

Memo

To: Mayor Hall

From: Sanya Vitale

cc: City Council

Date: June 13, 2023

Re: Brush Pile

The City maintains a large area where the City has allowed the accumulation of wood materials at the WWTP property.

This area contains roughly 17,000 cubic yards of materials that contain large pieces of wood the size of full-grown trees as well as standard brush and limbs. It also contains what industry experts have called “blight” or “rubbish”, including at least sofa pieces, glass, wire, metal and trash bags among other items.

There is also an area of leaves that DPW reports they provide to an area farmer for use on their crops.

After being alerted to the fact (Part 115) that the City should not be accumulating this amount of brush, I worked to seek out prices to have the materials hauled away and/or burned.

Per EGLE, the materials should likely not be burned if they include “rubbish” as defined by Part 115 and as previously outlined in the City Manager’s Weekly Update on May 12th. I also spoke with the Hartford Fire Chief who stated they could not burn the pile if it has rubbish in it.

Estimates were sought from four vendors for removal of the materials with the lowest estimate coming from Cornelius Farms 61398 40th St, Paw Paw, MI 49079 in the amount of \$71,600.

It is my recommendation that the Council considers contracting with Cornelius Farms to eliminate the brush pile as it is right now.

Currently, brush collection costs the City a minimum of \$13,250 and the City recoups roughly \$575/year from brush permits. According to DPW the City currently conducts brush pick-up at least 10 days/year and leaf pick up at least 12 days/year.

I would encourage the Council to allow the WWTP to remain closed to incoming traffic and that all drop off occur by appointment only. I would recommend that the Council reinstate brush drop off once another employee is hired at the WWTP. The main gate at the WWTP would be locked with new signage placed indicating that all brush drop-off must be done by appointment by calling a specific number and all local deliveries can be made by calling a specific number.

The new employee would be responsible for the oversight of incoming brush by appointment between the hours of Monday- Friday from 7am – 3:45pm and at least one Saturday a month by appointment from 8am – 10am.