T&E AGENDA: 06-02-08
ITEM: b

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Scott Johnson
John Stufflebean

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 05-21-08

Approved

Date 5/23/08

COUNCIL DISTRICT: City-Wide

SUBJECT: CITY FUNDED PURCHASE OF SINGLE-SERVE BOTTLED WATER

RECOMMENDATION

Transportation and Environment Committee recommend Council approve a resolution adopting Council Policy titled "Prohibition of City Funding for Purchase of Single-serving Bottled Water."

OUTCOME

Reduced use of City funds to purchase water in single serve bottles. It will not prohibit purchase of bottled water for emergencies or where there are no reasonable alternatives. This also reinforces the message that public tap water in San José is clean and safe.

BACKGROUND

Consumption of bottled water has grown dramatically in the last few years. Americans bought 38 billion plastic water bottles (filled with more than 8.25 billion gallons of water) in 2006, a 9.5% increase from the year before. Production of bottled water is very resource intensive and has worldwide impacts. Supplying Americans with plastic water bottles for one year consumes more than 47 million gallons of oil, enough to take 100,000 cars off the road and 1 billion pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, according to the Container Recycling Institute. The bottling process uses more than 1.5 million barrels of petroleum and 75 billion gallons of water annually (it takes approximately 9 gallons of water to bottle one gallon). In addition, after the water is bottled, it is shipped around the world. The three of the largest exporters to the U.S are Fiji, France, and Italy. Finally, industry experts estimate that over 75 percent of the single-serve bottles are discarded, adding almost 2 billion pounds of plastic to landfills across the country. In San José, where the City offers extensive residential recycling, the recent waste characterization study found that less than 40 percent of the plastic bottles were recycled. The

Cities and water districts across the country, funded by ratepayers and state and federal governments, are spending billions of dollars to provide safe, clean drinking water from the tap. Locally, the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the three water retailers within City limits spent approximately $411 million last year to provide clean safe potable water. Unfortunately, the migration from tap to bottled water fosters a perception that tap water isn't safe or necessary. In truth, tap water quality standards are much more stringent than those for bottled water and the cost of bottled water ranges from 240 to over 10,000 times more expensive, depending on the brand of bottled water.

There is a growing national movement, led by environmental and public health agencies to eliminate single use plastic bottles. Several major cities now prohibit the use of city funds for bottled water. In California, the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, and Santa Monica have already adopted similar prohibitions, as has the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Similar bans have been adopted in New York, Chicago, Boston, Salt Lake City, and are under consideration by Santa Clara County and many other cities. In August 2007, the League of Conservation Voters of Santa Clara County has asked other local groups to join together to ask Santa Clara County and the 15 cities, 37 school districts, and numerous special districts within the county to prohibit the expenditure of public funds to purchase bottled water.

On January 9, 2008, the Rules Committee approved a recommendation by two Councilmembers directing staff to prepare a work plan assessment for a proposal to halt City purchases of single serving bottled water. This recommendation was affirmed at the February 2, 2008 Council meeting on the Green Vision where Council approved incorporating the Rules referral into the Green Vision workplan.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of the recommended Council Policy (Attachment A) is to reduce the purchase of single-serving bottled water by generally prohibiting the use of City funds for such purposes, with limited exceptions, to demonstrate the City's commitment to environmental, economic, and social stewardship. The City of San José is a leader in the area of environmentally preferable procurement and, through its actions, elicits changes in the marketplace. In eliminating the purchase of single-serving bottled water, a product that creates significant environmental impacts throughout its product life cycle, where ample potable water supply of high quality is available, the City demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship, its confidence in California's extensive water supply sources and infrastructure, and prudent fiscal policy.

The goal is to discontinue, to the maximum extent possible, use of City funds to purchase single-serve bottles for City events and for events taking place in City facilities. This will reduce the amount of water served in non-reusable containers, thereby reducing the impact on the environment from the manufacturing, filling, transporting, and disposing of plastic bottles.

The recommended Council Policy would direct that public funds should not be used for the purchase of single-serving bottled water with the exceptions:

- Public safety emergencies, investigations, and extended deployments or activation of the Office of Emergency Services;
- High risk of cross-contamination with non-potable water such as at the Water Pollution Control Plant; or
- Situations where there are no reasonable alternatives to bottled water.

Following adoption of the Council Policy, an administrative policy will be promulgated to ensure implementation of the Council Policy and establish a process of annual reporting to the Council on the accomplishment of the Policy's goals. The Administrative Policy would require that all future City contracts and grant agreements requiring the expenditure of City funds contain language obligating the contracting party or grantee to follow the Cocunil Policy. Finally, City employees would be encouraged to engage in environmentally responsible practices, such as using and maintaining reusable containers for their personal consumption of water. The recommended Council Policy is not intended to preclude employee-funded water "clubs" or any bottled water purchased from any source by an individual or company using private funds.

Staff has already begun a campaign to encourage employees to switch to environmentally friendly reusable bottles. In addition, work is underway to develop a broader long-term educational campaign to explain the value of using reusable containers and the safety and value of tap water.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Progress will be reported as part of the annual Environmentally Preferable Procurement report.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

On September 18, 2007, Environmental Services Department (ESD) hosted a booth providing education on reusable bottles and offering a free bottle to those who completed a quiz about bottled water at the Resource Fair in the City Hall Rotunda as part of National Pollution Prevention Week activities. On November 14, 2007, ESD gave a brief presentation on reuse and handed out reusable bottles at the Golden Guardian event. In addition, reusable water bottles have been distributed for employee events in the Police Department and the Office of the City Clerk. ESD's Pollution Prevention staff, working with the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EP3) Committee, will lead citywide employee education to encourage reusable containers.

This proposed Council Policy has been discussed with all of the departments within the City with follow-up discussions in those departments that purchase water for their employees and/or for public events. It has also been reviewed with other cities that have or are considering similar

prohibitions. It does not meet the criterion of "Significant Public Interest", thus requiring additional notification per the matrix below.

- ☐ **Criterion 1**: Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to $1 million or greater.
  (Required: Website Posting)
- ☐ **Criterion 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- ☐ **Criterion 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

COORDINATION

Preparation of this proposal was coordinated with the Departments of Airport, General Services, Police, Fire, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Transportation, Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement, Finance, Housing, and the Offices of City Clerk, Emergency Services, Economic Development, and the City Attorney.

COST IMPLICATIONS

City departments purchase single-serving water bottles with the City's Procurement Cards. As a result, summary information about these purchases is not available. Environmentally friendly non-toxic, reusable bottles cost approximately $2.90 per bottle. The initial outreach at the September 18, 2007 Resources Fair and for other interested City employees cost $3000 and was funded by the Environmental Services Department 2006-07 Budget.

CEQA

Not a project.

SCOTT JOHNSON
Director, Finance

JOHN STUFFLEBEAN
Director, Environmental Services

For questions please contact MaryEllen Dick, Environmental Services Department, at (408) 535-8555.

City of San José, California

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE: PROHIBITION OF CITY FUNDING FOR PURCHASE OF SINGLE-SERVING BOTTLED WATER POLICY	PAGE 1 of 2	POLICY NUMBER
EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISED DATE	
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION ON		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the purchase of single-serving bottled water by generally prohibiting the use of City funds for such purposes, with limited exceptions, to demonstrate the City's commitment to environmental, economic, and social stewardship. The City of San José is a leader in the area of environmentally preferable procurement and, through its actions, elicits changes in the marketplace. In eliminating the purchase of single-serving bottled water, a product that creates significant environmental impacts throughout its product life cycle, where ample potable water supply of high quality is available, the City demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship, its confidence in California's extensive water supply sources and infrastructure, and prudent fiscal policy.

Background

Consumption of bottled water has grown dramatically in the last few years. Americans bought 38 billion plastic water bottles (filled with more than 8.25 billion gallons of water) in 2006, a 9.5% increase from the year before. Production of bottled water is very resource intensive and has worldwide impacts. Supplying Americans with plastic water bottles for one year consumes more than 47 million gallons of oil, enough to take 100,000 cars off the road and 1 billion pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, according to the Container Recycling Institute. The bottling process uses more than 1.5 million barrels of petroleum and 75 billion gallons of water annually (it takes approximately 9 gallons of water to bottle one gallon). In addition, after the water is bottled, it is shipped around the world. –The three of the largest exporters to the U.S are Fiji, France and Italy. Finally, over 75 percent of the single-serve bottles are discarded, adding almost 2 billion pounds of plastic to landfills across the country. The bulk of the bottles that are recycled are shipped to China for processing.

Cities and water districts across the country, funded by ratepayers and state and federal governments, are spending billions of dollars to provide safe, clean drinking water from the tap. Locally, the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the three water retailers within City limits spent approximately $411 million last year to provide clean safe potable water. Unfortunately, the migration from tap to bottled water fosters a perception that tap water isn't safe or necessary. In truth, tap water quality standards are much more stringent than those for bottled water and the cost of bottled water ranges from 240 to over 10,000 times more expensive, depending on the brand of bottled water.

Policy

1. It is the Policy of the City of San José that public funds should not be used for the purchase of single-serving bottled water.
2. The following circumstances shall constitute exceptions to the Policy:

- Public safety emergencies, investigations, and extended deployments or activation of the Office of Emergency Services;
- High risk of cross-contamination with non-potable water such as at the Water Pollution Control Plant; or
- Situations where there are no reasonable alternatives to bottled water.

3. The City Manager shall promulgate an administrative policy implementing the procedural elements of the Policy and report annually to the Council on the accomplishment of the Policy's goals.
4. City contracts and grant agreements requiring the expenditure of City funds shall contain obligations to follow this Policy.
5. The City Administration shall encourage City employees to engage in environmentally responsible practices, such as using and maintaining reusable containers for their personal consumption of water.

This Policy is not intended to preclude employee-funded water "clubs" or any bottled water purchased from any source by an individual or company using private funds.