

DRAFT **SUSTAINABLE GALLUP BOARD (SGB) MINUTES**
Octavia Fellin Public Library Meeting Room, February 3, 2020

Quorum - Members Present: Bill Bright, Tracy Lassiter, Elizabeth Barriga-Liaison

Members Absent: Gerald O'Hara

Guests: Thomas Chischilly, Laverne Chischilly, Mary Chischilly, Brittany Chiapetti, Pat Sheely, Carl Ballenger, Michal Notah, Jim Campbell, Rick Kruis

Items A-B were addressed;

Item D & E: Today's Agenda was approved, and previous the Jan. 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes was unanimously approved with minor revisions.

Item F: Recycling Issues Update by *Tracy Lassiter* MCRC has had questions from citizens asking about where the Prewitt-based McKinley Paper will get new power since the Power Plant is closing. Also, MCRC is working on a plastic straw campaign called "Gallup Away from Plastic Straws" to encourage restaurants not to use plastic straws, and possibly use paper straws. Part two of the MCRC campaign is also working on a plastic bag ban. Based on the results of the online city of Gallup electronic survey, with approximately 100 respondents, 78% are for a plastic bag ban. There have been disincentives such as the price of reusable bags: Grant County has a plastic bag ban that allows a distributing 22 lb.-capacity plastic reusable bags, which includes a 5-cent bag fee. People did not bring the 22 lb. plastic bags back to be reused. Now, the city has converted to paper bags. *Bill* mentioned that our City Attorney has been working on a Plastic Bag ordinance and survey. Many are concerned for our local, low-income citizens, who would be financially burdened to purchase reusable bags. Also, the Community Pantry uses plastic bags to pack food in for those who pick up food boxes.

At future SGB Meetings, *Tracy* will track the New Mexico Climate Task Force.

Carl has a vision for recycling plastic: Why not recycle plastic here, and have a commodity to sell? Possibly purchase a plastic chipper to have plastic bottles turn into plastic chips such as an on-site, 20-yd. container to help reduce costs of moving pallets of crushed plastic bottles. The board recommended he talk to Billy Moore. Plastic waste is everywhere, especially in 3rd world countries.; there are mountains of it. We recycle only approximately 10% of it. Wild animals, including albatross birds, are dying because plastics, and particles, are inside their bodies and in us, as mentioned in PBS News video the "Plastic Problem".

Bill says it is cheaper and safer to use a carbon filter for your tap water than purchase water in plastic bottles.

The board members encouraged meeting attendees to attend the Tuesday, February 4th, 2020 City Council & Mayoral Candidate Forum from 6:30pm - 8pm at the GMCS Student Support Center.

With respect to solar and utilities, *Bill* mentioned only 3 cities own their own utilities in New Mexico - Farmington, Los Alamos and Gallup. NM state mandates that cities must allow Net Metering in PRC cities. If individual solar users produce more solar electricity than they use, they get a wholesale return, banked until the end of the year, with a New Year adjustment during January. The city of Gallup copied the Farmington Net Metering model. With Net Metering, you still pay a monthly standard \$ 7.54 (First 50 kWh standard fee). Tri-State wheels in energy through Continental Divide.

which allows a 10% solar allowance in the City of Gallup's energy contract. People ask why their electricity bills are not lower, since we [the City] have the Alison Bridge Solar Park? The answer is, it only benefits the environment being cleaner energy compared to coal. Gallup Solar encourages the City of Gallup to negotiate a higher percentage of solar in future city contracts with Continental Divide. *Carl* would like to track how much solar is produced to offset kWh? *Pat Sheely* (City of Gallup Net Metering customer 41) wants to know what her solar kWhs are banked at her property and what changed on the city bill? *Bill* asks if, when selling a property that has Solar Net Metering, the city can buy back the extra solar kWh money credit? On a related note, *Carl* brought up that he has been having online automatic City of Gallup bill problems ever since the city switched to the new bill vendor last July or August 2019.

Since the SGB is only an Advisory Board, we abide by the Open Meetings Act. *Tracy* has had Open Meetings Act training and found it useful, and would like it to be offered for other local constituents again soon as she can think of several people who should attend it.

Future Agenda Items: Santa Fe Legislation, meet with City of Gallup Mayoral candidates just before the March election.

Rick Krus recommends all new buildings should have building codes, like in California; that require solar to be built into all new building structures. He will prepare a presentation to Mayor and City Councilors and borrow a City Library projector. *Bill* mentioned Solar Ready houses (versus Solar Installed houses) may be an easier step for Mayor and City Council to consider.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm. The next meeting will be Monday, March 2nd, 2020 at 3:30-5:00pm

Date Approved 11/4/20

W. B. Bright
William Bright, Chairperson

ATTEST: Tracy Lassiter 11/4/20
Tracy Lassiter, Secretary