

WASTE REMOVAL

Metro faces \$415,000 bill despite drop in garbage

Private firm entitled to payment under terms of deal

BRIAN MORTON

VANCOUVER SUN

Metro Vancouver will pay \$415,000 to a waste removal company because the amount of garbage it handled last year dropped.

“For 2013 and for the previous four years there has been a decline in waste handled by Wastech (Services Ltd.),” said Peter Wishart, lead senior engineer for Metro Vancouver’s solid waste services, after his report was received by the Greater Vancouver Regional District’s Zero Waste Committee on Tuesday.

“Waste quantities are decreasing due to the combination of haulers bypassing regional facilities along with waste-reduction and recycling efforts,” he added. “Bypassing of regional facilities consists of haulers removing waste from the solid waste system to take elsewhere for disposal.”

According to Wishart’s report, Wastech revenues fell by \$3.03 million in 2013 compared to 2012, primarily due to an overall decline of system waste handled by Wastech.

It said an audit of the comprehensive agreement between Wastech and Metro Vancouver determined that the

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MALCOLM BRODIE

RICHMOND MAYOR

total waste handled by Wastech fell by 54,711 tonnes compared to 2012, and that the total waste handled by Wastech fell from nearly 1.2 million tonnes in 2009 to 890,000 tonnes in 2013.

But under the terms of the agreement between the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District and Wastech, any reductions in economic efficiency are shared by both Metro Vancouver and Wastech.

The report noted that “declining waste flow affects economy of scale for the Wastech facilities resulting in reduced economic efficiencies.”

“Based on the (audit) of the comprehensive agreement for the year 2013,

the net year-end adjustment payable from Metro Vancouver to Wastech is \$415,361.”

The 20-year agreement, which expires at the end of 2016, includes operation of the Coquitlam Transfer Station, North Shore Transfer Station, Matsqui Transfer Station, Surrey Transfer Station and the Cache Creek Landfill.

There was little discussion by committee members Tuesday, but commission chairman and Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie said after the meeting that the formula — depending on waste flows and operating results — means “there’s either a payment to Wastech or a payment from Wastech. And so the report contains figures this year (that show) the payment goes to Wastech.”

Brodie said the amount of waste going to Cache Creek has decreased and that some waste haulers are taking waste outside the region, “specifically to the valley and then by rail down to the U.S.”

He noted that recycling rates and waste diversion are also having an impact “because there’s less garbage than there used to be.”

bmorton@vancouversun.com