



SAMPSON COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASE

*For more information: Sampson County Administration
(910) 592-6308*

For Immediate Release – December 28, 2023

SAMPSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESCIND SOLID WASTE FEE

During a special meeting held today, the Sampson County Board of Commissioners voted to rescind the \$80 per household solid waste fee implemented with the fiscal year 2023-24 budget. Those citizens who have already made payments will have the \$80.00 fee(s) refunded as soon as possible.

Explaining the Board's decision, Board Chairman Kivett acknowledged that the original implementation of the fee, while a prudent financial decision, had resulted in an unusual amount of confusion and concern. "We heard and listened to your feedback," he noted. "As commissioners, our goal has always been to balance the need for services against the desire to control the cost of providing those services."

Chairman Kivett explained that the Board of Commissioners was fortunate to have a collaborative partnership with solid waste management company GFL Environmental, who through its two separate divisions (and under two separate contracts) operates the County's twelve convenience sites and the regional landfill. "Today's decision to rescind the fee was made possible by ongoing discussions between County leadership and GFL which actually began all the way back to the Fall of 2022 and continued throughout the summer," he stated. "We were seeking to either maximize our host fee revenues or, given that it was time to renew our solid waste convenience site contract, at least minimize our solid waste collection costs. We hoped that the discussions would be complete in advance of our budget; however, when they were not, the Board proposed a solid waste fee to offset our costs. Within the last week, GFL has agreed to operate our convenience sites without charge for 30 months, a savings of approximately \$2.25 million for the County."

Ted Habets, Area Vice President Operations for GFL, stated, "We value our relationship with Sampson County, for whom we have provided integrated solid waste management services for a number of years. We have made and continue to make significant capital investments to ensure our services operate at the highest level of efficiency and environmental safety. Our GFL team, many of whom are also Sampson County citizens, are committed to providing this important community service at the convenience centers, and we look forward to continuing our collaborative relations with the county."

The expected solid waste collection contract savings are significant as the County continues to grapple with an increased need for services, the corresponding escalating costs of providing them, and the need to avoid an increase to a tax rate already



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substantially higher than our surrounding counties. The County's fiscal year 2023-2024 budget preparations reflected the Board's shift in focus to fee-based services, including the now-rescinded \$80 solid waste fee. It is anticipated that the focus on fee-based services will continue in future budgets.

Chairman Kivett announced that letters explaining the fee removal would be sent to citizens in the coming days, stating, "We sincerely regret the confusion that has occurred regarding convenience fees. Our goal is to govern in a way that is responsive to your needs while remaining fiscally responsible. Together, we look forward to a thriving New Year for Sampson County."

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