

## Tonnadoonah Dues Structure Assessment

5-16-2023

- 1) Cedar Lane does NOT have uniform community property development. Traditional HOAs do. Cedar Lane has 3 different property situations: 1) Year-round cottage; 2) Seasonal cottage; 3) Homestead.
- 2) The “one size fits all” dues structure is simple and seems fair on the surface, but it does not consider the disparities inherent to the three different traditional usage categories, and favors one of them.
- 3) There is no contractual basis for the HOA. Tonnadoonah’s HOA is not tied to property deeds as would be common for more modern developed communities, and no one has ever signed binding contracts to participate. There is only the a quid-pro-quo basis for paying for services rendered.
- 4) The Tonnadoonah HOA provides 5 primary services: 1) road maintenance; 2) snow plowing; 3) trash removal; and 4) Tree / brush disposal; 5) administration of the other 4 services.
- 5) In reality, one service currently creates more than half of the community’s overall annual cost – the dumpster service. However, that service is actually a combination of two separate but related things: 1) weekly trash removal, and 2) what would normally be a pay-per-usage large-item disposal service.

### Summary of Cedar Lane’s dumpster service and various alternatives

Homestead residents and cottage residents with larger home generate far more refuse than seasonal cottage owners and others with smaller cottages. Waste Management offers seasonal service that can be started and stopped throughout the year. WM also offers different sizes and costs for different service needs. The service Tonnadoonah provides is a combination of two services – the weekly trash removal, and also a bulky item disposal that most always comes with a pay per use fee arrangement.

As to the current dues, the amount of money per year is small, so it’s no big deal, but it adds up. As someone who has been publicly humiliated, I no longer want to be a part of the current system.

### Property taxes for public school funding vs Tonnadoonah dues – it’s not the same thing!

Some have compared a uniform fee as is used for Tonnadoonah dues to property-tax based support for public schools, which are paid by everyone whether they have kids or not. This is a non-sequitur and a big one. For starters, property taxes ARE differentiated – by property value. Also Tonnadoonah’s trash collection service is not a public service. You don’t pay for a private school unless you attend.

### Proposal to Create a Tonnadoonah “Dumpster Club” (similar to the Sewar Assoc.)

**Background:** The current trash removal service is mandatory with a uniform rate based on aggregate usage & cost. The “one size fits all” price works, but doesn’t account for differences between part-time or full-time residents or for different sized houses that generate a higher or lower volumes of waste. As things stand, those residents that have smaller places or visit less often (or recycle more) effectively subsidize the service fee for higher volume users. Also, dumpster service is offered to other permanent residents outside the Cedar Lane Community – again, partially funded by lower-end cottage users.

**Proposed method:** create a simple household specific numerical size factor using the number of bathrooms. (half baths and full baths would count the same.) That number would then be multiplied by one of 3 different residency status usage factors, which are suggested as 1.0 for regular (year-round) “cottage” owners; 0.75 for seasonal cottage owners; and 1.5 for permanent residents. (House size in Ft<sup>2</sup> vs bathroom count could be considered, but would be a bit more complicated numerically.)

**Other rubbish removal options exist:** there are other options - individual WM trash service with 96 gal. bins, or private service providers that could be considered. Or you can take your trash home. (I do.)

Hal Wolff