



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

February 6, 2019 Meeting Notes
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
Room 4901
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Chair: Dirk Wassink
Vice-Chair: Alessandra Pistoia

| Committee Members | Present? | SPU Staff | Role |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------------|--|
| Quinn Apuzzo | On leave | Natasha Walker | CAC Program Coordinator |
| Holly Griffith | Y | Sheryl Shapiro | CAC Program Manager |
| Emily Newcomer | N | Susan Fife-Ferris | Division Director, SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management |
| James Subocz | Y | Sego Jackson | Solid Waste LOB Policy Liaison |
| Alan Garvey | N | Katie Lynd | Strategic Communications Advisor for Solid Waste LOB |
| Amelia Fujikawa | N | Guests | |
| Adam Maurer | Y | Christian Hoogerheyde | Guest |
| Rachtha Dahn | P | Joel Dashnaw | Guest |
| Alessandra Pistoia | Y | Kelsie Blanthorn | Guest |
| Dirk Wassink | Y | | |

1. Regular Business

SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM

- Members and guests introduced themselves.
- Meeting notes from January were approved.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits and exit procedures.

2. Solid Waste LOB Updates

Susan Fife-Ferris, Division Director, Solid Waste Planning and Program Management & SWAC/Solid Waste LOB Liaison, Sego Jackson, provided a few Solid Waste Line of Business and legislative updates.

- **Solid Waste LOB 2019 Spending Plans:** The budget was approved by City Council at the end of November 2018, and the LOB spends the early part of the 2019 developing the spending plans for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), as well as developing staff workplans which are updated quarterly.
- **South Transfer Station Stage 2 (STS2).** This facility will include crew quarters, a recycling and reuse facility, parking for organics trucks, etc. to be built at the location of the old south transfer station and the existing household hazardous waste facility near the new south transfer station. We are at 60% design and hoping to break ground by early 2020. **Staff will invite SPU’s Jeff Neuner and Ben Whitley to present at a future date on this topic.**
- **Snow Impacts on waste collection:** Susan discussed impacts to weekday pick-ups as a result of the snow storm. Internal discussions are taking place on how to handle future impacts. Messaging around impacts has been co-managed with SPU’s new Public Information Officer.
 - **A SWAC Member** asked about the protocol for overflow of recycling. Staff responded they can put additional recycling in a separate paper bag or cardboard box.

- **A SWAC Member** commented that they had seen SPU’s announcements regarding snow impacts on waste collection on Facebook’s new local government pages and appreciated the heads up. Staff responded that SPU also does reverse phone calls to those impacted if there is a working phone number on the account.
- **Construction Waste Request for Proposal (RFP):** The RFP will be presented to the City Council Civil Rights, Utilities, Economic Development & Arts (CRUEDA) Committee on 2/28. Council meetings are video taped lived and can be viewed here: <http://www.seattlechannel.org/MayorCityCouncil>
- **Collection Contracts:** New ones will be rolled out on 4/1/19.
- **Reviewing solid waste rates for 2020-2022:** We will bring back information in the next couple months.
- **Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan Amendment:** Community engagement is expected to occur in Q1.

3. Q&A on Solid Waste Legislation

In light of numerous solid waste-related bills in review at the Senate and House, SWAC officers requested some time be set aside to better understand SPU’s role and impact on regional solid waste legislation. SWAC officers prepared a series of questions and interviewed SWAC Policy Liaison, Sego Jackson, and SPU Solid Waste Planning and Program Management Division Director, Susan Fife-Ferris.

The following questions were discussed:

- *Why is legislation important for managing solid waste at a municipal level?*
Staff responded that legislation exists on many tiers, from guiding principles, to best management practices, to Director’s rules, to legislation at the Citywide level. They added that there are many things SPU cannot do unless the organization is empowered to do so at the legislative level. This includes when legislation adopts a plan, which empowers SPU to act on that plan.
- *What is the relationship between the City of Seattle, King County, and Washington State solid waste legislation? How do they influence one another?*
The State has legislation that requires any municipality providing solid waste services to have a Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan. In the early 1990s, the City of Seattle decided to prepare their own plan, separate from King County. The City’s plan is incorporated into the King County plan, but the processes are separate. All other cities located in King County but one (Milton) opt to be included in King County’s Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee is also required under State legislation, though SPU’s SWAC is used for purposes beyond what is prescribed in the RCWs. Coordination between the City, County, and State Comprehensive Plans is important, as there is a lot of customer overlap. From a legislative perspective, the County and City often analyze legislation together, share analysis and cooperate with one another to the extent possible.
- *Can you give an example of solid waste legislation at the city level that had wide reaching influence within our state or others?*
Staff spoke to the plastic bag ban, as well as the ban on single-use plastic service ware. These are things that the City of Seattle was at the forefront on, and we have seen what we have implemented be influential regionally and nationally. SPU often hears from other jurisdictions interested in adopting these types of policies. They noted that marketplaces will often test new

items out in Seattle (for example, packaging suppliers), and while they can't always take credit for being the first to pass solid waste legislation, they have been responsible for "breaking the dam," so to speak. Staff also spoke to the ability to pass legislation at a local (city or county) level, in which other counties have followed suit. They gave the example of legislation for the pharmaceutical take-back program by King County Health.

- *Does SPU have a set of criteria that needs to be met to become involved with legislative discussions at the county or state level? If yes, what are they?*

There is a process, but not criteria. The Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan is the guiding document, identifying gaps in where SPU is going and what SPU could be doing in the future. It lays out areas that may require policy or legislation at a State level. Staff explained that some items, such as producer responsibility, are better implemented at a State-wide level. There is a prescribed process each year for SPU to provide input into legislative priorities that are being brought forward. Sejo Jackson is one of the reviewers of legislation for the City of Seattle. His comments are reviewed by SPU policy staff, which are then brought to the lobby group that serves the City.

Staff added that SPU has processes by which we look at the environmental, social, and financial impacts of programs, policies, and services to help guide what we might move on.

- *If we simplify solid waste management into two buckets—upstream prevention and downstream management, how does SPU prioritize legislative action between each bucket?*

Overall, SPU tends to prioritize those that are substantial, and upstream such as product stewardship and anything related to toxics reduction. SPU aims to address issues at the source, as it is always cheaper to prevent an issue than to clean it up later. We prioritize opportunities to influence upstream prevention or the design of something so that it is easier to manage downstream. But we must also consider Mayor or City Council priorities. Whether it is upstream or downstream, SPU is involved in State legislation. Some legislative actions include components of both or complement each other.

- *Seattle has a political culture of "being the first" for progressive waste legislation, i.e. the food service packaging ordinance. Does "being the first" complicate the process of passing legislation or does it help gain support?*

Being "the first" is exciting but can mean stepping on landmines that we didn't know existed. SPU tries to pilot things first, and we live in a community that embraces new ideas most of the time. Being an early adopter can offer an opportunity for the City to step into a key leadership position. But it can also be nice to learn from others' mistakes.

- *What is SWAC's role in advising city on legislation?*

In everything SPU's Solid Waste LOB does, we want SWAC feedback. SWAC is out in the community and represents the broad interests of the community. They can help us avoid those aforementioned landmines. We hope for the kind of feedback that makes our programs better, or helps us rethink our approaches, or is an idea we haven't thought of. And the connections that SWAC members bring to the table is useful for our work. SWAC's support and input has been crucial when revising ordinances in the past. SWAC plays a major role in the Comprehensive Plan. SWAC can influence or emphasize areas of the Comprehensive plan by sharing where they think community needs exist. Additionally, SWAC's letters to City Council has elevated the priority of certain topics for Council.

4. Washington State Legislative Updates

Sego Jackson reviewed current Solid Waste-related legislation in more detail. Jackson walked members through the Washington Legislature website, and provided instruction on how to follow bills, seen here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>

He shared the following video, which introduces the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHbE8q6CA5s>

- A guest asked about HB 1795. They wanted to understand who is leading it, and whether integrated waste management supporters were behind it. Staff responded that the bill is supported by Washington Refuse and Recycling Association, which represents haulers.

5. Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF)

Sego Jackson segued into an update on the recommendations report that came out of the Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF). SWAC members received a copy of the full report and executive summary, as well as a link to the RRTF website, in advance of the meeting.

Jackson began with a quick overview of the RRTF for members who were unfamiliar. He noted the differences between King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the Municipal Solid Waste Advisory Committee, as well as how their roles differ from the City of Seattle's Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Jackson then focused on report recommendations related to policy. The actions where SWAC spent the most time in discussion have been bolded:

- **Goal 1, Action 1A. Develop a comprehensive, statewide stewardship policy approach that helps achieve a funded, robust, and harmonized curbside recycling system throughout Washington State.**
 - A SWAC member commented that a future product stewardship presentation would make sense to schedule. **This has been scheduled for May 2019.**
 - A SWAC member commented that they support this; that Washington State has needed a harmonized recycling system for a long time.
 - A SWAC member asked if some cities or areas would be impacted more financially in order to meet these goals? Staff responded that in a product stewardship system, the costs gets incorporated/internalized into the product, thus it does not impact a small city disproportionately.
 - A SWAC member asked if this action is intended to be specifically about product responsibility? They felt it was unclear by calling it is a statewide stewardship policy. Staff responded that when we talk about a statewide stewardship policy, we mean extended producer responsibility.
 - A SWAC member asked if this would add anything to curbside collection, such as tires or TVs. Staff responded that this goal only addresses materials typically collected in

curbside collection. It will look at the same, but could have different containers for say, mixed plastics.

- A guest asked if there is any way to impact the way packaging is made. Staff recommended they study the product packaging stewardship legislation to see how it has been incorporated. A CAC member added that it would be good to offer incentives for product packaging designers to change their packaging.
- Goal 1, Action 1B: Support legislation that promotes the use of innovative technologies/processes to help develop and build local recycling infrastructure and market development.
- Goal 1, Action 1C: Refine and support Plastics Packaging Stewardship legislation.
- Goal 1, Action 1D: Advocate for Responsible Recycling policies by requesting that elected officials adopt Responsible Recycling in their jurisdictions.
- Goal 1, Action 1E: Develop a feasible model for beverage container stewardship in Washington similar to the Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative model.
 - A SWAC member asked if plastic bottles are already included in this bill, but not glass? Staff answered yes.
- Goal 5, Action 5C: Support “Reusable Bag” legislation to reduce the number of plastic bags entering the garbage and recycling system.
- **Goal 5, Action 5B: Remove plastic bags/film and shredded paper from the materials that are accepted in recycling programs in King County and the City of Seattle. Jan 2020 hard stop for receiving these materials.**
 - SWAC members were asked to think about whether they support this action.
 - There was a firm yes from 3 members, with agreement from all members, with some additional comments noted below.
 - Another member said they would support but want to know where the plastic bags go. Staff responded that King County’s SWAC and MSWAC are discussing this as well. There is another goal (in this report) that has an action to expand the industry-established retailer take back program known as WRAP. There is discussion on whether this store-collected material can be financed by the American Chemical Council for chemical processing.
 - Another member said they support the bill but wondered if there are alternative options for residents to put their shredded paper. Staff responded that the issue is shredded paper mixing with other materials in the MRF. Staff responded that King County has sponsored events where residents can bring materials to shred.
 - Another member said they supported removing plastic bags and film.
 - A SWAC member asked if the existing bill for reusable bags was Statewide. Staff responded yes, and that Seattle has banned plastic carryout bags, but has not addressed take-out food or other plastic film which can create problems at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs).
 - SWAC members discussed a possible next step to show their support for Goal 5, Action 5B. They inquired about timing for this letter, and staff recommended any letter be submitted in the next month. SWAC officers will take the lead on this.

- SWAC members discussed a possible next step for a letter in support of the WRAP program and expressing the importance of take-back programs at retailers. No action at this time.
- A SWAC member shared that they felt plastic film and plastic wrap may need its own outreach campaign, due to existing misinformation.

6. SWAC Discussion

- **CAC Meeting Feedback Form.** Sheryl and Natasha discussed the new meeting feedback survey. Note that survey is anonymous, but subject to public disclosure.
 - i. Feedback on survey questions or process should be emailed
 - ii. How can we capture guest feedback?
 - iii. May incorporate speaker or officer questions after each meeting.
- **SWAC Work Plan.** Dirk and Alessandra presented draft topic list and estimated timeline.
 - i. Natasha will email out work plan on Thursday and collect SWAC comments. Please send comments to Dirk and Alessandra.

7. Around the Table & Community Insights

SWAC members ran out of time.

Adjourned 7:34PM