

May 3, 2012
5:30 P.M.
Newport, Oregon

The Plastic Bag Community Plan Task Force met on the above date and time in the City Council Chambers of the Newport City Hall.

In attendance were Task Force Members: Lyle Mattson, Herb Goblirsch, Jay Fineman, Gretchen Ammerman, Laura Kriz, Matt Hawkyard, Rob Thompson, LeOra Johnson, Mark Jones, Mark Saelens, Dennis Fry, Steve Farish, Debra Smith, Rhonda Fry, Heiner Wagener, Vince Pappalardo, and Katherine Howard.

Also in attendance were Councilors Lon Brusselback, David Allen, and Dean Sawyer. Sandra Roumagoux arrived later and Brusselback left the meeting. Staff present was Peggy Hawker, City Recorder/Special Projects Director.

RECYCLING PRESENTATION

Rob Thompson distributed handouts and presented a PowerPoint. The PowerPoint addressed Thompson's services, why plastic bags cannot go into the blue tubs; where plastic ends up and what it is suitable for; tonnage collected from Thompson's customers (50 - 100 pounds of plastic bags monthly); glass as a contaminant to the comingling system; potential difference made by education and promotion. A discussion ensued regarding recycling of plastic bags taking place at the retail level.

After the presentation, the Task Force reconvened to Conference Room A of the Newport City Hall.

A discussion ensued regarding the length of the meetings. The Task Force voted to have meetings of approximately one and one-half hours in duration.

Additional comments included:

1. What could be done to promote recycling and bring in more plastic bags;
2. What is the end use of plastic bag recycling;
3. A mandated reduction would be insignificant and may not affect Thompson's customers;
4. Plastic bags cost approximately two cents each;
5. Fred Meyer gives customers five cents for each bag they reuse;
6. Recycling containers in retail establishments might encourage plastic bag recycling;
7. Glass can be comingled in Eugene;
8. Where do plastic bags go once they are recycled - burned for fuel overseas;
9. Combine with something that will appeal to the public;
10. Is it logical and realistic to recycle 50 - 100 pounds of plastic bags monthly;
11. Film plastics are plastics that stretch and are see-through;
12. There are many products in plastics through grocery stores - why did the City Council decide to delve into this issue as opposed to letting citizens vote on the issue;

13. Council reached a consensus to create this Task Force to discuss the issue and see what happens;
14. A recent clean-up near Moolack Beach (1/2 mile) yielded 16 plastic shopping bags;
15. Palo Alto is recycling approximately four percent of plastic bags used in the community;
16. Education and improving collection methods are important;
17. There is a difference from store to store on how employees are instructed to use plastic bags, i.e., fewer or greater items in each bag;
18. An educational component should also focus on youth to develop good recycling habits;
19. What encourages recycling for some folks is to know where the product goes;
20. Place recycling bins in certain businesses and let folks know what the bags are being turned into;
21. Recycling increases are often due to convenience;
22. May be advantageous to require businesses to take bags back;
23. Possibly consider a deposit on bags;
24. To what level are plastic bags filling landfills;
25. Plastic bags are a small portion of the plastics issue;
26. Why focus on plastic bags as there are many other uses for the bags;
27. Focusing on the single-use plastic bag won't solve the plastic film issue, but it does start the conversation which could lead to a reduction in plastics and possible alternatives.

DEVELOP NEXT AGENDA AND SET MEETING DATE

It was agreed to discuss re-use at the next meeting, and that the meeting be held on May 31, 2012, at 5:30 P.M., in Conference Room A of the Newport City Hall. Anyone with material for distribution at this meeting should get the information to Peggy Hawker.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rhonda Fry reviewed the history of plastic bags noting that the first plastic sandwich bag was introduced in 1957, and that retail establishments began switching to plastic bags in 1974.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:12 P.M.