

MINUTES OF THE RECYCLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF SILVER CITY, REGULAR MEETING

Held at Southwest Solid Waste Authority offices, Ridge Road landfill, Silver City, NM.

January 22, 2009

(Minutes prepared by committee member Richard Mahler)

Present: Terry Timme (Chair), Deanna Mooney, George Llewellyn, Joseph Schindler, Avery Gentle, Richard Mahler, Alan Archer, Ramon Arroyo.

Absent: Ann Alexander.

The meeting was immediately preceded by a guided tour of the recycling facility, led by recycling supervisor Ramon Arroyo of SWSWA.

Call to order -

Chairperson Timme called the meeting to order at 3:57 p.m.

Approval of Minutes -

By acclamation, minutes of the December 11, 2008, meeting were approved as submitted by Terry.

Report from SWSWA -

Terry reported on a special SWSWA board meeting this day in which a general manager was hired, subject to contract approval. He said that C. J. Law's views of recycling were not immediately known, based on the meeting and his/her job application. The prospective manager has worked in mining company administration locally and has a graduate degree from New Mexico State University.

Terry attended the recent scheduled SWSWA board meeting and relayed that the Authority is operating on budget and "doing a good job" financially. He said that our city and county expect to oppose proposed state legislation to increase the landfill permit fees paid to the State of New Mexico. Terry noted that the tonnage fee for disposal of waste at our landfill is already high compared to other communities. Terry also reported that city manager Alex Brown had expressed ongoing support for our recycling

program and said it should not be foregone in the face of an economic downturn that had negatively impacted the price paid for recyclables.

Ramon said a new forklift for the recycling facility has been purchased and should be delivered any day now. He also reported that a modified roll-off recycling bin with smaller holes has been installed at the Wal-Mart parking lot and it is working out well, with fewer problems of garbage being dumped inside the bin. He said garbage is still an issue at Gough Park, which has a roll-off with larger holes. His goal is to replace that one with a bin similar to the Wal-Mart one, placing the older bins at transfer stations, where they can be closely monitored.

Ramon expects sandblasting soon on new recycling roll-offs so that they can be primed and then painted by local children, thus completing the RAID grant. We have until June 1 to fulfill the terms of this grant. Ramon said he was unsure how MasterFibers, which purchases our recycled cardboard, might react if a proposed wood pellet business starts up in Santa Clara, using recyclable cardboard from our community.

Old Business -

A. Downturn in Recycling Market

Ramon reported that the extremely low demand for recyclables caused by the global economic crisis has kept prices paid for materials unusually low, but they are expected to go even lower. For some materials -- such as glass, magazines, and plastic -- there is no market right now and these recyclables are being stockpiled. Prices paid for other materials are currently about 60 to 75 percent less than what was being paid in October. Ramon estimated the landfill will run out room to store stockpiled items in about two months. There was a general discussion of ways to create a local market or use for such recyclables, with several ideas floated. It was suggested that we consult the industry trade magazine, Recycling News, for ideas. Ramon offered to provide current and back issues to anyone interested. Joe offered to circulate via email articles he finds in the Wall Street Journal and elsewhere that relate to recycling. Committee members agreed to let their email-boxes be used for this purpose.

B. Glass Recycling

Terry said he has no current information on the glass crusher offered earlier for donation by Holloman Air Force Base. He reiterated city manager

Alex Brown's past stated interest in using such a crusher and Richard volunteered to e-mail Alex with a follow-up inquiry.

New Business -

A. Viva Verde Expo

Terry and Richard discussed the upcoming Viva Verde Expo, to be held June 26-28 in Silver City and co-sponsored by the Gila Region Information Project. This is a series of educational events designed to promote "green" living and construction, with participation by local organizations, businesses, services, and individuals involved in environmentally sustainable activities. The committee has been invited to participate and there was discussion on how this might be manifested. It was noted that the Viva Verde Expo will likely fill the gap left by the cancellation of Earth Day activities this year at Penney Park, which was recently taken over by the city. It was agreed to continue this discussion in upcoming meetings.

B. Possible Spring Collection Event

There was a general discussion of the pros and cons of sponsoring another community collection event for recyclables. Earth Day (or the nearest Saturday to April 22) was a suggested date, using the Freeport-McMoran parking lot once again. Ramon said that he and Albert would be willing to be on hand with trucks and bins for collection. Several committee members volunteered to assist as well. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

C. Supply of New Household Recycling Bins

Terry asked Ramon how many bins were available for homeowners and whether the budget includes funds to acquire additional bins. Ramon estimated more than 200 were available and said he would check into the budgeting question. Terry noted that some bins are carelessly handled by the workers who pick them up and this can cause them to crack or fall apart. Ramon said he is aware of this problem and is telling employees not to throw the emptied bins.

Public Input -

There was no public input.

Next Meeting -

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 5, at 4 p.m., at the SWSWA offices on Ridge Road. The new SWSWA general manager will be invited to attend. Carpools will leave from the library on College Avenue between 3:30 and 3:45 p.m.

Adjournment -

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.