

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
Single-Use Plastics Working Group
October 18, 2022

I. Call to Order

This meeting of the Santa Fe County Single-Use Plastics and Polystyrene Working Group was convened by Jacqueline Y. Beam, Santa Fe County Sustainability Manager on the above-cited dated at approximately 5:33 p.m. in the Johnson Conference Room, 100 Catron St. Santa Fe, New Mexico.

This meeting was available on a Webex/audio platform.

II. Roll Call

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Member Present:

Karen Sweeney
Sarah Pierpont
Kim Kelly
Joseph Eigner
Gary Stoller (Arrived via Webex at 6:40)

Members Excused:

Others Present:

Jacqueline Y. Beam, Sustainability Manager
Olivia Romo, Constituent Services Liaison
Laura K. Jagles, Constituent Services Liaison
Hank Hughes, County Commissioner D5

III. Approval of September 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Approval of Minutes

All in favor of minutes, approved collectively.

IV. Approval of Agenda

All in favor of agenda, approved collectively.

V. Matters from the Working Group

A. Assignments and Research Discussion

Jacqueline: According to the map and business list created by staff, we now have an idea about the types of businesses in the County. They are categorized by retail, restaurants, bars, and grocers.

Kim: Are we able to create a list of emails and contacts for these businesses? Restaurants might be impacted in different ways, depending on the type of business it is.

Sarah: Should we contact businesses now or do more research?

Kim: We definitely need to perform research on the amount of waste generated in the County as we contact business owners.

Joseph: Let us first determine how to reach out to those businesses and the types of products they use and distribute into the community.

Sarah: Now that we have a list based on the type of business, we may now need to determine the amount of waste within SF County. This analysis will help us understand if a single-use plastics ban is even needed. However, we need to be sensitive to not scare businesses about a potential ban until we really know what we are going to do and our approach.

Karen: We reached out to the business sector and really didn't get any interest or responses.

Kim: Maybe when we do reach out to the businesses we do something more casual, such as asking them: Are you using plastic bags? Are you incentivizing people to use alternative methods? If it costs the same, will you use something more sustainable?

Joseph: Yes, we need to create a detailed questionnaire that helps us receive data to make our impact analysis.

Kim: If I receive a questionnaire, I wouldn't fill it out or respond. Calling to speak with a manager to ask these questions might be the best route.

Sarah: We could utilize Survey Monkey and call them to fill out the survey for them.

Kim: We will retrieve more data with that method.

Sarah: We want to get a needs assessment of the businesses in the County and advise them on how to decrease waste and plastic pollution and overall assist them in transitioning to more sustainable practices. NM Recycling Coalition received funding for solid waste audits. For example, the Pueblo of Pojoaque uses the County's Jacona Transfer Station for waste and doesn't pay. My goal is to conduct an audit before the end of the year. This could be interesting data for what is being thrown away. What would be another methodology for our study? Maybe we bring in the costs?

Kim: We also need to conduct research about the alternative products that we can use to assist businesses and alleviate the costs of transition. Also identify types of vendors who can supply the alternative products. We need data to quantify what the issue is regarding trash and what types of businesses are using these products. We can also use the audit of the NM Recycling Coalition to determine how much waste is being generated by the County at large, so we can quantify the issue.

Joseph: The County doesn't enforce recycling at the Convenient Centers. Ask the businesses how they dispose their waste? Who are their disposal vendors and private haulers? The County should receive a report from solid waste about this disposal. Haulers don't report their customers just how much they drop off or use. The private haulers lump the data from commercial and residential trash. We can generate a percentage of how much trash is generated in the County.

Olivia: Distributors and businesses themselves are going to know the most about the products. Olivia recommended that we perform mini audits of the businesses by doing more in person discussions. Only 3 businesses are commercial. Collecting the data for the County will be very telling about the issue at large.

Kim: I would like to recommend that we as a committee form a check list of deliverables based on the resolution about the survey of businesses, fiscal impact, and research, so we can move into our deliverables in an effective way. Olivia will work with Kim and Sarah to produce this check list and then move it through Jacqueline to disseminate with the committee for approval at the next meeting.

Sarah: Les Francisco with SF Solid Waste and his staff person Jeff can give us data about the transfer stations and total of trash, weight and separate items that we collect and process. Sarah will reach out to them about scheduling the audit and for data.

Kim: Let's reach out to the Black Bird Saloon to be on the committee. They are a nice couple who may be already using sustainable products.

Joe and Karen will look at the list of businesses and try to recruit participation from these businesses.

Sarah: We should have two surveys: one to County residents to determine if they are willing to pay 10 cents for bags and one for business owners.

VI. Discussion & Next Steps

Motion to approve the next steps to assign Gary, Joe, and Karen to recruit more members to the committee. Assign Kim and Sarah to review the business list and reach out to business if they want to serve on the committee.

Motion to approve: Kim; Second by Karen

Roll Call: All in affirmative

Joe asked Kim what their process was in passing the plastic bag ban for the City. There were tons of push back from the plastic industry?

Kim: We did receive push back from businesses specifically about the type of take out products. Eventually, we modified the ordinance so that everyone agreed to it. We will ask Neil Denton from the City of Santa Fe to give a presentation to the committee about his lessons on the bag ban ordinance.

Joe recommends that we do a 50/50 split with the businesses if we pass a bag ban. But we need their consultation and get an update about what is working and how we can do it better if we do ban plastic bags. We should also ask about enforcement. This should be in our tasks of deliverable. Invite Neal Denton for the December meeting?

Schedule a special meeting in November for the Jacona Transfer station. It will take about 6 hours to conduct the audit. Next meeting November 15th but we may need to move it because this is the BCC meeting. We can host it November 16th.

Motion to move meeting to November 16th by Sarah and Second by Karen. None in opposition. All in Favor. Motion passes.

Early December we can host the solid waste audit.

VII. Matters from the Public

None were offered

VIII. Other Business

None was offered

IX. Adjournment

With no further business and having completed the agenda, Chair Pierpont declared the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved by:

Sara Pierpont
SFC Single-Use Plastics and Polystyrene
Working Group President

Respectfully submitted:

Olivia Romo, Constituent Services Liaison