

# **DRAFT: Eldorado/285Recycles Meeting Minutes:**

**Jan. 9, 2018**

*In attendance: M. Spears-Cihon, K. Crickard, J. Crawford, S. Daniel, C. Devlin, J. Durlak, J.Eigner, J. Fox, S. Garfitt, R. Gear, D. Gutierrez, C. Harrell, L.Harrell, S. Knarr, S. Levy, A. Rodney, A. Scott, S. Shanklin, M. Smock, S. Sullivan, K. Sweeney, L. and T. Ward,*

**1. Approval of minutes** The minutes from our Dec. 12, 2017 meeting were approved without modification.

**2. Speaker-** Neal Denton, a Sustainability Specialist for SF County, was our featured guest and speaker. His main purpose was to bring us up-to-date on international developments in recycling and its implication for local operations. Main points from his talk:

## THE DOWNSIDE:

a. the Chinese government has instituted new and extremely restrictive requirements for the receipt of recycled materials, insisting that there be no more than 0.5% “contamination” (or waste) in all shipments. This new limit is virtually impossible to reach and well below the usual limits accepted by Chinese recyclers. Because the US sends 37% of all of its recycled material to China, this has created quite a crisis for many recycling operations. International organizations have protested this new limit and negotiations are underway with the Chinese government over possible changes. The changes do not have serious effects on #1 and 2 plastics, cardboard and metal, but mainly affect mixed paper and other types of plastics.

b. In response, Friedman recycling has changed its current contract with us and the possible repercussion is that it might cost the County over \$120,000 in lost revenues over a 1-year period if current developments persist.

## THE POSSIBLE UPSIDE:

a. In response to the Chinese government’s new initiatives, some countries are organizing and developing their recycling operations to receive recycled materials without such severe restrictions (e.g., India, and Malaysia). This predicament also presents an opportunity for the US to expand and improve its recycling programs. Currently, 40,000 jobs are associated with US-based recycling efforts and that number could grow if we develop safe, efficient, and large-scale programs in many states.

b. The current situation puts pressure on all recycling programs to educate consumers about proper recycling techniques. E.g., Neal mentioned “aspirational” recycling, the notion that some residents, unsure of whether or not a particular item can be recycled, just throw it into their mixed recycling containers and “hope.” Neal indicated there will be a new County educational effort to educate consumers on proper recycling efforts so that residents would be “responsible recyclers.” Currently, the main components of waste (contamination) in recycling materials comes from food, liquid and grease (e.g., pizza boxes), Styrofoam, and plastic-coated coffee cups and other containers. Neal also mentioned that his organization wants to create a group of “Master Recyclers,” willing to speak to local groups and at local events about proper recycling habits-- A great opportunity for members of our group.

Note. There is a movie available on YouTube and other sources called “Plastic China” that provides an overview of the dangerous (to both people and the environment) recycling practices previously rampant in China (which the government is now proclaiming it wants to end and reform).

**3. Chair’s report** - A tentative calendar of events for 2018 was distributed and members were asked to suggest or add any additional items

**4. Treasurer’s report** – Sheila **Beginning Balance \$2222.31** Deposits (1) Straw for bale reimbursement of 60.00 Payments: zero Service Charge 5.00 **Ending Balance \$2277.31**

**5. Secretary’s report** – There were 2101 visits to our website during December 2017, and a total of 16,896 hits.

**6. New Projects/Ideas Follow Up** – Both Claudia Borchert and Sarah Pierpont have agreed to speak at our February meeting, which, for them, will start at 6PM at the Vista Grande library. Note the time change at the bottom of these minutes for our new starting time for our Feb meeting. Arrangements were discussed for advertising our February speakers via announcements in the Vista, Next Door, and on our website.

**7. Current Events Follow Up** There was a meeting with ECIA employees about improving the organization’s recycling and talks will continue.

\* ReUse: There do not seem to be any major problems with our regular efforts to keep this area clean and organized. Joe E. has sent out the clean-up schedule for Jan.

\* safety vests update-Lisa Harrell discussed several options for adding our name to the roadside safety vests. Joe D. will provide Lisa with our vests so she can use the better ones for improvement.

**8. Zero Waste** – DiAna was congratulated for her fine article in the Vista summarizing our successful zero waste events conducted in Eldorado in 2017.

**9. Upcoming Events** – Main discussion concerned our Feb meeting with guests.

**10. Collections** – all collections are going well.

\* shoes, hats etc, holiday lights: Sue Daniel reported she collected 214 pairs of shoes in 2017 and 92 lbs of Christmas tree lights plus 10lbs of assorted wiring material. The lights and wiring resulted in a profit of \$19.30.

\* pens-Joe E: going well

\*#5's ,corks- Karen: going well.

\* Tom's, skin care-Shirley: going well.

\* compost-Chris H: no new installations which is common for this time of year

**11. Vistas-DiAna:** next article in Vistas will be on (would you believe?) worms !!!

**12. Government Affairs** – Joe E: we won't have data on year end 2017 recycling rates until next month. Santa Fe is planning on improving its truck maintenance facility, and natural gas refueling station.

**13. New Business** - none

**14. Adjournment-** Meeting was adjourned right on time at 6PM.

Note: Our next meeting will be on Feb. 13 **at the VGPL meeting room**, but we will begin **at 5PM** and we must conclude our business before our special guest speakers arrive at 6PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Durlak, Secretary