

Council Meeting Staff Report

July 7, 2020

Agenda No.:	B.
Indexes (Council Goals):	* 2020 Council Goal - N/A
Presenters:	Harry Burgess
Legislative File:	12844-20

Title

Consider Petition Regarding the Use/Distribution of Plastic Bags, Plastic Straws, and Styrofoam Containers

Recommended Action

I move that the Council approve the proclamation attached to this staff report regarding efforts to eliminate waste.

Council Subcommittee's Recommendation

The Council Subcommittee recommends that Council consider the recommended action as presented.

Body

On June 18, 2019, Ann LePage submitted a petition on behalf of 42 people, at least 5 of whom are registered voters of Los Alamos County, calling on the County Council to ban the use and distribution of plastic bags, plastic straws, and styrofoam containers. The petition is contained in Attachment A.

During the Council meeting held 7/9/19, the council voted to send the petition to a subcommittee of Councilors who were asked to meet with interested parties and develop a path forward to address the noted concerns. The subcommittee has done so, and as a result of these discussions wishes to offer the following response:

We thank the petitioners, particularly the high school Eco Club, for bringing our attention to this issue. The Council, through our FY2021 budget process has taken the following actions:

1) The Environmental Sustainability Board, with help from County staff, is expanding their public education campaign on recycling and minimizing food waste and unnecessary use of plastic bags, containers, and straws. This will include engaging with local retailers and restaurants to help them minimize waste of food and plastic materials.

2) The County approved funding for washable utensils and trays for use at Los Alamos Public Schools.

3) The County approved funding for a feasibility study of food composting that includes evaluating available technologies, costs and benefits. The County is also offering education and equipment to the public for backyard composting.

In addition, it is proposed that Council approves the attached Proclamation (Attachment B).

Attachments

A - Citizen Petition Regarding Ban on Plastic Bags

B - Proclamation Regarding Efforts to Eliminate Waste

