



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

May 6, 2016 Meeting Notes
 Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
 Room 4901
 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
 Chair: Chris Toman
 Vice-Chair: Ben Grace

Committee Members & CAC Staff	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Quinn Apuzzo	Y	Tim Croll	Director, Solid Waste Planning and Program Division
David Della	Y	Becca Fong	SPU Staff
Anna Dyer	Y		
Ben Grace	Y (p)	Yolanda Pon	Guest, Seattle King County Health
Holly Griffith	N		
Katie Kennedy	N		
Jamie Lee	Y		
Heather Levy	Y		
Rodney Proctor	N		
Joseph Ringold	Y		
Emily Rothenberg	Y		
Chris Toman	Y		
CAC Staff			
Linda Rogers, Interim CAC Program Support	Y		
Sego Jackson, SPU Solid Waste LOB Liaison	Y		
Sheryl Shapiro, CAC Program Manager	Y		

ACTION ITEMS:

- ✓ Privacy of garbage can ruling: Does that mean this also applies to recycling and yard waste?
Think about it for discussion next month
- ✓ Send Becca Fong any suggestions for updates on the various Solid Waste Outreach flyers

1. Regular Business – call to order at 5:38 PM

- Meeting notes from April were approved.

2. Solid Waste Branch Updates Briefing: Tim Croll, SPU Division Director, Solid Waste Planning & Programs

North Transfer Station opening delayed; new target date: September

- Working through issues with contractors
- Payment system for customers: In order for customers to pay bills using credit cards the billing system needs to be Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant.
 - City of Seattle is in the highest tier of standards for credit card users.
- SWAC Field trip prior to opening

NCIS (new customer billing system) – Going live in September 2016

Viaduct closure impacts: not seeing a lot of problems with trucks getting through. Driving challenges seem to be more coming in from south; not so much from north

Food Waste composting at Pacific Clean:

- Using Cedar Grove as backup; not able to take waste to east side of WA
- Risk assessment to determine actual risk for apple maggots; will take food waste but not yard waste unless it's ground up and reaches the temperatures required to ensure all apple maggot eggs, etc., are dead. Not optimistic will come together.
- Court law suit relating to food contaminants in garbage: Judge ruled current practices as legal, but language in the administrative rule suggested a deeper level of inspection of garbage which the judge deemed unconstitutional.
 - Washington State Constitution has higher standards for privacy than at the Federal level
 - "Searching" garbage is illegal; if the inspector "sees at a glance" food waste, pet waste, etc. this would be considered as in "plain view."
 - Plaintiffs didn't hold this view arguing that if a 10% or greater level was cited, that this could not have been known using "plain view."
 - Before 1/1/2015, the lids were opened and inspected; excessive levels of recyclables only led to the garbage not being picked up.

Question: What about multifamily properties?

Answer: For multifamily properties, there is no privacy issue as all residents materials are together in one bin.

Question: Does the ruling apply to multifamily or commercial properties?

Answer: No.

- SPU is continuing to inspect and tag for food waste and recycling for multifamily complexes and commercial customers.
 - Have had a program for recycling for multifamily and commercial; have fined some multifamily for non-compliance; not aware of any for commercial fines.
 - Single family – have never implemented \$1 fine; primary complaint is looking at garbage.

Question: Was the challenge about the nature of the materials or the nature of the “search”?

Answer: Tim Croll stated: Looking at the garbage rather than the fine is the issue; constitutional privacy was about the looking. The fact that SPU has been doing this for years was not a persuasive argument. Suit was about food waste; would apply equally to other programs.

A member asked about far-reaching impacts of the suit.

Tim Croll indicated SWAC may want to give advice on this matter. He sees easy ways to repair the matter without going through an appeal. Examples are: revise the Seattle Municipal Code based on a “plan view” glance for any contaminants, not identified as percentage. Could go back to plain view for composting and recycling; or could give up on the program.

Question: To what extent will this impact the characterization study? Is it at the route level?

Response: Program is to characterize what sector the garbage comes from; not studying down to individual household level. Segó stated that work in the areas over last few years on behavior studies will in the future need to think further about opt out options; need to think through other options. (SPU has not done this type of individual –based waste characterization.)

Question: To what extent does this apply to a private company?

Answer: a government would be required to protect privacy; private companies are not held to this standard. Even if garbage becomes property of a city, that city is required to protect privacy rights. Privacy rights may exist even when there is not a property right.

Privacy of garbage can ruling: Does that mean this also applies to recycling and yard waste? Think about it for discussion next month

3. Updates and Observations on Illegal Dumping/Encampment Services: Tim Croll, SPU Division Director, Solid Waste Planning & Programs

- 4 unauthorized encampments; but will provide garbage pickup
- Veronica Fincher provided the comments below for SWAC through an email brought to the meeting by Segó Jackson. Veronica had planned to attend but was unable to do so.
 - We can by no means assume that all encampments are the same and will respond the same way. Each encampment is its own community and encampments can differ greatly from each other. Some attract a young population, some are heavily drug-focused, some have a lot of people with mental illnesses, some have long-term residents, and some tend to attract more short-term residents. Just like for Seattle as a whole, we need to do our best to understand each community we’re working with.
 - We get mixed response from encampment residents. A lot of residents are thankful for the pilot. They don’t want to live in a pile of trash. There are also residents who are really suspicious of outsiders. Have experienced people yelling, and witnessed someone yelling at

- a REACH staff person. It makes it challenging when some people at the site work hard to keep it clean, but others don't want to participate.
- The pilot was started on a fast track at encampments that were already a mess to begin with. If we roll this program out to other sites in the future, we should clean them up first and then provide garbage collection when the residents return.
 - There are 4 unauthorized encampments; but will provide garbage pickup at other sites:
 - International District/Chinatown areas
 - Airport Way S. & 7th Ave.
 - Dearborn St. & I-5
 - S. King St. & I-5
 - S. Jackson St. & I-5
 - Pilot has now been going on for 4 weeks, going into week 5; passed out prepaid 116 bags; only 35 bags of garbage have been picked up.

Question: What kinds of things are finding in other bags?

Answer: Trash, wet clothes, clothes; 11 bulky items – couch, typically a shopping cart filled with junk. Fear of needles – if seen, leave bag; have contractor pick up; have seen needles only once. Needle cleanup has been required. Have not had to call firm to handle human waste.

- Found: low participation, but some willingness to use service, albeit in different bags, or loose; convenience is important in promoting use.
- City had efforts to cleanup encampments – FAS come in with notice – once and almost twice FAS cleaned up a test site; had to be call off to not do the cleanup. REACH talks to folks; residents thought if they used the bags, they would be left alone. Felt double crossed when came in and cleaned up. Lot of new stuff with no policies.
- King Street: A question has arisen: Is the pile of stuff really junk or is it really someone's stuff that should be kept? Will have to investigate further.
- Another problem = history/legacy trash previous to current residents; we could consider cleaning an area and then pass out bags to keep from getting like it was before.
- To date, have used 30% of budget; talking with budget office as to whether to continue after funding runs out.

Question: Is there going to be an evaluation at the end of the project?

Answer: There will be an evaluation. Staff has done a good job on reports; lots of information has been gathered. Have to review it to see what it reveals.

A member indicated that when they cleaned up Saturday, a 20 yard dumpster was filled. Noted when picking up on King St. Community site, those who park there can tell you if the pile has been there for quite some time. They can also tell if new tents or couches have shown up.

Question: For the Jackson St pick up: which side of the street is it?

Answer: Believe it's on south side. Residents kept saying needed more bags. REACH workers were there.

4. Outreach Materials and Tools: Becca Fong, Sego Jackson, SPU Staff

Solid Waste Outreach Collateral: See PowerPoint for details

Residential:

Where does it go? Flyers indicating what goes where

- Caps on for plastic bottles:
 - Caps on – talked about work done by industry to confirm that caps on is now best practice. If cap is attached to empty bottle, cap travels through process of beverage bottle recycling.
 - If captured all bottle caps on all bottles currently recycled in Seattle, would be about 150 tons of additional plastic captured for recycling; tiny items can add up to a lot. Since there are about 25 tons per rail car in the “garbage train”, this would be equivalent to 6 rail cars per year of just bottle caps.
 - Question: Are you concerned if the bottle is not emptied?
 - Answer: Yes, Which is why we are combining the message “empty” with “replace cap.” With our past message of “caps off,” you could still see some bottles with liquids that were capped arriving at the MRF.
 - Will see Sustainable Packaging Coalition logo for “Empty & Replace Cap on more bottles in the future.
- Large plastic bulky items – rigid plastic;
- Curbside collection of used cooking oil – up to 2 gallons for every collection, like deep fryer oil
 - different than FOG wastes, which go in the garbage. In some areas included with yard waste; Cedar Grove concerned about heat and spontaneous combustion

Curbwaste and Conserve goes to all single and multifamily; published an average of 3 issues per year; each highlights different programs

- Readers have expressed appreciation that as we advertise programs; this gives good feedback as to how many read and pay attention.
 - Question: Is it delivered to Seattle Housing Authority residents?
 - Answer: Yes.
- Plastics cannot be composted; plastic bag contamination is high. We want to highlight plastic bags and need to talk about compostable plastic bags.
- There is confusion about what can and cannot be composted, and plastic a major problem.

@ Your Service publication: goes with bill every two months; similar to curb waste ad highlights what going on.

Multifamily:

“Yellow cards” Property managers/Friends of Recycling & Composting order educational materials about SPU programs/campaigns with these cards. Haulers can provide items; can order on line. Get a lot of cards back in mail.

- Residents of Apartments and Condominiums? It is mailed directly to property manager
 - Question: How do tenants get information?
 - Answer: Varies; some direct mail to residents; up to property manager to give info to residents
- Apt and condos Food and compostables flyer
- A member remarked that SHA gets a lot of questions about putting grease in compost

Commercial:

- Focuses on branding of color coded recycling and images.
 - Blue, Recycling and chasing arrows image
 - Green, Food waste composting – chasing arrows with an apple core
 - Black, Garbage – trash can icon

Recycling & Food Waste (FW)

Commercial – Food Service requirements

For businesses – front and back of house information

- Posters can be customized; more relevant for businesses
- Working on updating library of images available for posters that are relevant for wide variety of businesses.

5. Outlook on Upcoming Recycling Report:

Tim Croll, SPU Division Director, Solid Waste Planning & Programs

- Recycling report comes out in June; role of SWAC is to write a letter providing comment; turnaround is very short; started short meeting – SPU willing to modify the timing of letter to be within month of SWAC receiving the report – rather than such a short turnaround
- More likely than not – will not get to 60% in 2015; organics increased by 15,000 tons last year; garbage up 7,000 tons from last year; first time in a while for growth in disposal. If all other recycling remained same, this would bring us about 58.5%. Big issue is commercial. Assume we will be just a bit short.
- Plan this year is continuing compost requirement. Will be in compliance with court ruling.
- Gray shading in report: What has been done in response to last year’s recommendations?

- Focus on ethnic businesses.
- Recommended revision to compostable food service require more compostables – have not done that yet; another target for focus.
- Unlikely in near future to propose a new ordinance from recommend recycle or compost to shall be compostable only.
- The construction debris sorting pilot was not continued– distracted by suit, and north transfer station building; can maybe focus more in 2016.
- Would ask in light of the court case, should we chill out or still be aggressive on the ban on the disposal of compostables? This would be reasonable for SWAC to talk about.
- Diversion rate in 2014: 57.1%
- P2 #4: proposed new requirements. An example would be if we required a compost bin on every floor of bldg. Parallel handling of compost and recycling; be on par; might be new construction needs a certain amount of space; require more space for composting.

Question: Is the guesstimated 2015 recycling rate, overall for all sectors? Answer: Yes

- 2016 priorities – recycle 60% - goal for all streams combined – is really diversion – recycling and food waste

Question: Do you get any feeling for certain sectors going up?

Answer: About half and half for residential and commercial

- Group: scheduled time to put out opinions, recommendations, worthy to be included in letter, now a good time to mention
- A member suggested that given current climate, understand shifting on packaging; shift to proper packaging and labeling. Tinting requirements for items packaged outside city of Seattle
- Anna indicated that with the confusion about what compostable and what is not seems to be the biggest barrier for MF in diverting food waste. Need clear labeling so consumer knows what is compostable and non-compostable
- Is labeling still part of Bill that is being crafted? Yes intent is make improvements to bag and foam tinting so that the consumer can be more successful in determining what is compostable, what is recyclable and what is garbage.
- Members interested in work on transcreation of materials and outreach.
- In the previous letter, regarding the 2014 report, SWAC emphasized support for more attention to commercial sector. We don't yet know what the 2015 report will show for this sector. Segó has done some work to get better reporting by some regarding reuse and additional recyclers.

Question: Are we going to have an opportunity to interact with City Council members?

Answer: Usually in June the CAC officers meet with the Chair of the City Council SPU Subcommittee chairperson; let Sheryl know if there is specific timing to request.

- Recommendation: Support ordinance to clarify packaging, tinting and labeling
- Praise for SPU equity work, and new resident outreach efforts; and transcreation efforts

6. Field Trip Planning Update and Next Steps: Field Trip Committee

- Best times for most People Fri 5/20 (7), Tues 5/31 (7), Fri 6/3 (6)
- Contacted Nicole at Wave – with some notice can do this
- Look at Fri 5/20 – send out email with when and where, time 2-5

7. Around the Table

- May 25 : all-CAC meeting on RSJ and Equity work– Sheryl will send appointments and e-mail reminder

Meeting Adjourned 7:30

DRAFT