

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: Holding the Bag
Report Date: May 1, 2013
Response by: Marin County Board of Supervisors

FINDINGS

- We agree with the findings numbered: **F1, F2, F3, F4.**
- We disagree wholly or *partially* with the findings numbered: **NONE.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Number NA recommendations have been implemented.
- Number NA recommendations have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
- Number R1 and R3 recommendations will not be implemented because it is not warranted or are not reasonable.
- Recommendation number **R2** requires further analysis.

Date: July 16, 2013 Signed: _____

Marin County Board of Supervisors
Response to Findings and Recommendations from Grand Jury Report
“Holding the Bag”

Including responses requested from Deputy Director and Program Manager,
Waste Management Division (Department of Public Works) and Marin
County Environmental Health Services (Community Development Agency)

FINDINGS

STATEMENT REGARDING FINDINGS:

- F1. Single-use plastic carry-out bags cause harm to the environment and wildlife.**

Response: Agree.

- F2. Reduction or ban of single-use plastic carry-out bags will help Marin County reach its zero waste goal.**

Response: Agree.

- F3. Reduction or ban of single-use plastic carry-out bags will help keep the land and waters of the County cleaner.**

Response: Agree.

- F4. Most Marin County governments do not currently have bans against single-use plastic carry-out bags. However, most are responsive to enacting policies against single-use plastic carry-out bags.**

Response: Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2012-2013 Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommends that:

- R1. “The Marin Hazardous and Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority (JPA) prepares the Model Single-Use Bag Ordinance to implement the strictest rules possible and encourage all agencies to adopt the Ordinance with minimal changes. A ban on single-use plastic carry-out bags should be imposed in all grocery stores, convenience**

stores, pharmacies and restaurants within the County and apply to all establishments, no matter how large or small.”

Response: This recommendation is not warranted for the County, as the County already has a single-use bag ordinance in place. The County supports the efforts of the JPA in creating a model ordinance for consistency countywide. The model ordinance, as currently drafted, is similar to the County ordinance, but includes restaurants as alternative ordinance options. As the JPA’s model ordinance is not finalized and will require further discussion by JPA members, it is premature the County to consider modifications. This recommendation seeks a response from the JPA, for which the County is but one member and not able to speak for the entire JPA.

R2. “Marin County and The Marin County Hazardous and Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Members educate the public on the benefits of reusable bags. Marin County and Marin County and The Marin Hazardous and Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Members develop standardized educational guides for all public schools showing the environmental harm done by plastic single-use carry-out bags. Marin County and The Marin Hazardous and Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Members develop educational materials and distribute them at public events such as farmers' markets and street fairs.”

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. The County, through the JPA, has a few education/outreach programs currently in operation:

- (1) Zero Waste Advertising/Media. This program does feature single use bag messages and encourages Marinites to use reusable bags.
- (2) School Outreach. This program covers a wide variety of topics regarding waste reduction, recycling, composting and environmental consciousness.

The County of Marin already has a single use bag ordinance in place for unincorporated Marin County and includes information on its website under the Agriculture, Weights and Measures Department on specifics of the ordinance. The County, like any member of the JPA, will work with the JPA on determining what further educational information is needed. Increased efforts may be made when there is further adoption and implementation of an ordinance.

R3. “Marin Towns and Cities adopt an ordinance to ban all single-use plastic carry-out bags using the Model Single-Use Bag Ordinance

with minimal, or no, changes, in order to create a true County-wide ordinance.”

Response: This recommendation is not warranted for the County, as the County of Marin already has a single use bag ordinance in place and cannot speak for the Marin towns and cities. We agree with the efforts of the JPA to create a model ordinance that can be used by each city and town to reduce confusion by consumers and provide some consistency within the county.