

Keeping up appearances

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
Friday, 22 November 2019 07:22



Clean-up board seeks corporate sponsorship

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The efforts to clean up Gallup and keep it clean are year-round, with numerous community events organized to get residents involved.

The Keep Gallup Clean and Beautiful Board discussed a number of clean-up initiatives and collaborations during the Nov. 12 meeting at Octavia Fellin Public Library.

But the stand out item was the discussion about Gallup Walmart, and the company's seeming absence from KGCB's efforts to tidy up the town.

Board member Greg Kirk suggested the board approach the Gallup Walmart and ask for help cleaning up the amount of litter in town.

Kirk suggested starting a Walmart campaign where customers would be charged for single-use plastic bags, but this concept was readily rejected by Elizabeth Barriga, board chairman.

"We can ask them, but they're corporate and going to do what they do everywhere else," Barriga said. "They're not going to reinvent their wheel. We have tried so many different times on different things to work with them."

Barriga added that Walmart is a large corporation, so a decision like this would have to come from their main office.

Kirk said he thinks the board should be able to work directly with the local store to foster change.

"I think we should have the ability to say [to the local Walmart] we want change, and want their help educating the public," Kirk said.

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One of the challenges in getting the local Walmart to cooperate on an effort like this is getting the manager on board, Barriga said.

But even though the board has made efforts to reach out to the store, Barriga says one of the issues is that the manager's position at the Gallup Walmart seems to be continually in flux. She says the photo of the manager posted inside the store has changed about three times in the past six months.

"We cannot even keep a manager there longer than a year," Barriga said. "These are the challenges I've had in the past five years."

If a local manager cannot be identified because of the difficulties in retaining one, Kirk suggested they aim for the regional Walmart office with their campaign.

"We need to come up with a cohesive plan to say what we want to do with the local Walmart," Kirk said.

Meanwhile, Barriga said she'll continue her efforts to set up a meeting with the local Walmart manager in an attempt to form a partnership on the board's clean-up initiative.

"I'm not saying don't give up on the idea [of the clean-up initiative]," Barriga said. "Never give up on the idea."

ABOUT KEEP GALLUP CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL

Keep Gallup Clean and Beautiful aims to inspire community members to take action every day to improve, beautify, and provide education about our local environment, according to the City of Gallup website.

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KGCB meetings are held on the second Tuesday or Thursday each month at Octavia Fellin Public Library.

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