

SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

May 13, 2026, Meeting Summary 5:30-7:30pm

Chair: Melanie Coerver

Vice-Chair: Lisa Watkins

Secretary: Travis Close

Committee Members	Present	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Melanie Coerver	Y	Fatima Krubally	SPU—Administrative Staff Analyst
Lisa Watkins	N	McKenna Morigan	SPU—Strategic Advisor, Waste Prevention and Solid Waste Policy
Travis Close	Y	Casey Colley	SPU—SWAC Coordinator
Joe Camero	N	Angela Wallis	SPU—Development Review Supervisor
Marcus Johnson	Y	Christopher Ruiz	SPU—Code and Contracts Compliance Manager
Paige Madden	N	Katie Swanson	SPU—Solid and Hazardous Waste Lead Planner
Karia Wong	Y	Katie Stickels	Guest—WA State Ecology
Phil Churilla	Y	Lauren Ballinger	SPU—Large Waste Generator Specialist
Caitlin Singer	Y		
Mike VanReken	Y		
Erin Gagon	N		
Chelsey Evans	Y		
Jacob Melaragno	N		
Tareq Fayyad	N		
Alissa Campbell	Y		

1. Welcome SWAC & Introductions

2. Review and Approve March Meeting Minutes

SWAC discussed how to record meeting minutes. It was determined that the secretary would take notes in the future and that meetings would not be recorded. The March meeting minutes were approved.

3. Directors Rules in Development

What is it? Prohibits food service business from using disposable food service waste. Director's rule clarifies and interprets these requirements and integrates new state requirements established since the ordinance was adopted. Annual update is required - lists single use food serviceware eligible for 1-year waiver if no acceptable compostable or recyclable alternatives available

2023 Changes: Integrated state labeling requirements for compostable products, clarified single-use food service for dine-in service must be compostable, brown-tinted paper takeout boxes not allowed unless compostable, removed temporary waiver for portion cups (2 oz or less) for hot foods or with lids.

Changes anticipated in 2027 (no changes for 2026): Statewide collection lists, new Recyclables Processing Contract, SPU will update its own Designated Recyclables List in response. Additionally, SPU will assess product availability for items currently eligible for annual temporary waivers

Questions raised: about the status of Starbucks cups, when the changes for each year go into effect, SPU's authority to enforce these regulations, and the status of food stickers.

Source Separation: Why is it important and what does it mean? - McKenna

Code References: 21.36.010 - Definitions & 21.36.082 - Commercial Recycling Required

Why is source separation important? Diversion reduces waste & Good for the environment, both locally and regionally

Food Waste Challenges: 20% of garbage is food waste, more from commercial sector, 72% of food is edible

New Food Service Provider: Divert. Collects food waste from grocery store, produces renewable gas through anaerobic digestion. Trucks to facility in Oregon or Longview, WA. Prevents packaged food from going to landfill and creates renewable fuel. Concerns: Mixing clean feedstock with packaging, potentially recyclable packaging ends up as garbage, packaged food includes garbage, which is under our flow control

SPU Response: Director's Rule Clarifying Source Separation Expectations: Possibly taking SWAC input with questions to be sent to McKenna

4. Directors Rule SW-420 for SW Storage, Access, and Collection.

Angela Wallis explained what a Director's Rule is and municipal code. Tonight's topic is about solid waste storage and access update in a Director's Rule. This rule is to include things that were not appropriate for the municipal code. Topics: service efficiency and safety. It is to include definitions that help the inspectors communicate with customers. It further helps implement things that are not explicitly recognized in the code, such as "hybrid services."



Single-family Residential New rule: all garbage must be bagged. Hybrid services: Made to reduce the number of carts that are required at townhome developments. Developments that share property can have their own garbage carts; share a food waste cart; and share a recycling cart. A development may be required to move to hybrid services. Dimensions required between containers for driver and user access.

Customer Experience: Commercial and Multifamily. Lids must be locked for containers stored permanently in ROW. All garbage must be bagged. Limit collection truck backing to 50' max per industry safety practice. Require AutoTurn analysis to service large dumpsters and compactors

Timeline: May or June: Publish in Daily Journal of Commerce. June or July: Route for SPU General Manager signature; transmit to city clerk. July: Post to SPU Policy Library (Web page)

Questions were raised regarding: the use of the propriety AutoTurn analysis software, the enforcement of hybrid services in multifamily buildings, and the requirements for planting strips.

5. Delegation of Authority for Civil Infraction and Penalty Enforcement

What is Delegation & Why it Matters: Authority granted by General Manager of SPU enabling staff to apply authority. Reduces delays in issuing violations. Staff can issue civil infractions directly.

Key Takeaways: no new authority requested, no increase in penalties, improves consistency and fairness, daily accruing civil infraction authority, structured escalation model prioritizing education and technical assistance.

Infractions: Class 1: maximum penalty \$250 for each specified infraction and Class 3: maximum penalty \$50 for each specified infraction

A question was raised about what may happen when an infraction is not paid. Failure to pay an infraction may result in a misdemeanor. SPU may also work with King County Health to enforce.

Current & Future Enforcement Framework: Step 1: Education & Technical Assistance, step 2: Education & Technical Assistance, step 3: Civil Infraction (newly decided under Director's Rule, although prior authorized in code)

Questions were raised about: the internal processes for proceeding through steps 1-3, whom to call to report complaints and request enforcement, and how to deal with unlawful tampering with garbage bins on the streets.

Compliance & Enforcement Goals: Develop an equitable compliance and enforcement program for code sections that allow infractions. Obtain compliance from customers. Motivate new customers to comply with the Solid Waste Code. Contribute to meeting SPU's vision of Zero Waste. Reduce Seattle's production of methane and other climate emissions

Questions were raised about how the funds collected from infractions are to be used, about certain businesses that have learned that paying fees for noncompliance has been less expensive than complying, and how SWAC can help with implementation.

6. Food Waste Prevention Campaign

Purpose: Understand motivators and barriers to food waste prevention and diversion among Seattle residents

Focus on Multifamily: Harder to reach, more likely to be overburdened, 85% of food waste is placed in garbage.

Timeline: January - March - Project planning, background research, identifying target audience, April - focus groups, May - citywide survey going live at the end of May.

Focus Groups: Food storage and meal planning are the best tools to prevent waste, grocery shopping behavior is a root cause of food waste, financial motivation is the most immediate and common driver for reducing food waste.

Survey: May 25 - June 15, aimed at multi-family audience; in five languages, advertised via social media, newsletters, responses will be used to develop a campaign.

7. SWAC Comments

What are the days and times when most of our members are available? If anyone has a preference, send Casey an email. The field trip spreadsheet will be shared with the entire SWAC members

8. Public Comments

Katie from Ecology shared some opportunities.

9. Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 PM