



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Zero Waste Division

MINUTES
ZERO WASTE COMMISSION
Monday, January 25, 2016
City of Berkeley Corporation Yard - 1326 Allston Way
Ratcliff Building, Willow Room

Chair Cowles called the meeting to order with a quorum at 7:00 PM

1. Roll Call:

Commissioners present: Cowles, Watson, Twu, Sutherland, Hitchen, Wenning, Noonan (7:02)

Commissioners absent: None

Staff: Andy Schneider – Recycling Program Manager

Members of the Public: Jeff Belchamber & Sara MacKusick-CCC; Dan Knapp & Mary Lou Van Deventer - Urban Ore; Daniel Maher-Ecology Center; Carolyn Dean

2. Approve Agenda: M/S/C to approve agenda Watson/Sutherland 6/0/0

3. Comments from the Public: None

4. Announcements and Commissioner Comments: Cowles announced the Capital Projects Council Meeting on Jan 26. Watson stated her concerns with how the ZWC plans and conducts its business. Wenning & Hitchen shared feedback from the Zero Waste workshop on Dec. 8 and both remarked that Berkeley was not shown as a leader on any of the projects covered. Twu shared his research on compost programs & facilities and prepared a matrix showing the limited acceptance in most compost programs.

5. Approve Meeting Minutes of Nov 30, 2015: M/S/C to approve the Nov 30, 2015 Minutes: Sutherland/Watson 7/0/0

6. Ban Consideration - Expanded Plastic Bag Ban & Water Bottle Ban – Discussion: Watson shared interest from Councilmember Wengraf's office on how to support an expansion of the Reusable Bag Ordinance to all retail. Schneider explained how StopWaste is assessing how expanding to all retail & possibly restaurants would be accomplished. They are amending the original EIR and estimating the cost to cover all dry retail. They are considering adding restaurants, but without the paper bag fee, as consumer behavior change is not possible at restaurants. Berkeley cannot easily create or enforce our own bag ban for all retail, but if it is approved, can participate in the County ordinance by simply not opting out.

Sutherland introduced Daniel King who presented a referral item from Councilmember Worthington to consider banning the sale of Plastic Water Bottles, Citywide. Mr. King shared many of the statistics surrounding single-use water bottles and made a compelling argument. Schneider explained some of the clarifications needed to make a viable ban consideration and shared the expected potential cost and legal defense needed to create a successful ban. Commission to draft a report to present options.

7. Officer Nominations for February Elections: Discussed the process for the February elections.

8. Ecology Center Contractor Presentation – Daniel Maher: Daniel presented on the Ecology Center’s organizational goals and community projects, including Farmers Markets, retail store, resource library, and Climate Coalition projects, and their residential recycling collection program. He outlined the service model, customer service call center, driver safety programs and outreach materials that support this popular program.

9. Service Consideration - Biweekly Dry Rubbish Collection Pilot: Schneider reported on the benefits of moving towards an every-other-week rubbish collection schedule. He explained how a StopWaste pilot is being conducted with Castro Valley Sanitary District, which we can learn from. Another round of pilot funding may be available in 2017 and COB will consider if we want to participate.

10. Zero Waste Goal and Strategic Plan Update: Watson expressed frustration at the fact that the Commission prepared a report to Council, staff reported to the ZW Strategic Planning Subcommittee that the Commission report would be sent to Council in July, 2015, and that the Commission Report has been delayed ever since. Watson asked that an update on the Commission Report be added to the October 2015 agenda, but the item did not appear. In November, 2015, staff reported that the Commission Report on Strategic Planning has not been submitted to Council and will not be submitted until it can be packaged with other reports. To date, there is no date set to submit the report to Council. Staff continues to state that there are insufficient resources to begin the RFP process for a consultant to support the planning process.

Watson expressed further frustration that the Commission put effort into preparing a report that has now sat, unread, for 9 months. Watson expressed concern that the Commission, and the Commissioner’s, work has no value if the results of the Commissioner’s efforts never see the light of day. Discussion on improved communication and process followed.

11. Future Agenda Items:, Water Bottle Ban, Compost acceptance issues, Mixed plastics issues.

12. Adjourn: M/S/C Sutherland/Hitchen to adjourn at 9:00 7/0/0