



Responsible Recycling Task Force Meeting #7

October 26, 2018 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

King Street Center, 201 S. Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98104

Members Present:

April	Atwood	Seattle University, SWAC Vice Chair
Stacey	Auer	City of Redmond
Elaine	Borjeson	City of Bellevue
Tony	Donati	City of Kent
Susan	Fife-Ferris	SPU
Cynthia	Foley	Sound Cities
Jeff	Gaisford	KCSWD
Mason	Giem	City of SeaTac
Meara	Heubach	City of Renton
Sego	Jackson	SPU
Carla	Johnson	Republic Services
Phillippa	Kassover	City of Lake Forest Park, SWAC
Kevin	Kelly	Recology, SWAC Chair
John	MacGillivray	City of Kirkland
Michelle	Metzler	Waste Management
Sarah	Ogier	City of Bellevue
Yolanda	Pon	Public Health
Stephanie	Schwenger	City of Bellevue
Lisa	Sepanski	KCSWD
Penny	Sweet	Councilmember, MSWMAC Chair
Hans	VanDusen	SPU

Guests:

Cherilyn Bertges, Speaker, Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative

Priyanka Bakaya, Speaker, Renewlogy

Laura Tucker, Guest, Jefferson County Public Health

Consultants:

Julie Colehour, Facilitator, C+C

Colette Marien, Meeting Coordinator and Notetaker, C+C

Agenda Item #1: Welcome & Introduction (*called to order at 10:05 am by Julie Colehour*)

- *Julie Colehour* reviews the day's agenda and informs the room that the second half of the meeting will be spent reviewing the recommendations. The agenda is as follows:
 - Welcome & Introduction



- Technologies: Renewlogy & Chemical Recycling
- Recycling Systems: Oregon's Beverage Recycling Cooperative & Bottle Drop Program
- October 26 Recommendation
- Recommendations Review
- Wrap Up & Next Steps
- *Julie Colehour* introduces *Laura Tucker*, who is here to observe. *Laura* is the Education and Outreach Coordinator at Jefferson County Public Health, as well as a mentor for Students for Sustainability, a student run high-school club that is working on a state-wide bottle bill with support from Representative Mike Chapman.
- *Julie Colehour* reviews the Task Force Goals, Roles, and Outcome:
 - **Short Term Goal:** To help identify near-, mid- and long-term actions in response to reduction in export markets for mixed recyclable materials due to China National Sword policies.
 - **Longer Term Goal:** To help establish commitment across the region to responsible recycling and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.
 - **Outcomes:** Prepare a report with actionable items and recommendations for future action by all; if possible, develop interim tools for communications and other topics that are more immediately available.
 - **Role of Task Force:** Not to make decisions, rather to learn about the problem, understand activities that are being implemented elsewhere and opportunities for change. They will provide guidance on next steps that will be brought back to county advisory committees and decision makers.
- *Julie Colehour* informs the room that minor changes were made to the minutes from the September 19 task force meeting and that the final approved minutes were sent out via email.

Agenda Item #2: Technologies: Renewlogy & Chemical Recycling (*called to order at 10:08 am by Julie Colehour*)

- *Julie Colehour* introduces Priyanka Bakaya, CEO and Founder of Renewlogy, who will be presenting virtually from Salt Lake City.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* comments that she will be presenting an overview of Chemical Recycling and Renewlogy's technology, and begins her presentation.

Priyanka's presentation:

- The U.S. plastic recycling rate has always been under 10%, and the latest stats after the China ban show that recycling rates could drop to 4.4% in 2018 and 2.9% in 2019.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* started Renewlogy seven years ago when she was a student at MIT working to figure out why plastics recycling rates are so low. To do this, Priyanka looked at both how materials were being collected and how they were being reused.
- **Why is Plastic Recycling <10%?**
 - Renewlogy looked at the plastics life cycle and found that there are a number of issues causing the recycling loop to not be fully circular, leading to 32% of plastics ending up in the oceans and environment.



- Renewlogy's goal is to look at how chemistry can be used to bring plastics back to their basic molecular structure to close the loop and make new plastics and other petrochemical products.
- **What is Chemical Recycling?**
 - Plastic is essentially a carbon chain made of polymers and chemical recycling breaks down those carbon chains so they can be depolymerized and then be made back into plastic material.
 - The theory of chemical recycling is that plastic came from chemistry, therefore why not use chemistry to take plastic back to its original form.
 - Renewlogy's goal is to create a fully circular economy by closing the plastic recycling loop using chemical recycling to create virgin plastic out of used plastic.
- **Thermal Process**
 - There are two types of chemical recycling: thermal and solvent based
 - The solvent based process can take plastic molecules back to polymers
 - The thermal process is able to recycle mixed 3-7 plastics, including low value film and bags, without having to first sort them and allows you to make a range of new products.
 - The thermal process utilizes an oxygen free system to take the plastics back to a basic molecular structure without creating toxic emissions.
 - The process includes shredding the material, then melting the material into a liquid first followed by a vapor. The vapor is then cooled to become either a liquid product or a non-condensable gas.
 - About 10-25% of the material becomes a non-condensable gas, which is used as energy to reheat and refuel the process.
 - 5% of the material is left as char at the end of the process, which is made up of things like labels, food, or other materials that were not plastic.
 - 70-80% of the materials becomes high value fuels.
 - It's a continuous process that allows Renewlogy to achieve an efficient process with a 52:1 energy recovery ratio.
- **Renewlogy Co-Located Modular Systems**
 - Renewlogy spent its first few years as a company validating the technology.
 - The first demonstration facility opened in Salt Lake City in 2014 using money from both the city and the state. Renewlogy has continued to scale and refine since.
 - Renewlogy recently completed construction of a 12 ton per day processing facility for a Canadian waste company in Nova Scotia, Canada.
 - Renewlogy is now focused on deploying more systems across North America and globally.
 - Renewlogy's key to scaling is to create multiple locations with a small footprint.
 - Each location has a 10-ton system that fits within a 3,000 square foot facility and takes about 12 months to roll out.
 - Current fuel costs allow the economics of the process to make sense. Margins are high enough that the process for recycling low value plastics is worthwhile.
 - Renewlogy facilities have a carbon footprint that is 75% lower compared to other facilities using typical fossil fuels.
- **Collection: EnergyBag**



- Renewlogy uses different ways of collecting materials. So far, most materials have been 3-7 plastics, low value film, and residuals received from MRFs.
- Renewlogy is working on an innovative program called the EnergyBag program that is sponsored by Dow and Hefty. The EnergyBag is an example of a new mechanism helping to capture non-bottle plastics. The program launched in Boise this year and in its first two months, Renewlogy received 250,000lbs of EnergyBag materials.
- A small portion of the 250,000lbs collected is not plastic as there is some contamination from chip bags, candy wrappers, etc.
- The program allows small, low-value plastic that would otherwise end up in landfills or jammed up in MRFs to be captured.
- **Collection: Drop Offs**
 - The Plastic Muncher, or reverse vending machine, is another concept that has been recently introduced to brands and grocery stores looking for new collection structures.
 - Residents or consumers download an app to receive a bag to put their low value plastics in. When the bag is full, they can drop it off in a Plastic Muncher which compresses the material down and provides a coupon to the consumer. The compressed plastic is then returned to Renewlogy.
 - Renewlogy has received a good amount of interest from brands and grocery stores and plans to roll out the Plastic Munchers in 2019 as a new way to collect low value plastic.
- **American Chemistry Council**
 - The American Chemistry Council's recycling division, focused on promoting new recycling technologies, estimates that the US can sustain 600 chemical recycling facilities.
 - The goal of the American Chemistry Council is to increase the plastic recycling rate from less than 10% to 30% or more.

Q&A:

- *Penny Sweet* asks if the materials have to be clean before they are chemically processed.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that they do not have to be clean first and, if there is contamination on the plastic, that will become part of the 5% of char left at the end of the process.
- *Phillippa Kassover* notes that when *Priyanka* began her presentation she thought that all plastics were involved, but it now sounds like it is just the low value plastics that Renewlogy was really designed for.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that they target plastics with no markets like low value plastics so that they don't have to compete with places that already have the infrastructure to recycle higher value plastics.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* notes that it seems like the facilities that are up and running are subsidized and asks if *Priyanka* can share some details about the economic model. *Stephanie* also asks if *Priyanka* can share where the Plastic Munchers will be installed geographically.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies, stating that it costs about \$4-\$5 million to set up one 10-ton facility and that they use two approaches to running the facilities, including:
 - Selling the facility to someone who wants to operate it themselves
 - Entering into a joint operation



- *Priyanka Bakaya* continues, noting that overseas, they try to sell the facility outright, whereas domestically, they more often enter into a joint operation. Entering into a joint operation allows the purchaser to bring their local operating expertise and Renewlogy to bring the technology and system expertise.
- *Priyanka* adds, in terms of the Plastic Muncher locations, they are talking to a few big chains who would choose which locations to target first, so at this time they don't have a sense of where the munchers would be installed.
- *Sarah Ogier* asks who is the end user for the fuel and if *Priyanka* can expand on the emissions created during the process, specifically what standards are used to define and regulate the emissions.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that they target the off-road diesel market, noting that in order to sell fuel for on-road use you need a license, so instead, Renewlogy targets the agricultural and industrial sectors since those are off-road. *Priyanka* adds that one way they could sell to on-road fuel is if the organization buying the fuel is also processing it, and that Renewlogy is looking into potentially rolling out some work with cities so they can use the fuel on-road.
- *Priyanka* adds, in terms of emissions, Renewlogy is considered a low emitter in Utah so they don't require a permit. The only emissions from the process is related to the non-condensable gas that is heating the process. The emissions are equivalent to running a few SUVs.
- *Sarah Ogier* asks what the end use is for the non-condensable gas, to which *Priyanka* replies it is reused to heat the system.
- *Sego Jackson* asks if *Priyanka* is able to talk about whether there are any facilities in the works in greater Washington state that would be accessible to Seattle.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that there are not plans to build a facility in Washington, but maybe on the West Coast in Canada.
- *Sego Jackson* asks if the Utah facility has capacity if anyone wanted to send test loads over.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that people can send test loads but that they would not have capacity for ongoing deliveries.
- *Hans VanDusen* asks if *Priyanka* expects to see significant investments from chemical companies who want Renewlogy to recycle their products.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* notes that, in the past year, they have seen a huge increase in the number of petroleum companies who are looking into using Renewlogy's facility. Typically, it's been cheap for petroleum companies to make plastic but now with mounting pressure, Renewlogy is seeing more companies coming to them for help with the chemical recycling process. *Priyanka* adds that now is the time to engage with the petrochemical companies and that Renewlogy is in communication with many of them to figure out how this type of chemical recycling can be brought to more places.
- *Lisa Sepanski* notes that previously *Priyanka* spoke about how they take mostly 3-7 plastics, and asks if they can take 1 and 2 plastics if it comes on a package, citing the new Amazon flexible packaging which is made with 2 and 4 as an example.
- *Priyanka Bakaya* replies that yes, they can take 1 and 2 plastics if they are mixed in with the mixed plastics but notes that if there are a lot of 1's they try to pull those out for recycling.



- *Priyanka Bakaya* wraps up, noting that she is happy to continue the conversation and encourages the room to reach out with any additional questions.

Agenda Item #3: Recycling Systems: Oregon's Beverage Recycling Cooperative & BottleDrop Program (*called to order at 10:37 am by Julie Colehour*)

- *Julie Colehour* introduces *Cherilyn Bertges*, the BottleDrop Give Program Manager at the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC).

Cherilyn's presentation:

- *Cherilyn Bertges* shares that she's been with the OBRC for seven and a half years and has worked in several different roles, mostly in Public Relations.
- **Brief History of the Oregon Bottle Bill**
 - The bill was signed into law in 1971 by Governor Tom McCall
 - The bottle bill, which gave 5 cents on beer and soda bottles, remained the same for a long time.
 - Overtime, people started using a lot of bottled water so in 2009 bottled water was added to the bill.
 - Also in 2009, universal brand acceptance was added to the bill which meant that any large retailer had to accept a container that was brought to them if they sold that same kind of beverage. This meant if a retailer sold any kind of soda, they would need to also accept any kind of soda bottles. Previous to 2009, consumers had to return their bottles back to the store that it was purchased from.
 - 2009 was a turning point for OBRC. It no longer made sense for distributors to drive around and pick up their own pieces, so the OBRC built a statewide cooperative to act on behalf of the distributors to fulfill bottle pickup.
 - In 2011, OBRC began piloting their BottleDrop redemption centers, which they will continue to roll out until 2020.
 - On April 1, 2017 the deposit amount increased from 5 cents to 10 cents, which was a benefit for OBRC as it led to a massive increase in volume returned.
 - In January of 2018, the bill expanded containers collected to include all ice teas, juices, energy drinks, and coffees. This meant that nearly all bottle types, aside from wine, liquor and milk products, were now acceptable.
- **More about the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative**
 - The last recorded number of containers processed by OBRC annually was 1.3 billion. This year, OBRC is on track to process approximately 2 billion containers.
 - The OBRC has 108 distributor members currently part of the cooperative
 - There are 400 Oregon employees at OBRC, which has doubled in the past three years
 - There are eight processing plants around Portland, four that are owned by OBRC and four that the OBRC contracts with.



- There are around 2,600 retail collection points that the OBRC uses a fleet of trucks to pick up from.
- Last year, the OBRC's operation budget was \$34 million. \$9 million of that budget is funded by distributors and the rest is from unclaimed deposits.
- The OBRC is a 1/3rd partner in ORPET, a plastic bottle recycling facility in St. Helens, OR, which started in 2012 and allows OBRC to ship plastic 20 miles down the road rather than overseas to China.
- The OBRC does not use taxpayer or state dollars to fund the program, but does take deposits that were unclaimed by people returning bottles.
- *Sego Jackson* asks if all 400 employees are private, which *Cherilyn* confirms and adds that the 400 number represents employees statewide from administrative staff, drivers, etc.
- *Sego Jackson* asks if Merlin Plastics is one of the ORPET partners, to which *Cherilyn* confirms that Merlin Plastics is the 2/3rd owner of the ORPET facility.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* adds that the OBRC functions much like a non-profit in the sense that they take what they need to function and that's it.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* asks what *Cherilyn* means by "process," noting that her understanding was that the glass is crushed and then used for road beds, rather than recycled back into glass containers.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* replies that they pick up the cans and glass bottles, count the containers, make sure the containers are separated, then crush, bale and send them on to the next phase of recycling. The vast majority of glass goes to Owens-Illinois Glass Plant in Portland, all plastic goes to ORPET, a small portion of the glass goes to California to be used in wine bottles, and the aluminum goes to the Midwest. None of the crushed material is used as road cover.
- *Sarah Ogier* asks how they divvy up and determine the collection points, to which *Cherilyn* replies that anyone who has a retail account can have the OBRC pick up their bottles. Depending on location, OBRC might back haul for the distributor, though for the most part, they pick up for all stores that sell beverages.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* comments that much of these questions are answered further ahead in the presentation, so asks the room to hold questions for now and she can address anything left unanswered during the Q&A.
- **BottleDrop Redemption Centers**
 - Originally, the bottle bill required people to return bottles to the store they were purchased from. Overtime, retailers, who are not in the business of recycling, rather in the business of selling food, began worrying about collecting dirty cans and bottles. In addition, the reverse vending machines that many stores used to collect the bottles began breaking down due to the dirty or liquid filled bottles that were being returned. Furthermore, the machines were hard to clean and, as collection increased, many stores didn't have capacity or chose not to accept the bottles for return. For the public, lines to return bottles were often long and with machines frequently out-of-order, many people started saying that the 5 cents were not worth it and instead put the bottles in curbside recycling bins.



- Due to these issues, the redemption rate went from 90% down to 64%. Stand-alone redemption centers came about as a way to fix these issues and bring redemption rates back up.
- BottleDrop redemption centers aimed to address the experience of returning your containers and getting Oregonians to continue to positively engage with the landmark piece of legislation.
- An additional reason for the redemption centers was that they knew more containers were going to be accepted and NW grocery stores, who were already becoming overwhelmed with collection capacity, asked the OBRC to come up with a better process for accepting bottles.
- At BottleDrop locations there is staff on site to keep the centers clean and to try to process the bottles quickly.
- All centers are indoors and offer three ways for people to return their containers:
 - Hand count – limited to 50 bottles per person per day
 - Reverse vending machines/self-serve machines – similar to the grocery store versions but newer and faster. All machines lead back to a conveyor belt system behind the wall that feeds the bottles into three tracks based on whether the bottle is plastic, glass or aluminum. The bottles are then crushed and baled at the center.
- One point of contention with the BottleDrop centers is that it's another stop for the public. To make it worth it for the public to use the redemption centers, the OBRC created the following program benefits:
 - Allowing people to return 350 bottles per person per day, more than twice the amount that was allowed previously.
 - BottleDrop accounts allowing consumers to purchase a durable green bag for 20 cents and receive a membership card. The bags have scannable tags on them that correspond to a given account. Account holders can drop off two bags per account per day. The bags are then sorted by BottleDrop employees and, once scanned, money for the bottles will be deposited into the account which can be accessed at the BottleDrop centers or at other partner retail locations. There is a 35-cent processing fee on each bag and each bag holds around 80 containers.
 - BottleDrop Plus is an additional program that allows account holders to print out refunds with a 20% bonus to be used at participating retail stores.
- **Other BottleDrop Programs**
 - **BottleDrop Express**
 - The increase to 10 cents and expansion to include additional beverage types have sparked huge demand.
 - Because a full redemption center cannot be placed everywhere due to the size of the space, BottleDrop express was created to place a couple collection machines in the existing return areas of grocery stores and to give more consumers access to the convenience of the green bag program
 - **BottleDrop Give**
 - A fundraiser support program that aims to make it easier for non-profits to use the bottle bill to raise money for their organization. Since the program launched, non-profits



have raised \$800,000. \$500,000 has been raised just since January 2018, which gives an idea of how much the program is growing.

- **BottleDrop Refill**
 - A pilot program that sends bottles to partner breweries to be refilled and resold. The program is growing and may expand to include wine and kombucha bottles.
 - The facility that washes the bottles prior to refill is currently located Montana. A new facility will be located in Clackamas Oregon in 2020. Even with transportation of the bottles to and from the washing facility, the carbon footprint is much smaller.
 - OBRC plans to open their own washing facility soon.
- **The ORPET Facility**
 - The facility has been a huge factor in minimizing transportation and has been especially helpful since the China ban, as Oregon can continue to process stateside.
- **Measurements of Success**
 - BottleDrop account owners, which make up about 30% of the program, is very popular in Portland and will soon have 300,000 account holders.
 - It is difficult to find a street in Portland that does not have a BottleDrop account holder
 - Approximately 65% of containers come through the BottleDrop centers and 16 express locations
 - In areas where there is a BottleDrop center, collection has increased an average of 20%.
- **Sector Efficiency**
 - BottleDrop has the most efficient bottle bill price per container in North America, due in large part to the program's vertical integration and control over every part of the process.
 - The Oregon Liquor Control Commission regulates the program and OBRC does the rest.
 - Most of the containers are processed in-state and anything not processed in-state is processed in the US.
 - The OBRC has an extremely clean recycling stream and are able to recycle 99.5% of materials received.

Q&A:

- *Sego Jackson* asks what the name was of the person that *Cherilyn* spoke to at the Northwest Grocery Association, to which *Cherilyn* replies was *Joe Gillian*.
- *Laura Tucker* asks how the OBRC deals with curbside collection.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* replies that any bottles that end up in curbside are collected by the waste haulers and that haulers do not receive deposits for bottles in the curbside system, rather it is these bottles that represent the unclaimed deposits used to fund a portion of the BottleDrop program. *Cherilyn* adds that, in any semi-condensed area, you'll find "independent contractors" who collect deposits on bottles found in curbside.
- *Lisa Sepanski* asks if the four sorting and contract facilities that *Cherilyn* mentioned in her presentation are MRFs.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* replies that the four sorting and contract facilities are not MRFs, rather smaller sorting facilities or facilities specifically equipped to sort bottles collected through the BottleDrop program.



- *Lisa Sepanski* asks if there is data on the percentage of bottles from the BottleDrop Refill program that have been put back into the system.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* replies that there is not good data yet since the program has only been available in store since the end of July. To date, OBRC has sent two truckloads of refillable bottles to the cleaning facilities. *Cherilyn* adds that there are barriers to the Refill program that they are still working through, such as how to not crush the bottles that are in good condition. There is both the education piece to help the public understand that Refill bottles need to be submitted for hand count rather than through the reverse vending machines, as well as how BottleDrop employees can efficiently identify refillable bottles that are dropped off in green bags from account holders. The OBRC is working to implement new technologies to address these barriers.
- *Sego Jackson* asks if *Cherilyn* can further explain how the \$34 million used to fund the program last year breaks down.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* explains that \$9 million of the \$34 million operations budget was paid for by beverage distributors who are a part of the co-op and who the OBRC picks up for. The remaining \$25 million was funded by unclaimed bottle deposits.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* asks what OBRC's share of revenue is from the sale of the recycled commodity.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* replies that the revenue share is determined based on the amount of the commodity that they return, which fluctuates based on the year and the commodity. All revenue is returned to distributor members of the co-op.
- *Cherilyn Bertges* thanks the room, wraps up her presentation and notes that she will leave business cards behind for anyone interested in connecting with her further.

Agenda Item #4: October 26 Recommendation Discussion (*called to order at 11:12 am by Julie Colehour*)

- *Julie Colehour* shares the suggested recommendation for the days meeting, which has not yet been seen by the group, and notes that we'll move onto discussing the four recommendations still under review from previous meetings next. The suggested recommendation is as follows:
 - *Recycling should support the local economy and build resiliency in the system by prioritizing local sorting and reprocessing services which, in turn, will create local jobs, minimize greenhouse gases from transportation, and increase the ability to document and measure real recycling.*
- *Penny Sweet* comments that the recommendation is very aspirational
- *Jeff Gaisford* agrees that it's aspirational and adds that there are items included in the recommendation that we talk about wanting to do but have not yet called out, like creating jobs, etc.
- *Laura Tucker* asks if the recommendation is suggesting that more MRFs be created, to which *Julie Colehour* replies that it's more about creating local jobs and decreasing impacts.
- *Sego Jackson* asks the room if the recommendation should say "our recycling program" instead, to which the room agrees.
- *Julie Colehour* asks the room if there are any red flags or concerns that need to be addressed.



- *Phillippa Kassover* shares her immediate thought that the recommendation should translate into a policy recommendation. *Phillippa* asks when the link to policy will be made and whether the Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF) as a group will be involved in recommending descriptive policies, or if the RRTF is instead just recommending goals.
- *Jeff Gaisford* replies that one of the goals for the final RRTF outcome report is to provide actions items and steps for how to achieve each recommendation, some of which will include policy. The report will also call out who the owner of the various steps should be.
- *Phillippa Kassover* asks at what point the action items will happen – will they be enacted by the RRTF or MSWMAC?
- *Jeff Gaisford* replies that actions will be highlighted in the report but will be taken further with the advisory committees.
- *Julie Colehour* adds that the draft outcome report will be sent to the task force for review prior to the November task force meeting.
- *Sarah Ogier* shares that she was anticipating a recommendation more specific to the materials and procedures that were discussed today and asks if the recommendation was intended to be so macro.
- *Jeff Gaisford* notes that *Sarah* has a good point and encourages others to share different recommendations that they think would be a better fit for the meeting.
- *Sarah Ogier* notes that she's interested in hearing from other task force members as to whether they were expecting to see anything more specific, or if this global approach is what they were looking for.
- *Lisa Sepanksi* shares that the thought behind making the recommendation global was to first get agreement on the recommendation from the task force and then move towards building action items to achieve the recommendation. The discussion would then be about whether research into other innovative strategies, like chemical recycling, is needed in order to accomplish the recommendation.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* notes that she was looking for something broader and more global that the group could drill down into and that she likes the recommendation.
- *Penny Sweet* agrees with *Susan*, noting that the suggested recommendation is exactly what she thought we would end up with, particularly that it embraces the problem in a local way. *Penny* adds that she liked what *Sego* said about “our recycling” because it begins to point us in a direction of work that we can do here.
- *Penny Sweet* continues, noting that there was not uniform support from MSWMAC for one of the other recommendations to remove shredded paper from the recycling bin.
- *Jeff Gaisford* notes that, when the topic of removing shredded paper was discussed in the MSWMAC meeting, it was determined that more information was needed about the problem and whether there were other markets for the shredded paper. Additionally, a question that arose was what to do with the shredded paper if it wasn't being put in the recycling bin. *Jeff* adds that they've reached out to shredders for additional information and that the topic will be further discussed at the November MSWMAC meeting.
- *Sego Jackson* notes that the recommendation to remove shredded paper was also in the Commingled Report.



- *Stacey Auer* comments that cities are also in ongoing conversation with waste management companies about plastic bags and that, while everyone agreed to remove plastic bags from the recycling bin, the question still isn't settled as to whether to remove clear plastic bags that are used in multifamily and commercial recycling programs. *Stacey* asks if this kind of detail will be included in the final report.
- *Jeff Gaisford* replies that this is a detail that should be clarified in the report.

Action Items:

- Revise the October 26 recommendation to specify “our recycling program”

Agenda Item #5: Recommendations Review (*called to order at 11:25 am by Julie Colehour*)

Revised Recommendation Discussion - Domestic Processing Infrastructure (7/18):

- *Julie Colehour* moves onto the revised recommendation from the July 18 meeting on Domestic Processing and Infrastructure, which has been revised as follows:
 - *Efforts should be made to protect worker health, safety and the environment from negative impacts that result from the sorting and reprocessing of recycled materials generated in the region. This can be done through contractual and policy decisions that mandate that materials only go to facilities that meet worker health and safety and environmental standards.*
 - **Definitions:**
 - **Sorting:** *means taking mixed recyclable materials and separating them into specific commodities that can be sent to a processor. For the commingled recycling system, sorting takes place at a Materials Recovery Facility.*
 - **Reprocessing:** *is the action after material sorting whereby sorted materials are transformed into a refined state, such as resin-specific plastic flakes or pellets, prior to being remanufactured into a new product.*
 - **Domestic:** *means in the United States or Canada.*
- *Julie Colehour* asks the room if the revised version of the recommendation, which was sent out to the task force via email, addresses previous concerns and feedback.
- *John MacGillivray* asks if removing the word “domestic” from the recommendation itself was intentional.
- *Julie Colehour* replies that there will be a glossary of terms in the report that will define “domestic” as the United States and Canada. *Julie* adds that the idea of domestic is woven through other recommendations, even if it's no longer in this specific recommendation.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* shares her concern that the recommendation is too vague, noting that because contracts already require worker health and safety and it's the law to only work with facilities that uphold these standards, people may disregard the recommendation.
- *Julie Colehour* asks if additional details about the chain of custody would help, to which *Stephanie* replies that would help people realize that this recommendation is meant to extend beyond sorting.



- *Lisa Sepanski* points out that the word “reprocessing” has been defined to address materials after they are sorted.
- *Hans VanDusen* comments that, in the final report, the definition won’t be placed right next to the recommendation, rather will be included in some kind of glossary, therefore it’s important for the recommendation to make sense as much as possible without the glossary of definitions.
- *Hans VanDusen* continues, suggesting that the word “downstream” be added so the recommendation reads: “Efforts should be made to protect downstream worker and environmental impacts... materials only go to downstream facilities...” *Hans* adds that the concern is the transparency around downstream worker safety.
- *Hans VanDusen* also suggests that the recommendation be revised to include an active voice and clear ownership.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* shares her thoughts that the word “efforts” is too vague and that she is uncomfortable with the standards not being defined.
- *Phillippa Kasso* comments that the revised recommendation has lost the idea of coming up with a marketable item that is clean and suitable for remanufacture and suggests perhaps breaking the recommendation down into two recommendations.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* agrees with *Phillippa*, noting that the whole goal is to have material that can be turned into a new, marketable commodity.
- *April Atwood* adds that the presentations during the July 18 meeting were about developing infrastructure and that the conversation was about building domestic infrastructure.
- *Yolanda Pon* shares that the first thing that comes to mind is from a regulating and permitting perspective and that we don’t have any facilities that do not meet worker health and safety standards. *Yolanda* asks how we would mandate other countries to ensure that their facilities meet the same standards and ultimately agrees that the focus needs to be on building domestic infrastructure.
- *Julie Colehour* asks if *Yolanda* is saying that we should prioritize domestic, to which *Yolanda* replies yes.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* agrees that domestic needs to be prioritized because we can’t always maintain control of what’s going on in other countries. *Susan* adds that we are morally responsible to take ownership when we know that a situation is unsafe overseas and cites changes made to electronic recycling as an example of how that’s been done in the past.
- *Sarah Ogier* suggests revising contract language to say that materials have to be processed domestically and creating policies that specify what happens to materials once they leave the bubble of domestic control. What controls can we apply?
- *Jeff Gaisford* notes that it’s a good point about how we follow the chain of custody, because like *Susan* said, with electronics we’ve depended on an NGO to tell us if materials are going to the wrong place or places without the right standards, and that’s worked. *Jeff* notes that the extreme version of this would be going out and auditing all the facilities and the question is how you follow up to make sure standards are met. Do we do that individually or have a non-profit/third party manage it?
- *Hans VanDusen* reiterates including the word “downstream” as the intent of the recommendation is to make sure that there is transparency and accountability downstream.



- *Lisa Sepanski* summarizes by asking the room if it would be helpful if the recommendation were more specific and unpacked action items like how to maintain downstream due diligence, to which the room replies yes.

Revised Recommendation Discussion - Working with Producers (8/24) and Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling (9/19):

- *Julie Colehour* shares the revised recommendations from the August 24th and September 19th meeting:
 - **August 24: Working with Producers**
 - #1: *Washington State should include a product stewardship policy approach as a key component to creating a responsible recycling system in Washington.*
 - #2: *The region should engage producers in recycling solutions in order to achieve a system of sustainable and responsible recycling.*
 - **Definitions:**
 - **Region:** *means in Washington and Oregon state.*
 - **September 19: Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling**
 - *The region should support local and statewide policy and legislation that is consistent with helping establish a responsible recycling system.*
 - **Definitions:**
 - **Region:** *means in Washington and Oregon state.*
- *Julie Colehour* asks the room to provide feedback on the revisions to the first recommendation from the August 24th meeting, which was previously specific to studying Recycle BC's program.
- *Phillippa Kassover* comments that she has been envious of both Recycle BC and the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative (OBRC) and asks if it's possible to include a recommendation for the bottle bill as well as the product stewardship recommendation.
- *Julie Colehour* suggests that the request for some type of bottle bill could fall under the recommendation from the Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling meeting.
- *Hans VanDusen* comments that the bottle bill is a product stewardship approach that is paid for in part by producers.
- *Hans VanDusen* notes that the recommendation from the Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling meeting is vague and he suggests that the region be defined as Washington only.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* comments on the first recommendation from the Working with Producers meeting, suggesting that the word "policy" be removed and that it specifies that the system is a statewide approach, rather than a Washington approach.
- *Sego Jackson* notes that the difference between the two recommendations from the Working with Producers meeting is that one is a policy approach and one is not. For example, there is a difference between asking the Carton Council to solve a problem and passing policy that requires a stewardship approach.
- *Penny Sweet* agrees that the word "policy" works and suggests that the three recommendations when viewed together is too rambling and needs to be tighter if we want our legislators to work to move the recommendations forward.



- *Julie Colehour* asks for clarification as to whether *Penny* is suggesting that there be one recommendation with specifics listed under it.
- *Penny Sweet* replies that there is an overarching discussion that needs to be had with policy makers and that she believes we need to come at them with one suggestion on how to move forward.
- *Sarah Ogier* notes that if the state were viewing the first recommendation from the Working with Producers meeting about including a product stewardship approach, they would say that product stewardship approaches already exist. *Sarah* adds that she'd like to see something about expanding or increasing the stewardship approach in Washington.
- *Phillippa Kassover* comments that we've become victims of our own process in that we want to pull a message out of each meeting. *Phillippa* suggests that we throw the recommendations out and look instead at the main themes that have been common throughout all the meetings and use those themes to determine what the comprehensive message is that we need to put forward. *Phillippa* adds that she thinks there is currently too much repetition in the recommendations and suggests perhaps getting a small group together to deconstruct and then reconstruct the messaging into themes. Initial themes could include:
 - Section on statewide policy
 - Section on local
 - Section dealing with supporting the development of new startups and technologies
 - Section on how the messaging to the public might work
- *Kevin Kelly* responds to *Sarah's* earlier comment, agreeing that the first recommendation from the Working with Producers meeting about product stewardship is redundant to existing Department of Ecology (DOE) programs. *Kevin* suggests saying "comprehensive stewardship approach" instead.
- *Hans VanDusen* agrees with *Sarah* as well, noting that we do have product stewardship in the state so this recommendation would need to be about expanding or making it comprehensive.
- *Lisa Sepanski* points out that the RRTF group exists within the context of China Sword and curbside recycling, which we do not have a stewardship approach for. *Lisa* also asks for *Phillippa* to specify what she means by "a local perspective."
- *Phillippa Kassover* replies that she was referring to how local groups here in King County and Seattle can enact the local work needed to make the broader statewide efforts work as well.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* suggests framing the recommendations around the extent to which we have control over the issues and notes that the recommendations are currently covering the region, state and county. *Stephanie* adds her concern that these recommendations will come off as Seattle and King County telling the rest of the state what to do.
- *Phillippa Kassover* suggests avoiding a defensive posture, noting that cities across the state are facing the same problems and are happy that we are defining solutions that everyone can use.
- *Jeff Gaisford* comments that there are actions that we can directly do and others that have the ability to influence, citing electronics as a great example of how time, energy, and working together can help actions move forward at the state level.
- *Lisa Sepanski* wraps up by noting that one of the things that the Responsible Recycling framework highlights is that we can benefit from regional policy alignment.



- *Laura Tucker* thanks the task force for allowing her to come watch and asks that anyone interested in learning more about or supporting the bottle bill that her student mentee group is working on should please reach out.

Action Items:

- Revise the recommendations to incorporate feedback from the discussion, including:
 - **7/18 (Domestic Processing and Infrastructure):** Revise to include:
 - Be less vague/mention the chain of custody – people are already required to uphold worker health and safety standards
 - Incorporate the word “downstream” in order to indicate that the concern is about downstream transparency and worker safety
 - Use active voice and clear ownership
 - “Efforts” is too vague
 - Standards should be better defined
 - Possibly break into two recommendations: one about worker health and safety and one about ensuring materials are clean and suitable for remanufacture
 - Focus needs to be on prioritizing domestic infrastructure
 - Unpack action items for how to maintain downstream due diligence
 - **8/24 (Working with Producers/Product Stewardship):**
 - Specify the need to expand or increase stewardship in Washington – perhaps say comprehensive stewardship approach
 - Say statewide instead of Washington
 - **9/19 (Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling):**
 - Include request for some kind of bottle bill as an action item
 - Make less vague and define region as Washington state
 - **Overall:**
 - Make the 7/18, 8/24 and 9/19 recommendations less rambling – perhaps combine under one overarching recommendation
 - Consider throwing the recommendations out and look instead at the main themes that have been common throughout all the meetings. Initial themes could include:
 - Section on statewide policy
 - Section on local
 - Section dealing with supporting the development of new startups and technologies
 - Section on how the messaging to the public might work

Agenda Item #5: Wrap Up & Next Steps (called to order at 12:03 pm by Julie Colehour)

- *Julie Colehour* shares the following next steps with the room:
 - The November 15th meeting will be hosted back at Bothell City Hall



- RRTF staff will compile a draft of the final report and send out to the task force in advance of the next meeting
- The November meeting will be focused on discussing the report draft
- The goal for the December meeting is to get final sign off from task force members on the report
- There will be one speaker at the November meeting and the rest of the meeting will be focused on reviewing the report
- *Julie Colehour* reminds the room to send feedback on Representative Smith's bill to Colette by November 5th.
- *Jeff Gaisford* adds that the December meeting will take place on December 14th at King Street Center in the 8th floor conference room.