



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

March 7, 2018 Meeting Notes
 Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
 Room 4901
 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Chair: Holly Griffith
Vice-Chair: Quinn Apuzzo
Secretary: Adam Maurer

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff	Role
Quinn Apuzzo	Y	Susan Fife-Ferris	Division Director, SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management
Holly Griffith	Y	Sego Jackson	Solid Waste LOB Policy Liaison
Heather Levy	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Emily Newcomer	Y	Marcy Sanders	Solid Waste Inspection & Compliance Division
Chris Toman	N	Sally Hulsman	Solid Waste Inspection & Compliance Division
Colin Groark	Y	Guests	Affiliation
James Subocz	Y	Alessandra Pistoia	Guest
Alan Garvey	P	Adam Kennedy	Guest
Amelia Fujikawa	Y	Christian Hoogerheyde	Guest
Adam Maurer	Y	Heather Trim	Guest, ZeroWaste Washington
Rachtha Dahn	Y	Kyla Wilson	Guest, ZeroWaste Washington
		Dylan de Thomas	Speaker, Guest, The Recycling Partnership
		Dirk Wassink	Guest, Second Use
		Lan Nguyen	Guest

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Regular Business

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

- Members and guests introduced themselves.
- Heather Levy was thanked for her four years serving on SWAC.
- Meeting notes from February were reviewed and approved.
- Susan indicated emergency exits and bathrooms.

2. Solid Waste LOB Updates & Quarterly Report

SWAC Policy Liaison, Sego Jackson, provided a few Solid Waste Line of Business and legislative updates.

- **Plastic Straw and Utensil Ban and Director’s Rule:** Full steam ahead on outreach regarding the ban. Sego shared outreach materials with SWAC members that are being delivered to stakeholders and the public. SWAC members reviewed a Draft of the Director’s Rule associated with temporary waivers. A 30-day comment period begins next week on the Director’s rule. Sego reviewed planned waivers, as well as some of the outreach being conducted, including attendance at the Seattle Hospitality Summit: <http://www.hospitalitysummit.org/seattle>

By ordinance, temporary one-year waivers can only be provided under two circumstances:

- where commonly used recycling and composting technology cannot process the food service ware, or
- where suitable alternative products that meet performance and food health and safety standards are unavailable.

While plastic straws, utensils, cocktail picks, and drink stirrers cannot be recycled through local processing facilities, there are abundant alternatives available that are durable, reusable, or compostable in our local composting facilities.

However, there are a small number of exceptions for specific needs and circumstances, and specific temporary waivers are proposed as follows:

Waivers are provided for a period of one year beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2019; therefore, the requirement that all single-use food-service ware be either compostable or recyclable shall not apply to:

- *Disposable long-handled thick plastic soda spoons when required and used for thick drinks and identified as non-compostable by the food-service business to its customers.*
- *Disposable flexible plastic drinking straws when needed by customers due to medical or physical conditions and for whom flexible compostable paper straws are unsuitable. Otherwise, straws must be compostable or designed to be reusable.*
- *Metal foil, metal foil-faced papers, and engineered composite papers used to wrap hot food such as hamburgers and burritos.*
- *Portion cups (two ounces and under), if used for hot foods or requiring lids and identified as non-compostable by the food-service business to its customers.*

- **CAC Member:** [Regarding temporary one-year waivers] What about bubble tea straws?
 - **Staff response:** There are compostable versions of bubble tea straws, but that could be discussed if there are not enough options. There are many new products coming onto the market also, though we are concerned that they have not gone through appropriate field testing before being offered.

- **HB 1047 - Secure Medicine Return Legislature:** Passed both House and Senate and will be signed soon by the Governor. Gave kudos to Zero Waste Washington for their efforts.
- **SB 6413 – Reduction of toxic chemicals in firefighting activities:** Passed both houses; requires concurrence from the Senate before going to Governor for signature.
- **HB 2658 - Concerning use of perfluorinated chemicals in food packaging:** Passed both houses and will be signed by the Governor. Gave kudos to Zero Waste Washington and Toxic Free Futures.
- **Meeting with QFC President.** Segó shared that a SWAC member had facilitated a meeting with QFC's president and additional details will be provided at a later meeting.
- **Paint Take It Back Program.**
 - GreenSheen opened a recycling facility in Kent in January. They have begun taking in latex paint and will build quantities there until they have enough to start processing which is expected to begin in 4-6 months.

- Supplies went out to the initial 21 collection sites in early February and the program launched. Since then, 7 more sites have joined for a total of 28. Out of those 28, 15 collection sites are in King County and 5 of those are in Seattle.
 - Collection sites set their own quantity limits and price to recycle with most offering recycling for \$4-5 per gallon container (regardless of the amount inside the can). There is no quantity limit at the GreenSheen facility in Kent.
- **2019 Water System Plan Update.** Segó provided a brief overview of the purpose of the plan, which is under review by the Water System Advisory Committee. An email will be shared with SWAC Members on Monday, March 12 those interested in participating in the public review period.
 - **The new Quarterly Solid Waste Report was shared.** Susan invited comments via email.
 - **Measurement Matters Conference.** Susan provided an update on the conference she attended in Tennessee the prior week. She offered to bring back learnings at a future meeting.

3. National Sword Overview

Dylan de Thomas, based out of Portland Oregon and with The Recycling Partnership, joined the meeting via video conference. Dylan provided an overview of “National Sword,” China's customs inspection program, subsequent scrap ban and associated geographic-specific impacts of the ban.

Segó Jackson shared the impact we are seeing at local (Washington) collectors, including difficulty in moving banned recyclables (specifically, mixed plastics and mixed paper bales) and the significantly reduced market price for those recyclables.

Susan discussed how this event may be different than past instances where market prices have dropped, saying this may have a more prolonged impact. This necessitates both short-term planning as well as long-term option analysis to encourage the development of more domestic sorting and markets.

Both Susan and Dylan talked about the ethical issue with moving recyclables to countries where the facilities for processing are inadequate. They spoke of a moral obligation to protect human health and the environment, and implicit contract with public trust to make every effort to recycle the materials that we are asking citizens to sort.

- **Guest:** How do inspections actually happen in the Ports in China?
 - **Guest speaker response:** It depends on the Port, and how well trained the operatives are. Some are actually breaking apart bales. There are reports that they’re going by smell, both of which are of concern to MRFs. We have also heard of China demands for video that shows the loading of containers, and then attaching those videos to the bales.
 - **Staff response:** I have also heard of mock inspections taking place domestically, to see if they could address contaminants before shipping to China.
- **Guest:** I heard this the other day, related to another topic: “Give people tools and help, instead of just preaching to them.” I’m worried we’re not giving the tools to deal with this challenge.
 - **Guest speaker response:** It is difficult, communicating this kind of topic with the public. For example, I am available to talk about the National Sword to local news outlets, but

not sure a 20-minute presentation would be readily-consumed. A lot of the work we do with the Partnership is around positive messaging, such as “thank you’s” when they are participating correctly.

- **CAC Member:** Susan’s point about this event feeling different, I would second that. China is wanting to become a 1st world country; this is a shift that will not go back.
 - **Staff response:** In the early 2000s I did a lot of work with MRFs. One of the issues we had were that too many containers were going empty to China. They offered to allow us to start shipping trash and recyclables for that weight. We need to focus on keeping this out of the landfill, but ultimately, we’re commodity brokers. Recycling is a global business and we need to remember that.
 - **Guest speaker response:** I’d also like to echo that this is a huge opportunity.

4. Domestic Plastic Recycling Process Workshop

SWAC Policy Liaison Segó Jackson and Quinn Apuzzo, SWAC Member and Waste Zero Manager with Recology CleanScapes, discussed the Domestic Processing of Mixed Plastics meeting hosted by Seattle Public Utilities and King County LinkUp program on January 30, 2018. A draft of Preliminary Findings and Next Steps document was shared in advance of the meeting.

Segó shared the agenda of the meeting, which was focused on how to ensure domestic sorting and processing of mixed (#3-7) plastics. Attendees included key SPU and King County staff, and representatives from other government agencies, the recycling industry, the Closed Loop Fund, and Zero Waste Washington. We had representation from Department of Ecology, Department of Commerce and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. Also, some representatives from Oregon. Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF) were represented on a panel, and we heard from plastic recycling facilities, before breaking into small groups to discuss options and actions that can be taken.

Quinn added that she felt there was energy and enthusiasm around the idea of a local Secondary MRF or PRF, but how to accomplish it was harder. “How do we make an economic situation that moves us in that direction?” she asked.

5. Solid Waste 101

Solid Waste Planning and Program Management Division Director, Susan Fife-Ferris, provided an overview of solid waste management in Washington State and Seattle. The goal of the presentation was to provide a history lesson in local solid waste management; Susan will be returning at a later date to give a more SPU-specific overview of Solid Waste.

- **Guest comment:** In your timeline, you missed the 2017 Green / Brown Bag Tinting Issue. I don’t think there’s any other Cities doing that.
 - **Staff response:** I’ll be sure to highlight that in the next iteration of the SWAC 101.
- **CAC Member:** I want to be clear that at some point Seattle decided to be a leader in [the solid waste] space; do you have any thoughts on what prompted that decision/culture?
 - **Staff response:** I don’t know that I can answer that, but we live in a naturally beautiful area that is very environmentally sensitive and aware. We also have civic leadership that has been strong for a long time. There has been a lot of forward thinking people civically engaged in the City. And a lot of people move here because they enjoy that, so it’s bred into the folks who come here.
 - **Segó:** Also, the incinerator event (the garbage barge) was very deep for some people.

- Susan was chair of SWAC in early 1990s, and chair of the Solid Waste committee for the Chamber of Commerce. Through that, she started a group that under an umbrella organization started the “Business and Industry Recycling Venture” cooperative effort between Seattle and King County and Chamber of King County. She shared that she moved from being a lawyer to a consultant because she enjoyed the work so much. Susan shared a brochure that she worked on from the early 1990s, explaining that she has a long history and affinity with solid waste and Solid Waste Advisory Committees.

6. Around the Table & Community Insights

We ran out of time for around the table; if members or guests have items to share they can send them to Natasha to email out to Committee.

Adjourned 7:35PM