



Chatham County, NC

Legislation Text

File #: 21-3797, **Version:** 1

Vote on a request to approve grant proposal to NC Department of Environmental Quality for Recycle Right education campaign

Action Requested: Vote on a request to approve grant application to NC Department of Environmental Quality for Recycle Right education campaign

Introduction & Background: Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling (SW&R) is proposing an education and outreach project to make recycling easier for residents of Chatham County. SW&R operates 12 Collection Centers that serve residents in the unincorporated areas of the county. The towns of Goldston, Pittsboro, and Siler City provide recycling services to their residents through a private hauler, Waste Industries LLC dba GFL Environmental (GFL Environmental). Many residents in the unincorporated areas of the county contract with a private hauler for curbside recycling services as well.

SW&R is proposing a grant project to help residents in Chatham County learn how to recycle right. The project involves a joint effort between SW&R; the Towns of Goldston, Pittsboro, and Siler City; and the private haulers working in Chatham County. The goal of the project is to get all entities to agree to a common list of recyclable items (except for glass) and work together on an education campaign to make recycling easier for all residents. The campaign will include printed materials, online resources, presentations, participation in community events, and a media release. SW&R will create educational materials for all entities to utilize and lead the effort of the campaign.

Discussion & Analysis: With many different entities providing recycling services to residents, this creates a lot of confusion for residents around recycling. Many residents do not know who provides their service or who to contact with questions and end up assuming that the SW&R's recycling rules apply to them. This project will make it easier for residents to recycle right no matter who is providing their service. This will be the first time all entities have worked together on a recycling-related campaign. SW&R works with the towns on various projects and interact with private haulers mostly through our private hauler permit process. We would like the recycle right project to lead to further opportunities to collaborate.

The towns and private haulers do not have dedicated education staff, like SW&R. However, the SW&R staff end up speaking with a lot of residents who are served by other entities, either because they do not know who to contact or through educational efforts. Once a common list of items and recycling rules are accepted by all entities through this project, SW&R staff will also be able to better respond to all residents' questions, helping to provide education on behalf of the other entities.

This project idea was initially proposed to the Town of Pittsboro, Town of Siler City, and GFL Environmental during a meeting with SW&R staff in February 2020. At that time, the idea was for SW&R staff to provide artwork, but the towns would have to pay to print the materials. The grant would provide the funding needed to cover printing costs. The grant proposal has been discussed

with most of the larger entities and the Town of Siler City and GFL Environmental provided letters of support for the grant application. We were unable to get a letter of support in time for the Town of Pittsboro, but we know they were excited about the project idea and interested in participating.

Please note: Due to the cyber incident and then a family emergency with SW&R staff leading the grant proposal, we were unable to get the application on the Board of Commissioners agenda before proposals were due. The proposal was submitted on February 18, 2021. We will not be notified of receipt until the end of March/beginning of April. If the grant proposal is not approved, we will withdraw our proposal from evaluation.

How does this relate to the Comprehensive Plan: Objective 8: Become more resilient, specifically by improving recycling systems.

Budgetary Impact: The total project budget is \$12,500. A cash match is required by the County for a total of \$2,083.00. The funding will come from the Solid Waste & Recycling enterprise fund.

Recommendation: Approve the grant proposal to NC Department of Environmental Quality for Recycle Right education campaign.