

MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

September 13, 2019 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

<u>MSWMAC Members</u>	
Bill Peloza	Auburn
Joan Nelson	Auburn
Sarah Ogier	Bellevue
Stephanie Schwenger	
Sabrina Combs	Bothell
Robin Tischmak	Burien
Barre Seibert	Clyde Hill
Micah Bonkowshi	Issaquah
Tony Donati	Kent
Meara Heubach	Kent
Jenna McInnins	Kirkland
John MacGillivray	Kirkland
Penny Sweet – Chair	Kirkland
Phillippa Kassover	Lake Forest Park
Asea Sandine	Mercer Island
Carol Simpson	Newcastle
Jeff Brauns	Newcastle
Aaron Moldver	Redmond
Stacy Auer	Redmond
Linda Knight—Vice Chair	Renton
Andrew Zagars	Sammamish
Autumn Salamack	Shoreline
Paula Waters	Woodinville

<u>King County Staff</u>
Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, HWMP staff
Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff
Hilary Leonard, SWD staff
Pat D. McLaughlin, SWD Director
Dorian Waller, SWD staff
John Walsh, SWD staff
Annie Kolb-Nelson, SWD staff
Lindy Honaker, SWD staff
Matt Manguso, SWD staff
Jamie Barker, SWD staff
Glynda Steiner, SWD Deputy Director
<u>Guests</u>
Cynthia Foley, Sound Cities Association
Keturah Brumfield, Recology
Quin Apuzzo, Recology

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting commenced with the Call to Order and Introductions.

Meeting Minutes

The July 2019 MSWAC minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Updates

SWD Director Pat McLaughlin presented the SWD update:

Comp Plan

The city adoption period for the Comp Plan officially closes on Monday. 23 cities acted to approve the plan and 3 cities acted to reject the plan. We anticipate the plan will pass, at which point it will be transmitted to the Department of Ecology for approval. Work on the site development plan for Cedar Hills has already begun. The

public comment period on the scoping of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) has closed with 60 comments received. There will be additional public comment opportunities up through late 2020.

Ogier asked if the scoping comments would be posted when available. McLaughlin responded that they would.

Labor Action

One of our haulers, Republic, is seeking to resolve a labor dispute. Labor representatives have notified us that potential strikes could impact our region next week. We're doing some preplanning to be in the best position possible if strikes do occur. In the past, strikes have impacted our operations by slowing the flow of materials. The strikes could impact your city if you use Republic or if you're hosting one of the transfer stations due to revised routes. We will keep cities updated as we know more.

EcoConsumer Events

Feedback on our recent EcoConsumer events have been very positive. During repair events, volunteers help attendees repair the items that they bring from home. The events help SWD work towards our goal of zero waste of resources.

Knight commented that Renton has had a very positive experience collaborating with Tom Watson, the EcoConsumer Program Manager, to host several EcoConsumer events and activities.

CDL Program

SWD launched a program for employees to receive in-house training to earn a Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The program is intended to address an opportunity gap and advance SWD's Equity and Social Justice commitments. We've found there are significant barriers to becoming a truck driver, one of the highest paying positions within SWD Operations. Upon successful completion of the program, employees will be qualified to apply for truck driver positions.

State Legislators

Gaisford reported that last month state legislators from California and Washington met to discuss product stewardship efforts. Discussion mainly focused on the work of the Responsible Recycling Task Force and stewardship for plastic and paper packaging. It was a great opportunity for our Washington legislatures to hear about the work happening in California.

SWAC Update

Kassover reported that the August SWAC meeting provided updates on the Comp Plan, harmonizing a regional list of recyclables, and a report on organics.

Responsible Recycling Task Force (Compost Bin)

John Walsh presented on the Responsible Recycling Task Force's (RRTF) plan for Action 3A, harmonizing curbside materials.

In July MSWAC was presented a refresher on the plan to create a best practices list of materials allowed in curbside recycling regionally. Today's presentation will focus on the green bin. Specifically, whether we should recommend shredded paper be put in the green bin. Shredded paper was not singled out as a contaminant in the 2017 Washington State Organics Contamination Reduction Workgroup report, however plastic is one of the primary contaminants and shredded paper is known to contain plastic film.

A questionnaire on the potential to compost shredded paper was sent to both Cedar Grove and Lenz. Lenz decided to not complete the survey because they felt efforts should focus on current contaminants, such as glass and plastic. The criteria to assess material suitability for curbside collection is the same as for recycling—number of jurisdictions collecting the material, estimated tonnage, the greenhouse gas impact determined by the warm model, contamination, processing issues, and market viability—except market viability. Since organics collection produces only one product, compost, market viability is captured within the contamination value.

An alternative collection method is increasing the number of community shred events. The County currently offers grant funding to cities to host shred events.

Next steps in the process is to discuss and decide at October's MSWAC meeting whether to approve the process, criteria, and inclusion of organics as well as whether to approve shredded paper in the green bin.

Knight noted not all cities use a green bin for organics disposal.

Waters noted that in a recent presentation Cedar Grove stated they need food, not paper in their organics collection.

Ogier asked how the GHG value shown in the Shredded Paper criteria table is calculated. Walsh responded that the standard is based on the WARM model's value for recycling paper as there isn't a value available for composting.

Auer asked about how the best practices list will fit with Cedar Grove's current communications on their list of non-compostable materials, which includes shredded paper. Part of the timing issue is getting out the word and updating city materials. Gaisford responded that the best practices list provides an opportunity to reach regional agreement on shredded paper and message out our recommendations at the same time the public is instructed to not recycle shredded paper. While we recognize what Cedar Grove is saying, the regional decision could be the direction we ultimately take.

Walsh added that every city has their own contract making the list non-binding. Once we decide what materials not to include, we'll first create communications, then address contract changes, followed by a potential ban at the transfer stations.

Schwenger asked if there's a quantitative value for shredded paper's contamination impact on compost. Walsh responded that they'll investigate that. Schwenger added that another factor to consider is that cities are not privy to the agreements haulers have with Cedar Grove. For some cities, the hauler has said that shredded paper is accepted. We don't want to tread on the haulers' agreements.

Kassover asked what happens to the shredded paper collected a shred events. Gaisford answered the paper goes to a MRF to be baled or directly to a paper recycle. Either way the paper is kept separate from other materials. It's a good question whether compost can deal with the plastic included in the shred collection.

Sweet expressed concern that many cities are not present at the meeting and will need to weigh-in. Likewise, haulers will need to be onboard in order to roll out a plan.

Knight commented that Renton sponsors shred events through the police department in collaboration with private sector partners instead of through the solid waste utility. The same may be true for other cities. Knight asked if part of the communications plan will be to provide alternatives to shredding documents.

Nelson commented that Auburn also does shred events in the Spring and the Fall.

Peloza asked if King County notifies cities when shred events are scheduled in neighboring cities. Gaisford responded that residents are sent mailers by the hosting city. King County doesn't send out notifications in order to avoid overwhelming capacity.

Combs noted that when Bothell did an event, Ecology sent out a notice and they have had issues with the event getting overrun by attendees.

Simpson asked about private shred events, such as the ones hosted by banks. MacGillivray noted that the City Attorney's website is overly broad in what they advise the public to shred. Kirkland has reached out to them to narrow their list and experienced resistance. MacGillivray recommended cities come together to compose a letter.

McInnis commented that more detail on the level of the issue and specifics around plastics are needed. If Lenz opted not to participate, that information should be incorporated into the table.

Kassover commented that we must be cautious in how we communicate with the general public so they don't lose faith in the issue of recycling. Our message must be ubiquitous and clear.

Peloza advised the group to keep seniors in mind and provide materials that are not online.

Moldver noted it may be worth reaching out to other regions to investigate what technology they're using to compost.

Bonkowshi asked if Seattle has shredded paper in their contract with haulers. Gaisford answered it's on their yes list, but we'll need to double check if it's included in their contracts.

Knight noted that whole paper is more desirable than shredded paper and we should continue to explore how to advise the public about shredding.

MacGillivray noted there's also a middle ground option of de-emphasizing shredded paper. In Kirkland, shredded paper is not on the list. When a customer calls to ask about it, it becomes an educational opportunity.

Communications Planning for Shredded Paper and Plastic Bags

Annie Kolb-Nelson presented a Communication Consortium Update.

The Communications Consortium is comprised of King County, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Waste Management, Republic, Recology, Sound Cities, the City of Bellevue, and the Department of Ecology. Work has been focused on the Empty, Clean and Dry campaign, which wrapped in June. Now we're preparing for the plastic bag and film removal that begins in 2020.

A media kick-off event is tentatively scheduled for October 17th at Recology's MRF to launch an education campaign. The goal is to divert plastic bags/wrap from curbside bins through consistent regional messaging.

The consortium developed messages and a communications toolkit for cities that includes talking points, FAQ, social media templates, educational videos, and more. We're working with cities and haulers to update recycling guides. We're also working with industry partners to improve take-back program infrastructure. A waste characterization study is being conducted by King County to establish baseline metrics.

The primary messages we'll promote to the public are to keep bags/wrap out of curbside recycling bins. Bags can either be returned to a takeback location or thrown out if a takeback location is not accessible. Secondary messages include refusing or reusing plastic bags, not bagging recyclables, and an emphasis on there's no fine for noncompliance.

Phase two will be to repeat and reinforce our messages. We'll announce the new policy is in effect beginning January 1, 2020 through a second press release, additional media outreach, toolkit updates, social media, and continued development of the takeback network. Beginning in Q2 2020 we're tentatively planning to engage in retail and industry partnerships that would include in-store promotions, a paid ad campaign, and video advertising. After the awareness campaign in Q3/Q4 we're planning on partnering with cities and haulers to address ongoing contamination. Cart tagging is one approach that could be more widely implemented. We'll wrap up 2020 with an evaluation of the program using the baseline metrics gathered in 2019.

Salamack commented that some cities have already amended their contracts with Recology around plastic bags/film and the campaign messaging should leave room for that. Gaisford noted the messaging will be an opportunity to state expectations more clearly as a region.

Knight noted that promoting reuse of plastic bags as a primary message would more closely align with the group's waste management hierarchy.

Kassover noted that the Shoreline Transfer Station is listed on the takeback website's site directory and asked if Shoreline is accepting bags for free. Gaisford clarified that Shoreline accepts plastic film and Styrofoam, but not shopping bags and the site will need to be updated. SPU is working with the organization that runs the site to ensure accuracy.

McInnis noted that improved signage should be a priority during the retail partnership phase of the plan. Gaisford answered that they've begun working with industry representatives to make takeback stations more visible.

Ogier cautioned that we need to be clear with the public that there's no new policy or law. Kolb-Nelson added that the word "ban" is not being used in campaign messaging to emphasize there isn't a punishment for not following best practices.

Nelson asked why attention needs to be drawn to the lack of monetary fine. Kolb-Nelson responded that media representatives are likely to ask about punitive messages and we want to be clear.

Seibert asked if there are legal issues associated with going through people's bins. Kolb-Nelson responded that bins will not be searched. Knight added that cities that do cart tagging have procedures in place to deal with sited contamination. Because bags are not being opened, there isn't a legal issue. When carts reach the curb they are considered the property of the haulers.

Combs noted that legal issues around cart tagging do presently exist and concern the type of truck being used by the hauler.

Kassover noted that the messaging to constituents needs to help people get enthusiastic around making an extra effort in taking back bags. We must provide both information and a feel-good message to create an emotional response.

Schwenger commented that by messaging the hard start date of January 1st it could come off as a policy. Kolb-Nelson responded that a benchmark date can help the public to prepare and begin making behavioral adjustments ahead of time. Gaisford added that it's key that the public understands plastic wrap and film is no longer wanted by recyclers.

Moldver suggested messaging be added by haulers to the bills they send customers.

Cleanup LIFT Update

Lindy Honaker presented an update on the Cleanup LIFT program.

The Cleanup LIFT program entitles low income individuals to a \$12 discount on transactions at King County Transfer Stations. During the first 6 months of the program there were over 2,000 transaction, over 87% of which were for garbage. Over 50% of all transactions occurred at Bow Lake or Algona.

The Skykomish Drop Box recently signed a new contract that will make it eligible to take part in the discount program. We'll be getting the word out with new communications materials. We currently have Cleanup Lift brochures available in 9 different languages.

There's continued monitoring of transactions including monthly reports on miskeys. The next rate update may include a code change explicitly stating businesses are not eligible for the discount. A code change would be followed by a new public rule.

Moldver asked how the program is funded. Honaker responded the cost of the program was included in the last rate update.

Member Comment

Waters asked if mattress collection at Shoreline is fully operational. Gaisford responded Shoreline has begun to officially accept mattresses for recycling, however, some communication kinks are still being worked out. The program will be ramping up over the next few months.

Pelosa commented that MSWAC could organize an effort to address water body contaminants such as sending a letter to King County Council stressing more resources are needed to monitor and clean up local shores around lakes and the Puget Sound. There's no visible program currently addressing the issue. Sweet responded that the work would likely fall to the Department of Ecology. Steiner added that Ecology has a program related to the pickup of solid waste litter that is funded by a tax on fast food. Any requests for additional work would need to be directed to them.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:11pm.