



Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes May 13, 2015

The Zero Waste Advisory Commission convened in a regular meeting on April 8, 2015, in Council Chambers of City Hall in Austin, Texas.

Chair Rick Cofer called the Commission Meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Rick Cofer, Cathy Gattuso, Dave Sullivan, Fayez Kazi, Jose Valera, and Kendra Bones

Staff in attendance: Bob Gedert, Michael Sullivan, Jessica King, Ron Romero, Donald Hardee, Richard McHale, Natalie Betts, Erin Benoit, Suzanne Harm, Richard Avila, Jeff Dilbert, Amy Slagle, Jessica Frazier, Aiden Cohen, Ray Benavidez, Jackson Featherston, Carrie Stefanelli, Kane Carpenter

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

The first ten speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

Two people signed up to speak during the opportunity for citizen communication.

Jason Pelz, Carton Council of North America, spoke on recycling cartons, end markets, export markets, grade development, education, and provided website information: recyclecartons.com and cartonopportunities.org. Mr. Pelz mentioned ways in which his organization could help in Austin might involve research, outreach, grants for equipment, and technical support.

Andrew Dobbs, TCFE and AZWA, spoke on URO compliance numbers, which he realized were mentioned in Director's Report, and he noted he should have signed up to comment on that item. Mr. Dobbs referenced a previous presentation, and expressed frustration with the URO data not being posted as an agenda item. Mr. Dobbs asked that compliance areas be clearly noted and the numbers associated with them more explicitly detailed in order to accord more accountability for the specific areas of compliance.

2. APPROVAL OF APRIL MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the April 2015 meeting were approved with all six Commissioners present on the dais. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Sullivan, second by Vice Chair Kazi. Commissioner Gattuso abstained due to her absence from the May 2015 meeting.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion and Action - Total Waste Management Services Agreement for Austin Airport

No citizens signed up to speak on this item.

Bob Gedert, ARR, introduced the item and reminded the Commission that as detailed in the March, 8 2013 memo from Council titled “Waste Disposal Contracts” ARR is to review contracts regarding management of waste generated through City operations or controlled through City collections.

Carrie Stefanelli, ABIA, presented a slideshow on the agreement and asked for the approval of the Commission.

Commissioners Kazi and Gattuso inquired about local presence definition used in the evaluation of carriers, and diversion goals. Ms. Stefanelli discussed their contractual criteria and ABIA’s efforts to increase recycling at the airport. Mr. Gedert compared Austin’s airport to DC-Reagan and DFW, and noted the lack of recycling at the latter two, as well as low diversion rates in airports in general.

Gattuso asked about conversations being had with airlines to let them know we are serious about Zero Waste. Ms. Stefanelli said she believed that ABIA was making serious effort and explained that materials involved are collected from both planes and the terminal.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if this contract complies with the Universal Recycling Ordinance, to which Mr. Gedert responded that yes, as every building in the city is affected by URO, this contract fully recognizes and respects the needs of the URO.

Commissioner Bones asked if airlines pay in to cover collection fees such as discussed here. Ms. Stefanelli said that yes, the airline has built in to their operating costs. The Commissioners continued to discuss local presence, opportunities to increase the diversion rate, applicability to vendors of ABIA, and training and outreach requirements.

Chair Cofer called for a motion to approve a recommendation of the item. A motion was made by Vice Chair Kazi, Commissioner Gattuso second. All 6 commissioners present voted unanimously to approve the motion.

b. Discussion and Action – Travis County Interlocal Agreement – Household Hazardous Waste

No citizens signed up to speak on this item

Shaun Auckland, Travis County, presented details on the interlocal agreement and requested that the Commission recommend the approval of the agreement, which updates the existing one with current language and processes. Commissioner Gattuso asked if ARR was pleased with the agreement, to which Donald Hardee, ARR Diversion Facilities Division Manager, responded in the affirmative.

Chair Cofer called for a motion to approve a rec of the item. A motion was made by Commissioner Gattuso, Commissioner Valero second. All 6 commissioners present voted unanimously to approve the motion.

4. STAFF BRIEFINGS

a. Safety Update

No citizens signed up to speak on this item.

Jeff Dilbert, ARR, presented a slideshow on the Safety initiatives and processes of Austin Resource Recovery.

Commissioner Gattuso inquired about collisions and asked how feedback is given for good performance. Mr. Dilbert discussed awards and recognition methods and processes in place at ARR.

Chair Cofer inquired about safety data prior to 2012. Mr. Dilbert discussed the possibility that the way numbers were collected might not match this set. Chair Cofer pointed out hazards being encountered by ARR employees and asked that additional hazard pay should be considered by the ZWAC at a future date.

Mr. Gedert gave appreciation to the operators and Mr. Dilbert for their work in promoting a safety culture.

b. Recycling Economic Development Program Update

No citizens signed up to speak on this item.

Natalie Betts, ARR, presented a slideshow on the efforts and initiatives of the City of Austin Recycling Economic Development Program.

John Hockenyos, TXP Consultants, presented a slideshow on his organization that does a variety of economic consulting for the City of Austin. Jeannette Rottas, TXD Consultants, continued the presentation discussing trends and findings, with recommendations presented at the conclusion.

Mr. Gedert noted the admiration that other municipalities have exhibited in his travels toward the economic development efforts that Austin engages in around recycling.

c. ARR Fiscal Year 2016-20 Financial Forecast

No citizens signed up to speak on this item.

Bob Gedert, ARR, presented a five year forecast that was recently presented to the City Council.

d. Director's Report - Single Use Bag Ordinance Update, Universal Recycling Ordinance Data Update, Waste Composition Study, City Council Actions, Staff Hires and Promotions, Current and Upcoming Job Postings, Statistical Reports and Performance Measures

One citizen signed up to speak on this item.

Joaquin Mariel, Balcones Resources, noted that we should focus on the available recyclables, recovery and processing of materials we already have the infrastructure and capacity to handle, and not be distracted by other items that aren't currently recyclable with present resources.

Mr. Gedert stated that fully collected recycling rate is 24.4% in Austin, and that Austin is below the national average. Commissioner Sullivan stated that EPA numbers for comparison need to be kept in mind.

Mr. Gedert stated that Austin claims to be green but is not quite there and that 90 percent of trash currently being put in Austin carts is compostable or recyclable.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that perhaps Travis County could share cost on some HHW mobile collection that overlaps with outlying Council Districts.

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Public Parks Recycling- June
STAR Ratings – can be pushed back to a later month
Single Use Bag Ordinance Status Update – June
Downtown Recycling Container Audit - June
Green Purchasing – June
Officer Elections - July

Commissioner Sullivan mentioned that there might be a Construction & Demolition Committee update at the June 10th meeting.

Commissioner Gattuso asked that CBI recommendations be placed on a future agenda, and mentioned wanting to discuss residential rates in the future. Mr. Gedert stated that he will place CBI item in his Director's Report to ZWAC in June, and will interject the residential rate questions in conjunction with cost drivers into this year's process of budget development.

Chair Cofer requested an Ecology Action update in June, as well as a hazard pay recommendation that he would develop after consulting with union representatives, and mentioned looking forward to read the Economic Development report being released the next day.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cofer adjourned the meeting at 8:42pm with no objection.