls, but we do keep track of who's calling and what they have to say. So thank you.

So just to remind you that we'll take the surveys, we'll get them back on the 18th of September, and then we as a Council, will go over them at that time, and then we'll decide at that time whether we want to proceed with this thought of organized garbage collection or —

AM: Will that be an open work session?

M: All our work sessions are open. Okay, with that, could I get a — is there any other business anyone wants to talk about?

CM: I'd just like to thank everybody who came. So thank you for involving yourself and your information with us.

CM: Yeah, I too would like to thank everyone, and please inform yourself, okay? There are consequences to both sides, okay? It's not — there's no free choice, there's no free lunch, so as long as we're fine with the consequences, we have to live with them. That's — all I'm looking for is to inform people.

CM: I'll make a motion to adjourn this evening's special session.

CM: Second.

M: Second that we adjourn. All in favor?

All: Aye.

M: Meeting adjourned. Thank you all for coming.

CM: Thanks, everybody.

[END OF SESSION]