

RANSOM CANYON CITY NEWS

UTILITY ENTERPRISE ISSUE

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September Council Meeting

- Council approves lengthy budget package
- New Subdivision Plat approved
- Firemen and Police serve in Patriot Day Ceremonies
- Police plan "Shattered Dreams" High School Program



Slight price increases, \$.80 cents per thousand gallons of water, (pass-through from Lubbock) and \$1.00 per month for sewer, were approved at the September City Council meeting. The council is taking a serious wait-and-see look at the evolution of the solid waste operation, and the sobering news of an increase from Caprock Waste for trip charges. As yet, no garbage fee increase has been proposed.

The solid waste operation

began earnestly last year to reduce the waste stream. Our grant application to SPAG projected that if Ransom Canyon had a chipper, over 156 tons of brush and limb debris would be kept out of the landfill.

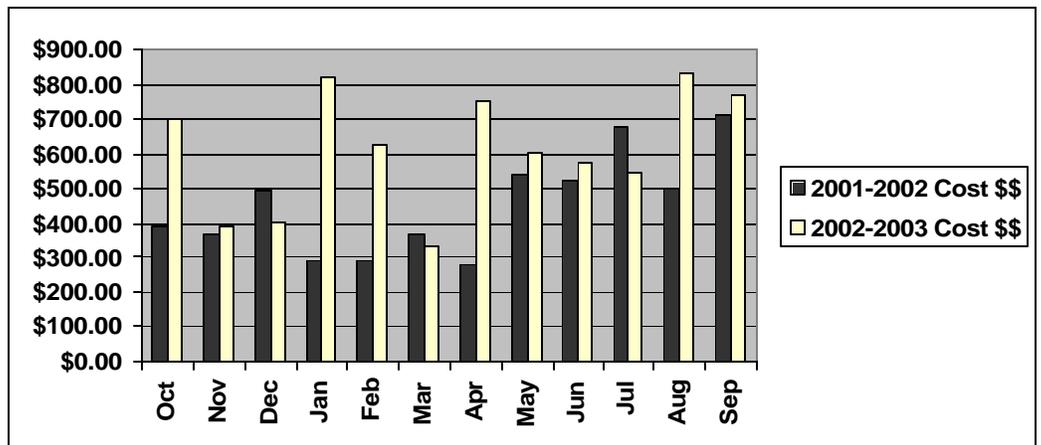
We have accomplished this goal. Crews operate the chipper once per week. By all calculations, 40 to 50 container loads of debris has been diverted from the landfill waste stream. Add to this the grass clippings that are also

being diverted, and the solid waste brush recycling program has kept perhaps 142 tons, or 37,752 cu ft of waste out of the landfill.

There is an unexpected downside.

Solid Waste Expense has increased.

It appears that the overall dumpster expense has not gone down. It has, in fact, gone up. *(Continued on page 2)*



ISSUE FOCUSES ON SOLID WASTE

The September issue of the City News is focused on the growing need of the city for active solid waste service management. The City Council has just recently ordered a second trash container to be located at the back entrance to the canyon, and they are

watching this change closely to determine if it helps keep this area of town cleaner, safer and helps the citizens of the Town with their trash management challenges. At some future time the council will determine if this sec-

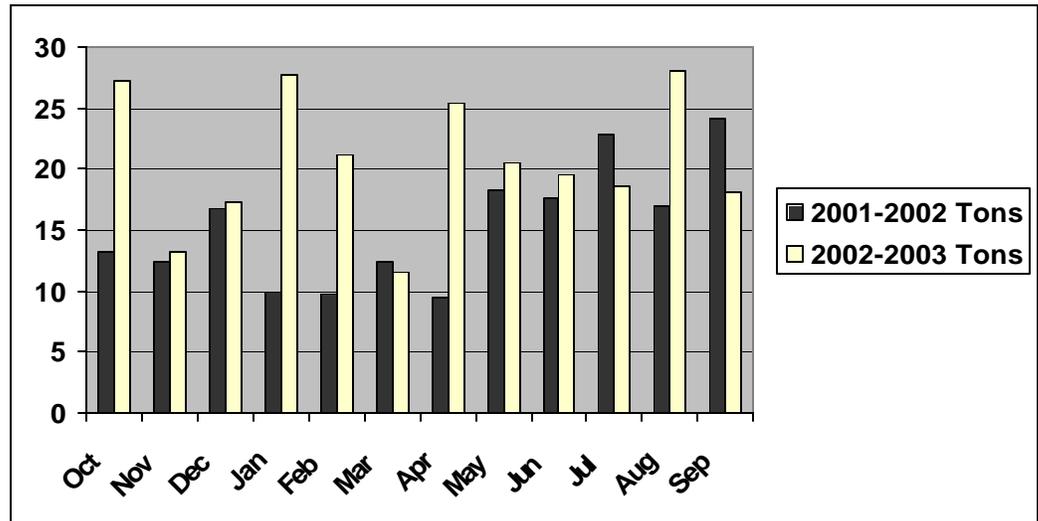
ond container is needed, or if the overflow this summer was a seasonal stress only.

The increase in tonnage is one trend. The new trip charge is another expense entirely that is adding to the stress on the enterprise.

Editor's Note: We have been advised that this is a very boring issue. Nevertheless, please don't put it in the open top container...



TONS OF DEBRIS INCREASES



It appears that the lightweight brushy debris has been replaced by heavier, bulkier materials, roofing materials, construction trash, appliances, furniture, moving trash and discarded remains of a throw-away society.



Community Interest

- ? Trim Trees after the first frost. Bring trimmings to the chipper site.
- ? The Canyon-wide Garage Sale is Saturday, October 11.
- ? Thanks to Vicki Stephenson for the graphs and charts in this newsletter.
- ? Tax statements will be mailed October 1.

NEW TRIP CHARGE FOR OPEN TOP CONTAINERS DUE TO CONSTRUCTION WASTE

(Continued from page 1)

It appears that the space that was taken up by the brush has been replaced by heavier, bulkier trash. The uncontrolled, unmanned, open top container is the culprit.

Also, Caprock Waste has notified Ransom Canyon that they will now be charging a "trip

charge."

For the many years of their contract service, they have hauled the open top containers for the city for only the tonnage expense, theorizing that they would be hauling normal household trash from homes in bags or polycarts anyway for the normal household fee.

They have noticed that the debris in the open top containers includes an increase in non-household trash. They charge to haul construction trash. That is their business. The fee per container will be \$110. This could be an additional \$840 per month for the city.

IS RECYCLING THE ANSWER?

Not necessarily. Until the council decides that the expense of a manned recycling center is justified, materials will continue to be intermingled. When this happens, the containers are refused by the recycling centers. The trash must be handled as mixed materials, and it goes to the landfill anyway.

At one time Ransom Canyon did have a recycling center, via some long green

"caterpillar" containers. But the cans, plastic, cardboard and newspaper were hopelessly intermingled, and the disposal expense was considerable.

It was a "feel good" project for the residents, but the truth of the disposal was not a success story.

The most successful recycling story has been the brush chipper experience. A good part of

that success story is due to the manpower that is provided through the use of work release individuals from the Lubbock County Prisoner Work Release Program. These individuals help fill a big manpower gap when they man and operate the chipper and other labor intensive projects.

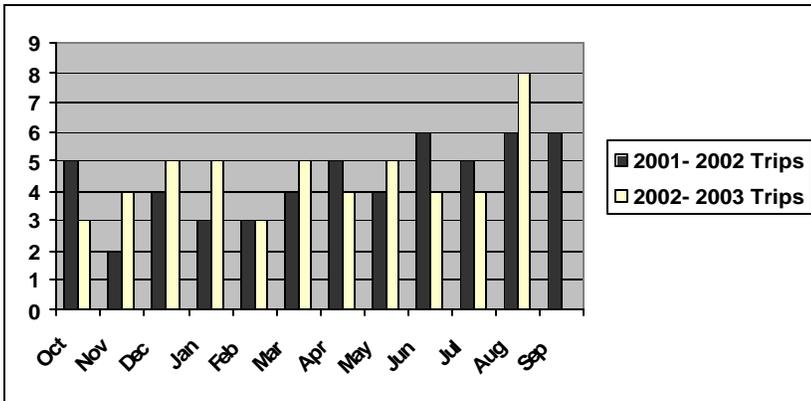
A TRASHY SITUATION

The number of trips is nearly the same as last year, so this does not seem to be the problem. Caprock Waste replaces the containers on Fridays. The tonnage is up. The expense is up.

Laws are in Place.

All new construction, roof permits and landscape permits require that trash containers must be placed on site. There are serious fines for violations.

Code enforcement is always challenging. With an unmanned station, degrees of violation tend to be unclear. Billing "after the fact" based on an inexact estimate of "improper" trash is awkward.



What constitutes illegal trash dumping in an open city container?

Moving trash, garage sale trash, old appliances, tires, old fences and general yard clean up trash? All of this qualifies as household trash.

Neighborhood

Trash Coop

Here are some things you can do now!

- ✍️ When you walk, carry a trash sack with you.
- ✍️ Secure plastic bags. The wind blows them into the fields east of the city when the garbage truck tips the polycarts. (Our city crews have to pick these up.)
- ✍️ Use the brush and grass clipping recycling program.
- ✍️ Curb your geese

WHO USES THE OPEN TOP CONTAINER?

This is a debate that has as many opinions as there have been years of wrestling with the issue. The containers are unmanned, and therefore are open to anyone in the neighborhood, both inside and outside the city.

Ransom Canyon police observe on the whole, however, that the majority of the trash

is coming from Ransom Canyon citizens.

The landfill is forty miles away in Abernathy. Local residents simply find it more convenient to unload here.

We have located vehicle tags, we have pulled trash out and found mail that ID's the items, we have confronted workers in the process, and the major-

ity of the dumping does seem to be from Ransom Canyon residents. Cost containment is at issue, and the city council is looking closely at the situation. Disposal management is becoming an expensive challenge no doubt.

This debate is as old as the decision to place the first dumpster.

WHEN IS THE OPEN TOP CONTAINER USED?

There are now two big open top containers at the dumpster site. They fill up at night and over the weekend. We try to get them emptied on Friday so that there will be plenty of room over the weekend. We added a second container because one container is no longer enough, and the mess on Monday morning was getting out of hand.

Ransom Canyon residents are like the rest of America. They

work and play at their homes in the evening and on the weekends, and they need somewhere to put their trash. The City has a responsibility to deliver solid waste service to the residents. The residents need a delivery point in the evenings and on the weekends for overflow household trash, so the open top containers still seem to be the best solution.

Everyone seems to be cooper-

ating well with the grass clipping and the brush and limb project, so the bulk of the trash that goes in the container is overflow household trash and construction or landscape project debris.

Occasionally during the week we will notice construction companies, but the construction debris primarily seems to come from Ransom Canyon home remodel projects.

Manned disposal sites are expensive.

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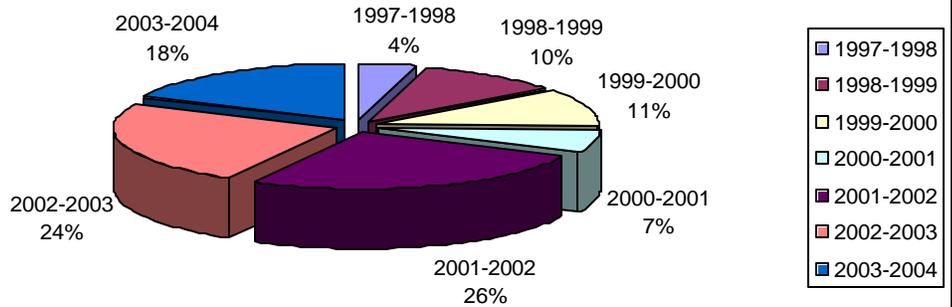


Ransom Canyon
City Council

Ransom Canyon City
Council
Mayor
Robert Englund

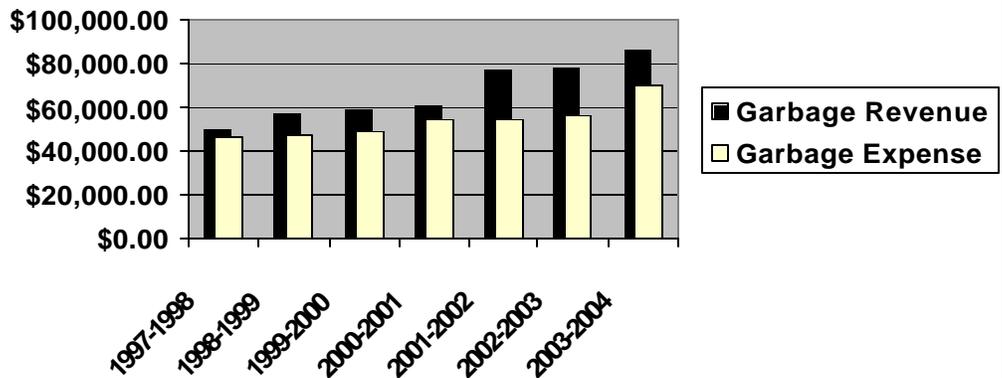
Aldermen
Richard Hulslander
David Peterson
Glen Robertson
Inez Speed
Leon Whetzel

Diminishing Revenue and Expense Margin



PROFIT MARGIN NARROWS

Trend of Revenues and Expenses



The Bottom Line is that our solid waste disposal fees are going up. The curb side service price is competitive. At issue is the growing use of the open top containers.

GASB 34 public accounting burdens the council with the responsibility to maintain a reasonable operating margin,

just as if they were running a business. There is no up side to operating an un-manned trash site for a city of a thousand people.

This is a lop-sided stress for our city, which has few other revenue sources besides property tax and water and sewer fees. This stress

makes it difficult to continue to make ends meet with the same margins.

Reasonable rules and neighborly cooperation has always gone a long way in Ransom Canyon. The council continues to examine this issue.