

**ORANGE COUNTY  
COMMISSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Orange County Board of Commissioners

From: Jan F. Sassaman, Chair  
Orange County Commission for the Environment

Date: February 10, 2014

Subject: Resolution Supporting Orange County Establishment of a Solid Waste Service Tax District

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The Orange County Commission for the Environment (CFE) has followed, with interest, deliberations by the Orange County Board of Commissioners (BOCC), as well as those of municipal elected officials, as they collectively discern the best way to finance recycling services for residents of Orange County and the incorporated areas. The overarching “Charge and Responsibility” of the CFE, as stated in our Annual Report/Work Plan (December 2013) to you is “to advise the BOCC on matters affecting the environment, with particular emphasis on environmental protection and enhancement.” With that role in mind, the CFE finds that:

**ORANGE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**RESOLUTION**

**Solid Waste Service Tax District**

**WHEREAS**, the present Solid Waste collection, handling, and disposal system is an integrated system that requires the Orange County Board of Commissioners and County staff to work together with local governments to preserve our successful, consolidated recycling program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Solid Waste Management Department is recognized as the leader in the state for waste reduction, most recently climbing within 2 percentage points of the County’s goal of reducing its waste stream by 61%, such that the County is now disposing only 0.56 tons of waste per person per year compared to 1.36 tons per person per year during the baseline year of 1991-1992; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Recycling Coalition has reported that manufacturing recycled products requires, on average, 17 times less energy than manufacturing the same products from virgin materials, conserving energy reduces the emission of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change, according to the US EPA recycling results in a net reduction for ten major categories of air pollutants (such as nitrogen oxide, particulates, and sulfur oxides) and eight major categories of water pollutants, and recycling also conserves natural resources, such as timber, water and mineral ores; and

**WHEREAS**, by diverting recyclable materials from the solid-waste stream, we also reduce the need and cost to send solid waste to landfills out of county; and

**WHEREAS**, our present integrated recycling system takes advantage of economies of scale; and

**WHEREAS**, the creation of a Solid Waste Service District would provide a stable, effective, and equitable funding mechanism and would allow for the cost of this service to be maintained at a relatively low rate compared to an “opt-out” subscription roadside collections service; and

**WHEREAS**, continuing to achieve the levels of waste reduction presently achieved through the County’s recycling program would be jeopardized by moving to a subscription-based system, since, as shown in national studies that participation in recycling, and the quantity of materials recovered, would likely decrease with a subscription-based system; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of the unincorporated areas in which recycling materials are proposed to be collected are in higher density areas, compared to the less-developed rural areas, making collection highly efficient; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed service will provide mitigating measures for the elderly and disabled, as well as those properties where there are special collection needs; and

**WHEREAS**, maximizing recycling and reuse efforts, while minimizing waste disposal, is beneficial to Orange County’s environment and continues the strong environmental culture of our community that can be a model and foundation upon which subsequent generations can build;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Orange County Commission for the Environment recommends that the Board of County Commissioners establish, as soon as practically possible, a Solid Waste Service Tax District pursuant to N.C. General Statute 153A-301(a)(5) that would provide universal bi-weekly (every other week) curbside recycling services (with roll carts) within the district, the boundaries of said district to be reasonably equivalent to those indicated on the map provided with the Action Agenda Item 7-b to the BOCC at the February 4, 2014 meeting of the BOCC.**

This the 10th day of February, 2014.



Jan F. Sassaman, Chair  
Orange County Commission for the Environment

cc: Michael Talbert., Interim County Manager  
John Roberts, Orange County Attorney  
The Honorable Mark Kleinschmidt,  
Mayor of Chapel Hill  
Roger Stancil, Chapel Hill Town Manager

The Honorable Tom Stevens, Mayor of  
Hillsborough  
Eric Peterson, Hillsborough Town Manager  
David Andrews, Carrboro Town Manager  
David Stancil, Orange County DEAPR Director  
Gayle Wilson, Orange County Solid Waste Director