



**SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)**

November 6, 2019 Meeting Notes  
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

*Chair: Dirk Wassink*  
*Vice-Chair: Alessandra Pistoia*

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff	Role
Quinn Apuzzo	N	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Emily Newcomer	Y	Socorro Medina	Lead, Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan
Alan Garvey	Y	Susan Fife-Ferris	Director, Solid Waste Planning and Program Management Division
Adam Maurer	Y	Jemini Davis	Solid Waste Administrative Support
Rachtha Dahn	Y		
Alessandra Pistoia	Y		
Dirk Wassink	Y		
Nico Onoda-McGuire	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Kelsie Blanthorn	Y	Joel Dashnaw	Guest
		Whitney Williams	Guest
			Guest
			Guest

**1. Regular Business**

- SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM
- Sego is attending the Extended Producer Responsibility workshop in British Columbia.
- Members and guests introduced themselves. Prompted by the SWAC chair, they each shared a “Favorite Thanksgiving food.”
- Members helped indicate emergency exits and exit procedures.
- Meeting notes from September and October were approved.
- Last call for written nominations for SWAC Officers.

**SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink shared the following from Sego Jackson:**

- Any additional nominations need to be provided in writing tonight to Sheryl Shapiro, CAC Program Manager. Instructions will be sent from Sego Jackson, SWAC Liaison. Voting is expected to be completed by December 4.
- Dirk reviewed the nominations process and
- The meeting with all the SWAC groups has been scheduled for 12/13. All SWAC members are listed as attending. Please let one of the Chairs know if you will be unable to attend. Meeting will take place at the King County building, King Street Center. The capacity of the room is full so we will be unable to invite additional guests.

## 2. SWAC Line of Business Updates: Susan Fife-Ferris, Director, Solid Waste Planning and Program Management Division

- Bag out! Plastic Bags & Wrap out of the curbside recycling container
  - October 17th Media Event was a success – thanks to KCSWD and Recology.
  - Received a lot of coverage and questions afterwards.
  - Main message: plastic bags and wrap are no longer accepted in the curbside recycling container; take plastic bags and wrap back to drop off locations or put in the garbage.
  - Will continue to roll-out messaging.
  - Working with Industry and Non-profit partners to stabilize and expand the drop-off options; can find locations at [www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org).
  - Participants include: SPU, KCSWD, American Chemistry Council (ACC), ACC's Wrap Recycling Action Program, Association of Plastic Recyclers, The Recycling Partnership, & Sustainable Packaging Coalition.
- Food Rescue Innovation Lab – Moving Forward (Liz Fikejs lead)
  - Partnership with Mary's Place
  - Lunch Meeting on Nov 5th focusing on moving forward – next steps to take action in 2020.
  - Shared leadership: 40 participants from all aspects of the issue sitting at the same table to discuss what success looks like and how to move forward collectively.
- Midway Landfill Transportation Projects with Sound Transit (ST) & WSDOT (Jeff Neuner lead)
  - The ST Design Build team led by Kiewit is working on design for the waste removal and landfill closure replacement components to support site prep for two I-5 southbound lanes of traffic and the Federal Way Link Light Rail on the east side of the Midway Landfill.
  - Question: Will Federal Way be the location for the new site?  
Response: no, not siting there.
  - Target date for 100% plans ready for construction is May 1, 2020, with a 6-month earthwork phase starting immediately.
  - Maintenance facility is in SEPA process; results in summer 2020.
- South Recycling Center
  - Final design is delayed a bit.
  - RFB process is delayed to Q1 2020.
  - Hope to break ground in summer of 2020.
- SPU's Strategic Business Plan
  - Update is due to Council by June 30, 2020.
  - Customer Review Panel advises on its development.
  - SWLOB will provide input to the process and final document.
- Question from SWAC: There was some speculation that Dick's Burgers located in Kent would need to be relocated as a result of the Midway Landfill Transportation Project. Are there any updates?
  - It has been confirmed that Dick's will not be affected by this project and will remain where it currently is.

**Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment update: Socorro Medina, Lead, Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan**

- Public comment period has been postponed to Q1 2020 to make sure that the Plan Amendment clearly articulates the reasons behind the slow progress toward the 70% recycling rate goal and outlines the potential new metrics more clearly.
- Also working to streamline the Amendment to eliminate redundancies and make the narrative more concise.
- Need to ensure Executive reviews and accepts draft before document goes to the Mayor and the City Council.
- SWAC input at this time is welcome.

**3. King County Strategic Climate Action Plan: Alessandra Pistoia, SWAC Vice Chair**

- The last Climate Action Plan was completed in 2015.
- It is a five-year blueprint to confront climate change.
- There are opportunities for the public to engage in the update of the plan in 2020; two-hour poster sessions are held on Saturdays.
- The public is invited to give their opinion on how their plan looks. Their overall strategy is to reduce greenhouse emissions.
- Of particular interest to SWAC is the section in the 2015 plan on Consumption and Materials Management. Discussion of question posed: what information and tolls are needed when consuming something? Suggested response: Repair models, local sourcing
- Members and the public can give input through an on-line survey.

**4. Community Waste Prevention Grants: Veronica Fincher, Waste Prevention Program Manager**

Veronica Fincher provided an overview of SPU's Waste-Free Communities Matching Grant program and awards and outcomes to date:

- The grant program provides \$100,000 in annual funding for community-initiated and led waste prevention projects. Recycling and off-site composting projects are not eligible for the grant, but onsite organics management is eligible as part of waste prevention. In addition to focusing on waste prevention, projects must include one of the three focus areas: 1) innovation, 2) community engagement, or 3) community benefits. Grant awards range from \$5,000-\$20,000 and applicants must include a 50% match on top of the award. Applications may be submitted in-language and in print or video format. Read the grant program Guidelines on SPU's website for more information on grant eligibility and requirements:  
[www.seattle.gov/utilities/wastefreegrants](http://www.seattle.gov/utilities/wastefreegrants)
- SPU incorporated SWAC and other community feedback into the program design for the 2018-19 grant cycle. For 2019-20, SPU made some additional modifications, including: 1) increasing the award range to \$5,000-\$20,000 (previously \$2,000-\$15,000), 2) contracting with ECOSS to recruit and assist immigrant and refugee applicants, and 3) simplifying the contracting and invoicing process. Nico, a SWAC member, served as one of the community representatives on the 2019-20 grant selection committee.

- SPU awarded 17 grants for the combined 2018-19 and 2019-20 grant cycles. The projects and outcomes are listed in the PowerPoint and on the website: [www.seattle.gov/utilities/wastefreegrants](http://www.seattle.gov/utilities/wastefreegrants). Some projects have been successful, and some have struggled, as expected. One grant recipient canceled their project due to lack of capacity.
- The grant program is demonstrating that SPU's approach to building a waste prevention ethic in Seattle may need to differ from past approaches used to build a recycling and composting ethic. Rather than just pushing waste prevention messages out from SPU to the community, SPU is exploring ways to build up community efforts so the ethic is spread from within the community instead. However, the grant program has also shown that the community takes inspiration from waste prevention messages SPU shares. So, it's still important for SPU to play a role in waste prevention messaging, but with the more strategic intent of inspiring innovation within the community. Another benefit from the grant program has been building networks between grant recipients and applicants, creating a tapestry in the community for waste prevention efforts.
- Overall SPU is seeing community interest in the grant program and potential benefits for waste prevention, including helping guide future SPU programming decisions and the potential for influence beyond the grant awards.
- Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation for additional content.

**Below are questions/comments from SWAC members and responses from Veronica in *italics*:**

There are four areas SPU is planning to work on to further improve the grant program: 1) grant recipient capacity, 2) projects needing more time, 3) SPU staff needing more time to support and learn from grant projects, and 4) spreading the word. Veronica asked from feedback from SWAC members on the following questions:

1. SPU is considering transitioning to a 2-year grant cycle instead of 1-year, with the potential for higher award amounts. The intent is to allow more time and funds for grant recipients to help projects get off the ground and allow more SPU staff time to devote to helping and learning from projects. Is this a good approach to consider?

SWAC questions and feedback:

- How effective would the two-year contract be for a business or organization that is struggling?
- I think the 2-year creates more stability. For a more community-led, more money with a longer cycle is good.
- Would there be a preference for projects that lasted 1 year versus 2 years?  
*SPU would not have a preference. Projects would not be required to last 2 years.*
- In the past 2 years, what were the specifications for time constraints?  
*We put it at 12 months but in reality, they had 18 months.*
- Can you potentially do a one-year check in? With milestones and checklists that need to be met before being approved for a second year?  
*That will be a good addition.*

- Do you have dedicated staff to assist with the grant?  
*Currently it is just me. I may have assistance from an intern in the future.*
- People will be more aware of the grant opportunity if you can apply every year.
- A two-year cycle can potentially solve the issues that have been brought up about the program.
- If it goes to a two-year, would there be flexibility to pivot and move in a different direction?  
*This is possible, but there are some contractual constraints. Each application will be reviewed individually.*

2. SPU is considering options for helping projects build capacity, such as encouraging partnerships, connecting grant recipients and applicants with available resources, and hiring consultants who can provide some guidance for projects such as business planning and promotion strategies. What approaches would SWAC recommend?

**SWAC questions and feedback:**

- Do businesses applying for a grant require a fiscal sponsor?  
*Contracts requires grant recipients to have a business license, or they must use a fiscal sponsor that has a business license.*
- How do you present resources/partnership opportunities that are available, such as those available through the Office of Economic Development?  
*We don't currently, but hopefully transitioning to a 2-year grant cycle will allow more time for this.*
- How do they know what they need?  
*We would need to go through this with applicants and grant recipients to see what their needs might be and match them with partnership opportunities and resources.*

3. SPU is considering options for in-person promotion opportunities to further spread the word about the grant program. Information sessions were not effective methods in previous years. What would SWAC recommend?

**SWAC questions and feedback:**

- Have you asked former applicants how they heard about this program?  
*In the past, we have not. We added a question for the new grant cycle for this. We will look into going back and connecting with previous applicants to ask them.*
- You could have breakout sessions within the information sessions for people who are there for different purposes, such as a group for people who already have ideas in mind and one for people who don't have project ideas yet.
- How about doing an online information session?  
*This would still have the same challenges the in-person sessions had.*
- Ask applicants what would help them.
- Have SHA host a session.
- Go to BIA meeting.
- Bring previous grant recipients together for a celebration

Members are invited to offer additional comments in the follow-up meeting survey or directly to Veronica.

## **BREAK**

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*Guests were requested to leave at this time.*

### **5. Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment update**

SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink, and Vice-Chair, Alessandra Pistoia, led SWAC members in a discussion of their comments regarding the Solid Waste Plan Amendment.

### **6. CAC Update: Sheryl Shapiro, CAC Program Manager**

Sheryl announced that she will be retiring in February and that there would be celebration in January. Members may address questions and/or concerns to Sheryl, Segó, Susan and/or Kathleen Baca, Community Affairs Director (Sheryl's Supervisor).

### **7. Around the Table & Community Insights**

**A SWAC member** shared that this would have been **Quinn Apuzzo's** last official meeting with SWAC and unfortunately, she could not attend tonight. We hope she will come to a future SWAC meeting so that we can honor her service.

**Adjourned 7:35 pm**