

Ordinance Committee Minutes August 11th, 2015

Present: Councilor Anderson, Councilor McBrady, Councilor Kitchel, Councilor Hemphill, Nathan Poore (Town Manager), Kimberly Darling (Energy and Sustainability Coordinator)

Phone in with Cathy Nichols (REAC Volunteer)—Kimberly delivered PowerPoint presentation with three different policy options on regulating the use of single-use shopping bags.

Elected chair—Russ Anderson elected chair. Approved minutes from April Ordinance Committee meeting

What have we learned from Portland? Signage and notification is effective and important.

Cost of paper vs. plastic? Kimberly suggested that paper cost retailers anywhere from 5-15 cents, where plastic is known to cost 1 cent (per bag).

Is 3,000 an appropriate square footage a good idea? Russ thinks maybe it should be bigger to capture our biggest contributors.

Conversation about a loop-hole in how bags are made—corn starch?

Russ—worries about the burden on small businesses. Likes the idea of a ban.

Cathy—making the fee optional allows small businesses not to have to charge if they don't want to, allows large businesses to cover the increases in inventory

Charlie—what's the rush?

Nathan—on the plastic bags, recommending a fee system on year one and a ban on plastic year two?

Russ—the free market will figure it out on the fee with paper (no need to set a limit).

A policy like this makes sense to bring to the Council and have public discussion. Need to provide a clear policy. 3,000-5,000 square footage to be determined. Limit set at 5,000 to exclude the small businesses and achieve what we're going after. Kimberly will determine what that square footage is.

Going with option #3 for public input and town council discussion. Should this go to referendum? Doesn't need to. Doesn't want to vote to endorse anything without public input. After examining these policy options, this one is worthy of bringing to the Town Council and get public input.