



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Future Agenda Item for City Council Meeting of July 30, 2013

DATE: July 23, 2013

TO: Ronald L. Olson, City Manager

FROM: Lawrence Mikolajczyk, Director, Solid Waste Operations
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361-826-1972

Request approval to amend Chapter 21 of the City's Code of Ordinances, to regulate the use of plastic checkout bags and establish a system to monitor and collect environmental recovery fees.

CAPTION:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 21, PART III GARBAGE, TRASH, AND OTHER REFUSE OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, BY ADDING NEW ARTICLE VI REGULATING THE USE OF PLASTIC CHECKOUT BAGS IN THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI, AND PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES.

PURPOSE:

The purpose is to encourage the use of reusable shopping bags and decrease litter by imposing a fee for single-use plastic checkout bags.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Single-use plastic checkout shopping bags have become a significant problem for the City of Corpus Christi. When combined with prevalent windy conditions, plastic checkout bags collect on trees, fences, farm crops, and are washed into the storm water collection system and eventually into our adjacent waters. Plastic checkout bags detract from the City's beauty, are harmful to wildlife, and place a financial burden on the City to clean up litter. As a tourist destination, located adjacent to sensitive estuaries, bays and the Gulf of Mexico, the City needs to take action to resolve a growing problem.

Previous City Council Updates:

May 2012 – Presentation of plastic checkout bag survey, with discussion of enforcement issues.

October 9, 2012 – Update on recently completed online plastic checkout bag survey which found only 5% of respondents used re-usable bags.

October 23, 2012 - Update on community and organizational meetings related to Plastic Checkout Bag initiative as well as media buys, and promotion of A Bag's Life.

February 21, 2013 - Update on ongoing partnerships with "Plastic Checkout Bag Challenge"; introduction of Green Star Program quarterly reporting form (draft); and discussion of litter ordinance updates

April 16, 2013 – Discussion of the Green Star Program, environmental recovery fee, and ordinance updates.

May 28, 2013 – Mayor Martinez withdrew an Action Item regarding plastic checkout bags

ALTERNATIVES:

Staff considered other options, ranging from an education/marketing program to completely banning plastic checkout bags.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

The staff held numerous meetings with retailers and other interested parties to explore options. Staff considered the actions taken by other cities to control litter created by single-use bags.

CONFORMITY TO CITY POLICY:

The ordinance and program confirm to City policy.

EMERGENCY / NON-EMERGENCY:

Non-Emergency.

DEPARTMENTAL CLEARANCES:

City Attorney

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

X Operating X Revenue ☐ Capital ☐ Not applicable

Fiscal Year: 2012 - 2013	Project to Date Expenditures (CIP only)	Current Year	Future Years	TOTALS
Line Item Budget				
Revenue		(\$0)	(\$1,300,000)	(\$1,300,000)
Encumbered / Expended Amount				
This item		\$0	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
BALANCE		\$0	\$0	\$0

Fund(s): #1020 – General Fund

Comments: All revenue collected would be put back into programs to reduce plastic checkout bag litter, such as giving away reusable bags, education, and litter clean-up and enforcement. For FY 2013-14, we estimate 5 months revenue of \$542,000 5 months of expense of \$542,000. The amount of expense is contingent upon, and equal to, the amount of revenue earned.

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and approve the proposed ordinance.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Ordinance and Powerpoint presentation