



City of Racine

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Legislative Report

File Number: Res. 0746-19

Agenda Date: 07/16/2019

File Type: Resolution

Zero Waste Initiative – Committing to Responsible and Sustainable Solid Waste Management Planning and Practices

Resolved, that a resolution supporting the “Zero Waste Initiative” and Committing to Responsible and Sustainable Solid Waste Management Planning and Practices is approved.

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin Waste Reduction and Recycling Law of 1990 required cities and counties to reduce, reuse and recycle (including composting) solid waste generated in the state; and,

WHEREAS, while the diversion of materials from landfill disposal itself carries a cost, the cost of landfill disposal will continue to increase with no economic return; and,

WHEREAS, the conservation of these materials will support the creation of new jobs in reuse, dismantling, recycling and composting; and,

WHEREAS, the Kestrel Hawk Landfill located at 1989 Oakes Road is operating its last cell and is facing closure within five years; and,

WHEREAS, the placement of materials in landfills causes damage to human health, wastes natural resources, and wrongly transfers liabilities to future generations; and

WHEREAS, waste prevention, reuse, recycling, composting, and recovery are material management options that conserve resources while reducing environmental impacts; and,

WHEREAS, additional source reduction, recycling and composting will increase the cost-efficiency of local, publicly-supported recycling facilities and programs; and,

WHEREAS, increased source reduction, recycling, and composting saves energy, water, and natural resources, reduces air and water pollution, reduces the damage caused by extracting resources from the environment, and reduces the impact on Kestrel Hawk and the need for new landfill facilities; and,

WHEREAS, with the shared understanding that local government, inspired by community involvement, is ultimately responsible for leading by example and establishing policies and criteria needed to eliminate waste, so that residents, manufacturers, and businesses produce and sell materials that can be safely reused, recycled or composted; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Racine supports the “Greater Racine Zero Waste Initiative”, which has been working for two years to promote a “Zero Waste” philosophy and visionary goal that emulates natural cycles, where all outputs are simply an input for another process; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Racine is committed to protecting, enhancing, and focusing on environmental quality and sustainability in our community now and for future generations; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Racine has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the principles of the Paris Climate Accord in a resolution (Res 0122-18) passed on April 16, 2018.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The City of Racine supports the creation of a Solid Waste Reduction and Comprehensive Management Plan to both reduce waste and pollution and to promote the reduction, recycling, composting, and reuse of waste materials.

Further, that the City of Racine is committed to involvement in, and dedication of resources for the Zero Waste Initiative, including cooperation with all local communities for the development of a greater Racine area, integrated solid waste plan.

Further, that the City of Racine will pursue solid waste collection procedures, policies, and financing-structures where reducing solid waste and increasing source reduction, recycling, composting, and reuses is incentivized.

Finally, that the City of Racine will support and promote education and outreach to its citizens to dramatically alter their individual behavior regarding the creation and disposal of municipal solid waste; with the stated goal to reduce municipal solid waste produced and collected in the City to 6100 tons per year, or 20% of the 2009 baseline, by the year 2030.

Fiscal Note: The implementation of more environmentally sustainable solid waste management practices should in no way have a negative impact on the City’s budget, and, instead will likely decrease the long term costs associated with collecting and disposing of solid waste.