



SPU Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

April 5, 2023, Meeting Notes
Webex
5:30 pm – 7:15 pm

*Chair: Brie Kuhn
Co-Chair: Wendy Weiker
Secretary: Michael Johnson*

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff /Guests	Role
Danny Barksdale	Yes	Quinn Apuzzo	SPU – SWAC Program Coordinator
Rina Fa’amoe-Cross	Yes	Jeff Fowler	SPU – Solid Waste Deputy Director
Brie Kuhn	Yes	Maggie Yuse	SPU – Sr. Policy Advisor & State Legislative Liaison
Hannah Scholes	Yes	Pat Kaufman	SPU – Commercial Program Manager
Adrian Tan	Yes	Joe Camero	WM
Ming-Ming Tung Edelman	No	Diana Wadley	Department of Ecology
Michael Johnson	Yes	Valentina Rappa	Rheaply
Chelsey Evans	Yes		
John Martin	Yes		
Erin Gagnon	Yes		
Wendy Weiker	No		
Steven Walls	No		
Yongkang (YK) Zhou	No		

1. Welcome & Introductions

- SWAC Chair Brie called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm
- Members and guests introduced themselves. Prompted by the SWAC Chair, they shared their name, affiliation, and an item that find most frustrating when incorrectly recycled.
- February meeting minutes were approved by SWAC members in attendance.

2. Comments on Solid Waste Line of Business (SWLOB) Updates for SWAC

Updates were provided to the committee in writing in advance of the meeting and Jeff Fowler was present to answer SWAC’s questions.

- **A SWAC Member asked:** Does SPU receive monthly updates from the MRF about outbound materials, contamination rate, residuals, etc.
- **A SPU Staff responded:** Yes, contamination rates are about 10%. We can follow up with more details.

3. Legislative Update

Maggie Yuse, Senior Policy Advisor & State Legislative Liaison, provided a mid-session legislative update. EPR for Batteries is still alive and has passed through the House Appropriations Committee. WRAP Act and Right to Repair will not be moving forward this session.

- **A SWAC Member asked:** What are the hurdles around Right to Repair? And EPR for appliances?

- **A SPU Staff Member replied:** The opposition, which is largely backed by big tech companies, has voiced security concerns about independent repair businesses having access to personal electronics. This group holds influence with a key legislator who previously worked in the tech sector.

4. SWAC Member Spotlight: Fare Start's Food Recovery Program

SWAC member and FareStart Food Recovery Program Manager, Danny Barksdale, provided an overview of FareStart's food recovery efforts.

- **A SWAC Member asked:** Is there a Capitol Hill Fare Start restaurant?
- **Danny Barksdale:** The restaurant closed during the pandemic but we still operate our Café and will be opening a new restaurant soon on 7th & Virginia.
- **A SWAC Member asked:** Is all of the food FareStart uses acquired through food recovery efforts?
- **Danny Barksdale:** No, the majority of the food FareStart uses in our meal programs is still purchased. Food recovery helps offset costs. For context, last year FareStart served over 1.5 million meals to communities across King County. FareStart was able to utilize just under 250,000 LBS of recovered food in support of these programs, which created a budget impact of roughly \$500,000.
- **A SWAC Member asked:** This is amazing work, thank you! What's the biggest challenge or obstacle you face?
- **Danny Barksdale:** Time constraints related to working with perishable food and getting buy-in from chefs.
- **A SWAC Member asked:** Are any of the chefs incentivized [to utilize recovered food]? And is food storage space ever an issue?
- **Danny Barksdale:** Yes, some of the chefs we work with are great about using recovered food, and some hate it. I've learned that the best approach is to not be pushy and focus on emphasizing the benefits of utilizing this resource. And yes, food storage/freezer space can be a challenge. We try to be strategic and work with partners to maximize storage space and help connect surplus recovered food with demand at other hunger relief organizations.
- **A SPU Staff Member asked:** How does FareStart approach food waste reduction internally?
- **Danny Barksdale:** All restaurants have a huge financial incentive to reduce food waste. Throwing away food is like throwing away money.
- **A SPU Staff Member commented:** Awesome presentation. To help connect the dots between FareStart and SPU's food waste prevention efforts, you may recall that last year FareStart and Northwest Food Alliance were two partners who worked with SPU to help track food donations from grocery stores to help us better understand food recovery opportunities. FareStart was also awarded one of SPU's Waste Free Community Matching Grants. The next cycle of this grant is now underway and the deadline for applications has been extended to April 7 so please share with your networks.

5. Around the Table

- **A Guest shared:** WM is currently recruiting student interns to participate in their Recycle Corps program. More information is available [here](#).
- **A SWAC Member shared:** [Green Jobs Pathways](#) is looking for businesses and organizations to serve as intern hosts and mentor interns.

- **A Guest shared:** Applications for Ecology’s [Public Participation Grants](#) are being accepted through May 11, 2023. Ecology is hiring for a new Food Center Lead. [Applications](#) will be accepted until April 11, 2023.
- **A SWAC Member shared:** [Reusables.com](#) recently launched in Seattle.

6. SWAC Chat

Informal café-style conversations.

- SWAC members and guests responded to the prompt: What can we, as SWAC members, do to inform, involve, and inspire people within our sphere of influence?

Adjourned [7:09 PM]