

JOHN COOK
MAYOR



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JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Susie Byrd, City Representative, District #2 
DATE: September 24, 2008
RE: Report to Mayor & Council on Actions of the Environmental LRC
Agenda Item for City Council Meeting of September 30, 2008

CITY CLERK DEPT.
08 SEP 24 PM 4:20

Dear Mayor and Council:

Per Representative Holguin's idea that LRC actions be taken to Council for review and consideration, I have prepared the following memo of activity at the last Environmental LRC for your consideration. No action was taken on any item but I thought you would want to know what we worked on.

Report to Mayor and Council on Actions of the Environmental LRC, September 10, 2008

1. Discussion and action on gravity latch for trash can lids (Ellen A. Smyth, P.E., Director (915) 6231-6719)
 - A. Representative Castro's constituent brought forward an idea for a gravity latch for the trash can lids in order to prevent litter from blowing out of cans.
 - B. Staff reviewed the idea and looked at other options provided by the vendor.
 - C. At this time, they are not recommending any city wide latch because of the costs which would be about \$500,000 to retrofit all of the cans.
 - D. They are going to do a test of the various latches in some of the neighborhoods that experience the highest winds.
 - E. The LRC took no action but asked that this additional latch be added to the next purchase of the cans.
2. Update on the Five Year Strategic Plan for Environmental Services (Ellen A. Smyth, P.E., Director, Environmental Services, 621-6719)
 - A. Staff updated on the strategic plan. LRC asked questions but took no action. Staff will put together a timeline and grid to track all of the actions necessary to make their goals.
3. Update on Plastic Bags (Kurt Fenstermacher, Assistant Director, Environmental Services, 915-621-6892)
 - A. Staff updated LRC on the feedback to date from meetings to talk about how to reduce the usage of plastic bags in our community. Feedback mostly tends to support a voluntary effort to reduce the usage of the plastic bags and not an all out ban. Staff will put together various options for Council to consider based on community feedback and research of what other communities are doing. They will present this to the LRC by the end of the year. LRC will make a recommendation to Council.
 - B. No action was taken.
4. Update on Sustainability Program (Ellen A. Smyth, P.E., Director, Environmental Services, 915-621-6719)
 - A. New Sustainability Manager was introduced. He gave a report on his game plan to achieve a road map for sustainability in our community. He has pulled together a committee of people to look at what is currently being done and what we need to do going forward.
 - B. No action was taken.

5. Update on Waste to Energy Program (Ellen A. Smyth, P.E.; Director, Environmental Services, 915-621-6719)
 - A. Ellen reported that our consultant has done some preliminary research and thinks this is an option we should pursue but that the landfill is currently not producing enough methane to make this project work yet. They are building towards the program and may need to make some investments in the landfill to be ready for energy production once the landfill is primed to go. Landfill will be ready to produce energy in the next 5 years. Ellen will come back with any investments for approval by council.
 - B. LRC took no action. There is a report available should anyone want more detail.

6. Update on Supplemental Environmental Program (SEP) (John Garza, Assistant Director, Environmental Services, (915-621-6835))
 - A. City Council asked Environmental Services to prepare an application to be an administrator of Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP) in El Paso. Mr. Garza reported on their progress and their proposed projects. A company who is fined for an environmental infraction can invest in a SEP rather than paying the fine to TCEQ's general fund. The City currently has few SEP projects or administrators and last year there were \$180,000 in fines levied. Staff is recommending the following projects: Canvas Bag Distribution Program (to reduce plastic bag litter and waste), Neighborhood Cleanup Events (to cleanup neighborhoods), Lawnmower Exchange Program (exchange gas-powered for electric powered to improve air quality), Alley Paving (to improve air quality).
 - B. LRC took no action but asked that the final application and projects be brought to council for final approval.

7. Update on Citizen Collection Sites (Ellen A. Smyth, Director, Environmental Services, 915-621-6719)
 - A. Staff gave an update on the citizen collection sites. Ellen forwarded this report to all of council for consideration.
 - B. LRC took no action.

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