



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

March 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	N	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Holly Griffith	N	Sego Jackson	Solid Waste LOB Policy Liaison
Emily Newcomer	Y	Katie Lynd	Strategic Communications Advisor for Solid Waste LOB
James Subocz	Y	Becca Fong	Recycling & Composting Outreach
Alan Garvey	Y	Rachel Vickers	SPU Solid Waste Intern
Amelia Fujikawa	Y		
Adam Maurer	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Rachtha Dahn	Y	Christian Hoogerheyde	Guest
Alessandra Pistoia	Y	Joel Dashnaw	Guest
Dirk Wassink	Y	Kelsie Blanthorn	Guest
Nico Onoda-McGuire	Y		

**1. Regular Business**

SWAC Chair, Dirk Wassink called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM

- Members and guests introduced themselves.
- Meeting notes from February were not ready for review.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits and exit procedures.
- Sheryl distributed new parking passes to SWAC members

**2. Solid Waste LOB Updates**

Sego Jackson provided a few Solid Waste Line of Business and legislative updates.

- **Collection Contracts:** Construction and waste contracts passed through City Council for approval. Waste Management was chosen. For construction and demolition sites, they may take recyclable materials to sites by self-haul, but Waste Management will haul the garbage.
- **Miscellaneous and Legislation Updates:** SPU participated in a King County convened Organics Management Summit. This group will meet again in April is be focusing on the organics side of materials needing better management and markets, similar to the work of the Responsible Recycling Tasks Force (RRTF) addressing the recycling system. This program will look at organics management from curb to capacity. Sego reviewed the various bills in circulation. Overall, all the solid waste bills are in good shape. A few updates include:
  - The Plastic Packaging Stewardship bill on the House side (HB 1204) is fully intact and remains in the policy committee as a discussion draft and for reference. It will not proceed this session. On the Senate side, its companion bill (SB 5397) has become a study bill, which is still useful.

- The Plastic bags bill passed the Senate last night with heavy Republican support due to some changes, including allowing thicker 2.25 mil plastic “reusable” bags and an \$.08 charge rather than \$.10.
- HB 1632 has changed to a “provided on request only” requirement for plastic straws, plastic utensils and condiment packets.
- SB 5077 was a ban on plastic straws statewide. It has been amended to a “provided on request only” approach also. It has passed out of the senate.
- The Ecology requested legislation that establishes a Recycling Development Center (HB 1543 and SB 5545, and the Compostable Products bill (HB 1569) are also moving along.
- Almost everything is ready for a floor vote. The food waste reduction bill (HB 1114) is ready for floor vote.
- The bills that would have restricted local government ability to determine what materials are collected curbside have not moved forward (HB 1795 and SB 5854.)

### 3. Recycle Right (clean, empty, dry) Outreach Campaign Update

Becca Fong from SPU provided a presentation on the Recycle Right Campaign effort currently underway. The Recycle Right campaign is part of a regional effort that includes SPU, King County, City of Bellevue, etc. The goal is to create a regional message around recycling. The 2017 National Sword/China Blue Skies had many implications, sparking a movement to find sustainable change in the solid waste industry. This can include MRFs having better sorting and recycling, increased costs for recycling, and higher quality materials and decreased contamination. This last step must start with consumers, and this is where the campaign begins.

- **Message:** Recycling is not dead. Many people are unsure of their perception of recycling. This is for many reasons including, surcharges were happening around the region, media, and change in policy around the world. Seattle has incentivized recycling, by embedding the cost of it in the garbage service charge, which was great for diversion but hid the industry and thus people didn’t understand the system (how it worked and why?). As a result, contamination increased.. This campaign goal is to change this behavior of wishful recycling. People are also very confused with proper way to recycle, recycling should be easy, if it is hard people are more likely to opt out. To add to the confusion, messaging across the king county region were all different. A Regional Task Force was created that needed to work together and create one message.
- **Campaign goals:** Concise, consistent message across the region. We need to acknowledge that recycling is changing because many people think that recycling hasn’t ever changed. We also want to dispel idea that recycling is over, and everything goes to the landfill. Focusing on positive behavior such as what goes into the bin instead of what doesn’t go into the bin. we can hope to decrease contamination and create a regional effort. This is how recycling will be from here forward. The main message are: empty, clean, and dry, recycle right – when in doubt find out, keep recycling, it matters. The group will focus on main recycling categories because this is a big source of frictions between jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction could pick certain materials to focus on. Another message will be to prevent and reduce waste by choose reusable items.
- **Timeline:** Through 2019 and they are currently creating workplan for 2019-2020. The group is working to leverage regional media. For example, King County doing large media buy, Seattle is

putting ads on buses, and everyone focuses on a media that can have an effect across jurisdictions. Seattle is also working with C+C to come up with campaign branding and materials. Everything will be the same across jurisdictions, and this will focus on 5 main materials (paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, glass, metals). Seattle also has transit ads, social media posts (Recycle Thursdays), embedded messages in collateral and outreach

### Question and Answer

- **A SWAC member** asked if studies are exploring if consumers have guilt over lazy recycling habits. A discussion ensued around this:
  - Afraid of using too much water?
  - Better to throw out instead of contaminate recycling
  - Element of disappointment that thing must be very clean
  - Why can't recycling methods be more advanced?
  - Uncovering recycling process can be a benefit. There are people involved and it is a long process
  - Stop, think, sort – spend time on thinking
  - Emphasizing what goes into your garbage
  - Giving people permission to use your garbage cans
  - SWAC member – guilt effect: people feel shame of putting things in garbage
- **A SWAC member** felt that the picture of peanut butter on the new campaign is very effective.
- **A SWAC member** asked if the new campaign will be paired with news articles. Staff responded that existing press coverage has painted recycling in a bad light, but that SPU is working on generating relevant articles.
- **A SWAC member** asked if the waste industry has shied away from national sword.
  - Has negative connotation when it isn't fair because China didn't want to take other people's garbage
  - Stop focusing on China Sword as the causes for recycling problem
  - It is a new day for recycling – look forward instead of the past
- **A SWAC member** emphasized the phrase, "it matters." Staff responded that recycling matters, as well as recycling right matters.
- **A SWAC member** asked if people fear fines for putting dirty recyclables in garbage. Staff responded that they weren't sure, but believe it is more related to guilt.

#### 4. Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF)

Sego Jackson, Solid Waste LOB Liaison, gave a presentation on the Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF). This presentation focused on next steps for SPU and SWAC, provided an overview of the RRTF recommendations and goals, answered questions and addresses concerns, and generally discussed SWAC's support for these goals. Sego also wanted to reaffirm SWAC support for moving plastic bags from curbside by doing a formal vote after the presentation. The policy recommendations were discussed at the February SPU SWAC meeting.

There are three advisory committees that receive this presentation: Seattle/SPU's SWAC and two King County SWACs.

This RRTF was a 10-month process to create regional response to current state of recycling by developing a responsible recycling framework. This would focus on quality vs quantity, regional policy alignment, harmonized messaging, and domestic sorting and processing. The next steps of 2019 work program action items are to determine what is SPU's and SWAC's role. To do this SWAC needs to discuss and make sure we see the goals in comprehensive plan. Segó also mentioned that he wanted to focus on what SWAC wanted to cover and then will return to these items in a year with an update, but if SWAC wants something sooner to let Segó know. Items 1 were discussed at last meeting and items 2A-C were discussed at this (March) meeting.

Segó provided a PowerPoint that summarized all the recommendations in the report that were not discussed at the last SWAC meeting.

- **A SWAC Member** asked if transcreation for underserved communities will this be a part of this process. Staff responded that the report may not call that out specifically, though outreach teams will be using these methods, and the items created/transcreated and translated locally can be shared across the region.

After the presentation, Segó asked for confirmation that SWAC supported the Responsible Recycling Task Force recommendations. Dirk asked each SWAC member to state their position as the means of voting and SWAC members unanimously supported the RRTF recommendations.

- One SWAC member stated that they liked the local economic development portion but was unclear on how the upstream recommendations would be worked with.
- One SWAC member likes how it is setting wheels in motion.
- **A survey will be sent out after meeting in which additional feedback can be sent to Segó**

## **5. SWAC Letter in Support of Removing Plastic Bags from Curbside Recycling**

Dirk Wassink, SWAC Chair and Alessandra Pistoia, SWAC Vice-Chair, presented SWAC's letter of support for removing plastic bags from curbside recycling. Previously it had been suggested that SWAC could consider sending a letter in support to Mami Hara for removing plastic bags. Alessandra drafted a letter, feedback was provided, and edits were made. The final letter was read in the meeting and was unanimously approved by all SWAC members.

Before the next time that SWAC drafts a letter, SWAC members will receive a review of Google Docs functionality to ensure it is clear when tracked changes are captured.

## **6. Volunteer Request: SWAC Recycling Rate Report Letter to City Council**

Dirk Wassink and Alessandra Pistoia discussed the importance of the SWAC letter to City Council regarding SPU's Annual Recycling Rate Report. This is generally the job of the SWAC secretary but currently there is not a secretary.

Dirk and Alessandra were interested in getting volunteers to generate letter. A SWAC member who wrote the letter last year said the letter should focus on the context of basis of the rate and implications, and what SWAC thinks is important to focus on in response. A clear time line should be discussed before the end of June and volunteers to write the letter will be found in May/June, as the turnaround for the letter review process is short. If SWAC members are interested in writing the letter they are encouraged to come forward.

## **7. Community Asset Mapping Introduction**

Sheryl Shapiro, CAC Program Manager, provided an overview on community assets mapping exercise that all CACs will experience. This goal of this project is to see what our members' connections are in the community are. We are beginning to formalize a process to map out the potential "reach" of the Advisory Committees, starting with this place-based exercise. We know that CAC are small – chartered for 12 members – so it is hard to represent/connect fully with the geography/diversity in the City. **Why are we doing this? To discover:**

- Where are the assets that we have?
- Where are there gaps?
- Want to showcase SWAC's assets
- Want to explore and build, strengthen connections between SPU and communities

Members will be given "homework" to identify by neighborhood their places of connection by 10 categories (e.g. work, school, arts, recreation). At a SWAC meeting, members will work from their populated matrix to place some of their connections on large maps. This will likely take a full meeting to do project and SWAC will likely do this exercise in August.

- A SWAC member asked if mapping tools could be used that are more user friendly to show connections and showcase different information. For example, Kumu. Staff responded that there is a possibility of using this technology or another way of showing the information digitally.
- A SWAC member asked if there had been trends shown yet. Staff responded that we had a short time to view the first mapping exercise and have yet to dive deeper into observing patterns.

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

- Staff asked members to please hold the March 27 and April 24 All-CAC dates. A final calendar hold will be sent next week. The topic will likely include work at the corporate level.
- A SWAC member shared that they had received new garbage bins. They liked that they were bigger and included an insert. Staff responded that part of the new contract was to provide all wheeled carts. All carts are tipped, which is better for the haulers (though haulers still need to get out the trucks).
- A SWAC member shared about a video of recycling program with QFC division and corporate office requested that another one would be done. **There will be a one-minute presentation at the April meeting**
- A SWAC member noticed the empty, clean, dry campaign on a bus the other day.

- A SWAC member shared about the China International District spring cleaning on April 27. There will be t-shirts and food, and they will be there rain or shine.
- Sheryl will send out different community workshops on RSJI. SWAC members should try to attend some
- Sheryl is going to a Global Gathering of practitioners of Liberating Structures (highly interactive and inclusive ways of engaging participants in meetings, planning processes, etc.) next week. There is a local user group that is open for anyone who wishes to have a taste of this on the third Thursday of the month.
- Sheryl shared a SWAC membership update. Over the next few months, there might be SWAC openings; Members were encouraged to refer people who might be a good fit to Sheryl.

**Adjourned 7:27PM**