FNSB SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 2019 – 01

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HB 81, AN ACT PROHIBITING DISPOSABLE PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, HB 81 has been introduced in the Alaska Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2019-19 supporting HB 81 has been introduced and considered by the FNSB Assembly; and

WHEREAS, The Assembly has referred the Resolution to the Sustainability Commission for comment; and

WHEREAS, The FNSB Sustainability Plan has a waste reduction goal to divert 10% of waste by weight from the landfill by 2028; and

WHEREAS, There is ample evidence of the harm done by certain plastics in the environment, including plastic bags, for example:

• At the current rate of production, by 2050 there will be more total plastic in the ocean than fish and it takes up to 1,000 years for a plastic bag to break down in the environment,

• Wildlife mistake plastic bags for food, killing 1 million birds and 100,000 marine animals per year; and

WHEREAS, While it may take more energy to make a reusable bag, it is feasible to choose a reusable bag that may be used enough to outweigh the difference in energy cost, and the environmental impact to the land, waterways, and oceans can be much less for reusable bags compared to single-use bags; and
WHEREAS, Many states (California, New York, and Hawaii), counties (27), and municipalities (320, including Anchorage, Unalaska, Palmer, Wasilla, Cordova, Hooper Bay, and Bethel) have adopted plastic bag bans and businesses like Kroger, the largest grocery chain in US, have decided to eliminate single-use plastic bags by 2025; and

WHEREAS, While plastic bags are only part of the problem, they are a good place to start in solving the problem of single-use plastics harming the environment and developing consumer awareness of the problem; and

WHEREAS, The Commission supports the plastic bag ban but recognizes all plastic waste, specifically single use plastic waste, as a problem in our community that should be addressed; and

WHEREAS, The Commission recommends a phased approach to a plastic bag ban; and

WHEREAS, The Commission encourages the Assembly to support positive incentives to use reusable bags and non-plastic bags that are recyclable in Fairbanks; and

WHEREAS, The Commission urges the Assembly to support other waste reduction efforts, such as addressing food waste which represents approximately 40% of the solid waste stream and revisiting the FNSB Solid Waste Collection District fee structure as it disincentivizes waste reduction efforts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sustainability Commission of the Fairbanks North Star Borough recommends that the FNSB Assembly support HB 81.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 29 DAY OF May, 2019.