



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

January 4, 2017 Meeting Notes
 Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
 Room 4901
 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
 Chair: Holly Griffith
 Vice-Chair: Quin Apuzzo

Committee Members & CAC Staff	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Quinn Apuzzo	Y	Susan Fife-Ferris	Division Director, SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management
Anna Dyer	Y	Sego Jackson	Solid Waste LOB Liaison
Holly Griffith	Y	Lisa Sepanski	Project Manager, King County Solid Waste Division
Jamie Lee	N	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Heather Levy	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Emily Newcomer	Y		
Emily Rothenberg	P	James Subocz	Guest
Chris Toman	N	Jennifer Leigh	Guest
Colin Groark	Y	Hoa Pantastico	Guest
		Tim Nickell	Guest
		Alan Garvey	Guest
		Marilyn	Guest
		Amelia Fujikawa	Guest

ACTION ITEMS:

- Sheryl to look into field trip opportunities: investigating the possibility of SWAC members sitting in a listening to the City of Seattle call center, and checking Socorro regarding a possible field trip to multi-family properties w/ a “where does it go?” game. Possible a senior center?
- Sheryl to send the list of SBP meetings to meeting guests via email.
- Susan Fife-Ferris to work with the SWAC leadership group on the monthly garbage tonnage reports, and to develop meaningful information on what is being diverted.
- The following are Plastics-related recommended reading provided at the meeting.
 - Stemming the Tide: Land-based strategies for a plastic free ocean <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/marine-debris/mckinsey-report-files/full-report-stemming-the.pdf>
 - The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the Future of Plastics Ellen MacArthur Foundation. You can access both the 2016 and recently released 2017 report here: <http://newplasticseconomy.org/>

1. Regular Business

SWAC Chair, Holly Griffith called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM

- Meeting notes from December were approved.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits, bathrooms, and noted that she would be following up with more details concerning emergency supplies and procedures at a future meeting.

2. Solid Waste Updates & Quarterly Tonnage Report

SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management Division Director Susan Fife-Ferris and Solid Waste LOB Liaison, Sege Jackson, provided a few Solid Waste line of business updates.

- **New Hires.** David Hare was hired as SPU's new Solid Waste Lead Planner. He is replacing Aurora Mendoza, who temporarily held that position. He comes from Hawaii where he was working for a Cedar Grove affiliate.
- **North Transfer Station Opening event.** Susan reported a large turnout at the event, including many Advisory Committee members. She noted they are still working out the bugs, and are in the process of hiring a reuse vendor. Interviews are this week and they hope to have a contract in place soon. She said the biggest challenge has been attracting customers back from the South Station.
- **Organics Contract RFP.** The RFP is for approximately 40% of material generated in the City. The vendor open house meeting was today and proposals are due on 1/20/17. Susan said once they have established the contract, they will bring more information back to SWAC.
- **Quarterly Garbage Tonnage report.** Susan said that SPU is on track to have approximately the same haul tonnage as 2015. There has been a down-trend in the tonnage that has been shipped to the landfill. Susan said she wants to work with the SWAC leadership group to develop meaningful information on what is being diverted.
 - **Committee member question:** Does this include construction demolition debris?
 - **Answer:** This only includes what's going to Arlington. Demolition debris goes to a different facility.
 - **Committee member comment:** A note for our guests: I think questions come up on what this tonnage report includes, every time it's presented.
 - **Answer:** It might be helpful if it had a variety of information and clearly identify what's being included in those numbers. Whatever we bring back in the future, we'll make sure it's more clear. It may be that we bring specific CDL information.
- **South Transfer Station Safety Audit.** Staff is reviewing the report. Susan said that safety is a number one priority, and staff will look for opportunities for changes. Once they have highlights, Susan said they will likely bring more information back to the Committee.
- **Sege provided a legislature update.** Sege noted that all are on SPU's legislative agenda, and that briefings with the City's new lobbyist began today:
 - Solar Incentive Legislation, which includes producer responsibility.
 - 360 Can legislation is not yet back, but we heard it would be introduced again.
 - Paint legislation will be back.

- There's a new pharmaceutical bill, which would require a producer-financed and provided program, like the King County producer responsibility program, be provided State-wide.
- **Sego also spoke to the Governor's budget**, which came out with a cut to the Coordinated Prevention Grant Program. He noted that it was cut 50% last time.
 - **Committee member question:** Is there a plan to do something similar to what you did last year when the budget was cut in half?
 - **Answer:** I don't know what the strategy will be, but the new lobbyist will be up to speed on that. SPU will be in support of all these bills (except the 360 can bill, if it is introduced) so we'll be keeping an eye on that. The 360 can bill might be good for SWAC to weigh in on, if introduced
 - **Committee member question:** What is funded by the CPG program?
 - **Answer:** For some agencies, it's their entire moderate risk waste or recycling staff. For SPU, it has funded programs like the garden hotline, and some of the other contracted work with Tilth..
 - **Susan:** CPG also requires a match of 25%. So, another cut could mean that other jurisdictions might just re-allocate that matching fund.

3. Commingled Recycling Report and Plastics: Lisa Sepanski, Project Manager, King County Solid Waste Division with Quinn Apuzzo, Waste Zero Manager, Recology and Sego Jackson, Solid Waste LOB Liaison

Sego introduced Lisa Sepanski and Quinn Apuzzo. Both Sego and Quinn commended Lisa for being a champion of this report. Quinn and Lisa provided a brief history of key policy actions related to Solid Waste in Washington that led to the Commingled Recycling Report:

- 1969: Washington passed the first Solid Waste Management Act.
- 1984: Solid Waste Management Act is amended to focus on 3 priorities (in order): Waste Prevention, Recycling and Resource Recovery, and Landfill. Moved to one bin to increase diversion. But with success, came quite a bit of contamination.
- ~2000: ~80% of Washington had access to curbside recycling. Still seeing issues with contamination.
- 2006: EPA got involved to address contamination issues with commingled programs.
- 2013: SW region developed and began implementation a set of best practices \to address contamination
- 2012-2016: NW region worked on recommendations to address contamination in their commingled curbside programs.
- Oct 2016: Published the "Optimizing the Commingled Recycling Systems in Northwest Washington" Report, which provides recommendations.

Lisa walked committee members through:

- The background of the report
- The jurisdictions and agencies and companies involved in the workgroup
- The goals of the report
- The organization of the report
- An overview of the report recommendations.
- The top commingled recycling issues

Commodity Issue: Plastic Caps

- **Committee member question:** What's the recommendation when you have those caps attached to a different material type? Like the chicken broth box, or the juice box?
 - **Sego:** "Plastic caps back on plastic bottles." That's how this workgroup worked on messaging.
 - **Susan:** But that's a huge behavioral change for this region, who have been told differently for the past decade.

Commodity Issues: Shredded paper

- **Committee member question:** Did your group talk about putting them in compost bins?
 - **Lisa:** We had to draw a red line that we were not talking about compost.
- **Guest: Is there a minimum size of paper you can recycle?**
 - **Quinn:** All of the municipal recycling programs we partner with accept shredded paper, so we don't have a minimum guideline. 8.5x11 would be optimal.
 - **Sego:** I think the Solid Waste group said 3" square. If you have a smaller piece of paper, it's probably a waste to put it in there. The shredded paper dust is a real issue as well at Material Recovery Facilities.
 - **Lisa:** I made a note about that for messaging. We should probably look into size issues.

Commodity Issue: Poly-coated (milk cartons, juice boxes, cups, frozen food boxes) paper. Lisa said this commodity offers good fiber, but to be effectively processed it must go to a tissue mill, and there are no tissue mills in the NW. The nearest one is Mexico, and there are mills in Korea and Thailand. In our region, these materials usually being bailed with mixed paper and could be considered a contaminant. Because of the relatively low volume, the MRFs don't have an incentive to make a grade 52 and market it. There needs to be work done in engaging the Carton Council on this issue. The Carton Council represents the makers of some of these packages and have stated a commitment to improve recycling.

- **Committee member question:** For those getting bailed as mixed paper today, are there markets for that?
 - **Quinn:** Buyers haven't rejected bales due to the presence of poly-coated cartons, but it's unclear how this material is getting recycled at the mill.
 - **Committee member question:** But as far as recycling messaging goes, we're not changing the messaging about not putting them into their recycling?
 - **Lisa:** As you can see, we didn't recommend they not take it. We couldn't get data on what happens to them.
 - **Sego:** The purpose of the report is to acknowledge these issues exist, and is a working document to provide some guidance.
- **Committee member question:** I was surprised to hear about the aseptic cartons. I'm wondering to what extent Tetra Pak is involved in this?
 - **Sego:** They're very involved, and as far as industry folks go they're top notch. They're the one entity that has helped financed MRF equipment, and has put their money where their mouth is more than most, but more action is needed.
 - **Lisa:** And the Carton Council was represented at most of these work group meetings.
 - There's also space constraints for holding it long enough to get a shipment.

Commodity Issue: Compostable and degradable plastics

- **Committee member question:** So, we buy compostable utensils for events, and no matter what signage we do, at least 20% end up in the recycling container. Is that a huge deal?
 - **Sego:** The compostable foodware is prohibitive in the recycling bales, but to my knowledge we haven't had enough of an issue to pose a problem.
 - **Committee member question:** But isn't some PLA recyclable?
 - **Sego:** You can recycle some PLA and there are some technologies to sort it, but we're a long way from that. Also, there are some plant-based PET packaging that can be recycled with petroleum-based PET. That type of packaging is not compostable.

Sego reviewed the implementation workgroups that were developed in this report:

- Education/Messaging Group
- Contracting/Harmonization Workgroup
- Packaging Industry Collaboration Implementation Work Group (PICIWG): How to collaborate with industry groups to move some of these actions forward. Examples include:
 - WRAP program in WA and OR
 - **Committee member question:** (Regarding thick plastic film) Is that all collected at the retailer collection points? There's a bin at my local grocery store where I take my plastic bags, but I don't know if they take it.
 - **Sego:** The retailers probably don't know if they accept it either. We need to get the retailers on board first.
 - **Guest comment:** We get a lot of those questions every day (at QFC). We recycle our own generated plastic film, about 35 gallon bags on pallets per day. We've had to turn away people who bring contaminated plastic, but we'll take it if we can recycle it.
 - Plastics Recovery Facility (PRF) in NW. A PRF is an advanced recovery facility for plastics that separates further, and can even pelletize/flake some resins and ship directly to domestic markets. Sego said they are looking at local interest, and are interested in bringing in industry partners for financing. There is the possibility of industry-pooled funds to contribute to financing a facility. For instance, the Closed Loop Fund provided some financing to a PRF in Maryland.
 - **Committee member question:** I understand needing to draw a line between recycling and composting discussions, but as I think about public education/messaging and recognizing that not every part of the Country has a robust curbside recycling program, that as we rethink messaging we should think about it in a holistic way. The pizza box or shredded paper is a great example. I hope these two conversations (between recycling and composting) can merge, especially when it gets to the customer. We have an opportunity to forge this in Washington State.

Sego provided a special update on plastics. Sego noted that plastics, especially single-use, will be a growing issue. The motivation for industry addressing them is that if they can't address them at a consumer level, it will quickly become a producer responsibility issue. Sego provided some recommended reading (links to be emailed out):

- Stemming the Tide: Land-based strategies for a plastic free ocean
<http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/marine-debris/mckinsey-report-files/full-report-stemming-the.pdf>
- The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. You can access both the 2016 and recently released 2017 report here:
<http://newplasticseconomy.org/>

4. 2017 SWAC Topics/Work Plan, & Field Trip Discussion

February SWAC Meeting: Sheryl facilitated a discussion around attending an SBP community outreach meeting in lieu of having the February SWAC meeting. Committee members shared their thoughts:

- Don't think I can squeeze in both. Can only attend two of the CRP meetings
- I would agree
- I land in a similar space
- **Committee Chair:** Consensus is to skip the February meeting.

Field Trip Brainstorm: Sheryl walked committee members through a field trip brainstorming session. Committee members and affiliated staff provided the following suggestions:

- Strategic Materials (the glass processing facility).
 - Sego: This could be linked with other facilities in the area, such as Recology.
- Past field trips: Last year we went to the Zoo. In the past, we went to Ardagh- they make glass bottles. We also have been to a MRF, and have done wine tasting and a visit to Cedar Grove.
- Nucor (Steel). It's a fascinating field trip, and a good way to see how materials are utilized locally.
- Touring the SPU Contact Center.
 - Sheryl said we can investigate that.
- Multi-family compost tour by SHA. The previous one was lightly attended, but was great. Anna said she would be happy to offer the tour again.
- We could go to multi-family properties and do a "where does it go?" game. Wasn't there a senior center? Marcia / FORC (Friends of Recycling and Compost). Such an interesting and important environment for us to experience. I think of that as an outreach opportunity more than a field trip.
 - Sheryl would be interested to hear how they communicate with the residents there.
 - Sheryl said she can check with Socorro on that.
- Sego: Ballard Brewery and their anaerobic digester / HORSE system. Hope to see a Wiser system somewhere too. PCC is using that system. We'd need to map it out.
- Sheryl: Can we tour the back of the house at QFC?
 - Guest: That might be possible.
- Urban Death Project
 - **Multiple members expressed interest**
- SWAC Committee Chair, Holly, noted that the April SWAC meeting being held at the North Transfer Station would count as one field trip.

- Committee member comment: I like the idea of the NTS meeting serving as the spring field trip.

Prioritizing workplanning topics: Sheryl ask Committee members to rank the “TBD” workplanning topics not yet assigned to the 2017 SWAC workplan. Committee Members were asked to provide “sad faces” next to topics they would be devastated not to have on the 2017 workplan. Holly collected the sheets.

- **Committee member question:** For the waste metrics, where are those presentations happening?
 - **Answer:** The tale of 3 cities has been scheduled for June. The remainder will have to be scheduled as the SWAC Officers see fit.

5. Strategic Business Plan Update and Outreach Opportunities

Sheryl reviewed the CAC engagement timeline relative to SPU’s SBP outreach activities:

- Attending a SBP Community meeting between 1/31-2/11
- An SBP update at the SWAC March meeting
- A possible SWAC / chair presence at the March 22 CRP meeting
- **Committee member comment:** I want to be realistic on whether we can still achieve “de-densifying” the SWAC agendas when you skip one meeting. But things are fluid, and you try to accommodate.
- **Committee member comment:** Might want to remove something from March, given the discussion around the SBP could be long.
 - **Sheryl:** “SWAC Outreach & Engagement” can be dropped and conducted via email. Don’t want it to fall too much later in the year, but could populate a document and have that discussion over email.
 - **Committee member comment:** The most effective way to do that, more than an email or spreadsheet, is to just share events at the Around the Table.

6. Around the table

- Heather provided a quick update of the WA Organics Contamination Reduction Workgroup.
 - **Sego:** Further discussion on this scheduled for Q4, or when the roadshow is ready.

Adjourned 7:35PM