



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

August 6, 2014 Meeting Notes
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
Room 5965
5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Wendy Walker & Heather Levy

Secretary: Vacant

Present: Heather Levy, Wendy Walker, Katie Kennedy, Joseph Ringold, Stephanie Schwenger, Chris Toman

Absent: Dan Corum; David Della; Erika Melroy

Guests:

Staff: Dick Lilly, Tim Croll, Linda Rogers, Sheryl Shapiro

5:40 pm Call to Order

1. Regular Business –Wendy Walker, Co-Chair

- Meeting notes approved – June 4, 2014
- Report on outstanding items from June – none
- Chair report – none
- Stacie Singleton, Aaron Lawhead and Katie Salinas have resigned their membership due to changes in work

2. Food Waste Requirements Ordinance – Tim Croll, Solid Waste Division Director

- Mayor’s office did transmit ordinance to council
- Decided to delay ordinance requiring all compostable to provide service. This was due to dissatisfaction expressed by various stakeholders
- Food waste disposal ban ordinance main action: **Commercial**
 - Required recycling of food waste and compostable paper
 - Building owners have to provide composting service for tenants or provide space for tenants’ own food waste containers
 - Begin customer outreach and assistance on October 1st regarding new composting requirements
 - January 1, 2015 SPU will begin monitoring commercial containers and provide educational notices or tags for containers with significant amounts of food waste and compostable paper.
 - July 1, 2015 violations will result in additional collection fee of \$50 per collection.–
- Ordinance main actions: **Residential**
 - January 1, 2015, residents in single-family, multifamily and mixed-use buildings will be required to separate food waste and compostable paper for composting
 - No food waste or compostable paper is permitted in garbage container or drop box or disposed as garbage at the City’s transfer stations.

- October 1, 2014 begin educational outreach to residents regarding the food waste and compostable paper composting requirements.
- January 1, 2015, SPU will begin monitoring and placing educating educational notices or tags on garbage containers with significant amounts of food waste and compostable paper
- July 1, 2015 violations by residential curbside or backyard customers will result of an additional collection fee of \$1 per can collection.
- Directors Rule SW-402.1 – Prohibition of Recyclables in Garbage - set for purpose of interpreting and clarifying the ordinance requirements
 - Modified to incorporate implementation of new food waste and compostable paper ordinance.
 - Define a “significant amount” = 10% rule
 - **Exemption** identified: Placement of recyclables and/or compostables in containers by the public: Any garbage can which is made available to the general public, or to the businesses’ customers for bussing their own meal scraps are exempted from enforcement of this requirement.

Discussion:

- Wendy and Heather – report to Council on SWAC support before Council vote
- Cedar grove has expressed some concern about undercutting its carbon credits
 - Businesses may get carbon credits by going above law, not by what’s required
 - How many are being issued in Seattle area? Cedar Grove reports 70K tons of composting collected;
 - Customers buy credits
- If SWAC wants to indicate something missing, reasonable to present to council.

Questions –

- Feasibility question – what stakeholders were being listened to? – talked with 54 ethnic grocers; they expressed most concern. Starbucks leery of how ordinance portrayed paper cups for composting vs recycling.
- Lot of feedback on compostable service ware – is it all in shelf now? Is it now required by all? Intent is to meet with stakeholder and discuss what might work for everyone on matters that haven’t so far been controversial
- What has occurred regarding container logos? Not go that direction due to administrative issues. Compostable materials are to be labeled as such
- What’s happening with the green bags – some are compostable, and some are not. Becomes confusing to customers – not all are compostable.
 - **Action Item:** Ask Dick to with Cedar Grove to see if the issue of bags is a contaminate issue within the compostables. Dick to get feedback and report back to SWAC.
- What is best time for timing if SWAC wants to comment on proposed ordinance? Certainly when council is having a hearing on ordinance. If want to send something in writing, can go in at any time

- Council Meeting - SPU & Neighborhood Committee – expected to be Sept 9th 2 PM on Tuesday
- Any measures if businesses and multifamily residents continue to have organics in garbage? If prove have organics in garbage will be required to have service.
 - Is enforcement on hauler, SPU inspections or both? 2 warning notes, then a charge

Action item: SWAC wants to contribute letter to council or testify on Sept 9th. SWAC will review draft ordinance and requested materials, and request input as of August 15th. Chris Toman will draft document and bring to next SWAC meeting on Sept 3 for final review before sending to council. Will also decide who will testify/speak before Council at meeting.

Key points in letter/statement

- Support, but with issues to consider
- Consideration not lose sight of
 - Bag colors
 - Consequences for requirement – is penalty enough to get their attention?
- **Action items:**
 - Sheryl will send out link to Tim’s presentation to Council on r this issue
 - Other stakeholders concerns – summary from Veronica’s outline – to send out to SWAC members ASAP

3. Strategic Business Plan Update – Tim Croll, Solid Waste Director

- SPU’s Strategic Plan is currently in front of City Council, being reviewed by the Select Committee on Utility Strategic Planning
- Council suggested potential amendments to Resolution 31534:
 - Labor efficiencies – two options proposed
 - Dollar labor efficiency target, with positions and consultant spending as measures of progress
 - Dollar and position labor efficiency targets, with consultant spending as an evaluation tool
 - Carbon Neutrality –
 - Credits purchased be local, i.e., from City of Seattle, or King County if no options are available within the City limits
 - Deadline for achieving carbon neutrality should be removed from the Plan
 - Human Resources staffing increase – before reallocating more positions in SPU human resource functions in 2018, consultation and assessment should be addressed in 3-year Plan update.
 - Bond interest issues - \$1.5 million per year saved in lower interest rates should be reflected in Plan’s rate revenue requirement and rate path
 - Health care inflation – reduced rate from 7.0% to 6.9%

- Low income rate assistance enrollment schedule – Until enrollment success is demonstrated, schedule for doubling enrollment for low-income utility assistance will be extended to 2022.
 - How do we recruit for enrollment in the program? Tracey Rowland, SPU Customer Service Branch has been attending the City-wide Interdepartmental Task Force on the Utility Discount Program and would be available to speak to SWAC about these issues.
 - Is the application process difficult?
 - Issue of re-up every year; change to every 3 years for seniors
- Set firm cap on rate path; propose tougher language

Questions:

- How binding are amendments? Set by resolution signed by council and mayor
- Council voting on SBP on August 11th
- Primary requirements result in prioritizing resources and tightening up.

Outreach for Strategic Business Plan: Next month should have summary of public meetings

- Four meetings were held in diverse geographic areas of the City (N: North Seattle Community College, Central/SE: 2100 Building, SE: El Centro de La Raza and SW: Youngstown Cultural Arts Center), 2 in the evening and 2 on Saturdays.
- Attendance at evening meetings were relatively small; stronger numbers in community members who had participated in the fall outreach

3-B. Monthly solid waste tonnage numbers – Dick Lilly presented current tonnage numbers. These represent the same shortfall over previous months; mostly due to north end self-haul customers apparently going to Shoreline or other facilities

- Illegal dumping calls increasing but believe it to be due to an external app allowing easier reporting. **Please name the app-is it “Find It, Fix It” ?**
- Some glitches in converting info from app and getting to dispatchers to respond to issues

4. New SWAC Secretary - Wendy Walker & Heather Levy – co-chairs

- Aaron Lawhead, former Secretary has resigned from SWAC due to relocation
- Chris Toman volunteered to take over duties

5. Tap Water Campaign Update – Chris Toman, Heather Levy, Katie Kennedy, Sheryl Shapiro

- Campaign kick-off meeting was held Thursday, July 17th at the SPU Water Quality Lab
- –Activity : Abbreviated Blind Water taste and odor test; bottled water was preferred by many
- Staff discussed presence of chlorine smell; some people dislike, others trust water if smell of chlorine is present
- Discussion of use of filters: lack of proper maintenance of filters (changing out on appropriate schedule) can cause illness due to growth of harmful bacteria

- Projected Timeline of campaign sets possible launch of Campaign in Spring 2015
- Marketing plan and “branding” will be developed
- Work groups formed:
 - Statement of intent of campaign, policy framework
 - Research on bottled water industry
 - Other public interest campaigns
- Next meeting: Sept 17, 5:30-7:30’, additional members welcome
- How does this impact outreach for new composting plan scheduled for Jan-July 2015?
 - **Action Item:** Sheryl will look into this. Also, are there other campaigns that may assist or interfere with campaign?
- Lots of cross-group energy on campaign – exciting to see

6. Discussion Items– Discussion by All

- Field Trips:
 - Cedar River watershed
 - Landsburg and other sites in Fall – salmon return
 - Glass recycling plant –past field trip – revisit?
- Recruiting – now have 3 SWAC vacancies – send Sheryl names if have any referrals

Wrap Up:

7. Action items -

- Dick Lilly to check with Cedar Grove on green plastic bag contaminate issue in compostables
- SWAC to review documents; draft letter to Council supporting Food Waste Requirements Ordinance for review at Sept 3rd meeting
- Sheryl to send out link to Tim Croll’s presentation to Council on ordinance
- Summary of stakeholder concerns summary to be sent to SWAC as soon as possible

13. Preliminary agenda for next meeting:

- Review draft letter on Food Waste Requirements Ordinance support
- Food waste bans in other cities

Next meeting is September 3, 2014 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

7:35 PM - Meeting adjourned