



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

May 3, 2023, Meeting Notes  
Webex  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

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

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff /Guests	Role
Danny Barksdale	Y	Quinn Apuzzo	SPU – SWAC Program Coordinator
Rina Fa’amoe-Cross	Y	Jeff Fowler	SPU – Solid Waste Deputy Director
Brie Kuhn	Y	Pat Kaufman	SPU – Commercial Program Manager
Hannah Scholes	Y	Lee Moman	SPU – Director, Clean City Division
Adrian Tan	Y	Pat Kaufman	SPU – Commercial Recycle/Compost Program Manager
Ming-Ming Tung Edelman	N	Tracy Cramer	SPU – Illegal Dumping Enforcement & Education Manager
Michael Johnson	Y	Diana Wadley	Department of Ecology
Chelsey Evans	Y	Heather Trim	Zero Waste Washington
John Martin	N	Joe Camero	
Erin Gagnon	Y	Kevin Tisdale	SPU – Administrative Support
Wendy Weiker	Y		
Steven Walls	Y		
Yongkang (YK) Zhou	N		

**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 their favorite PNW hiking trail.
- April meeting summary was 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:** Is the accepted list of recycling the same for commercial as it is for residential in Seattle?
- **A SPU Staff responded:** Unlike Seattle’s residential recycling program which is managed by SPU, commercial recycling services are provided on a business-to-business basis. SPU does not have authority over commercial recycling. Recycling companies work directly with businesses to determine which materials will be accepted.
- **A SPU Staff member commented:** Sally Hulsman, who currently manages SPU’s solid waste compliance team, has accepted the role of Contracts Manager and will be overseeing SPU’s seven major solid waste contracts.

### 3. Commercial Program & Seattle Reuse

Pat Kaufman provided an overview of Seattle's commercial recycling and compost programs, and reuse partnerships.

- **A Guest Commented:** My understanding is that Seattle's ordinance required that the materials accepted in Seattle's commercial recycling programs to mirror the residential recycling program.
- **A SPU Staff Member replied:** Commercial recycling isn't mandated in Seattle but we will take another look at the ordinance language you are referring to and follow up.
- **A SWAC Member Commented:** The type of materials businesses generate can vary widely and educating businesses on how to recycle correctly is an ongoing challenge. We have incentive and enforcement tools, carrots and sticks so to speak. We prefer to lead with "carrots" but enforcement tools are really effective.
- **A SPU Staff Member Commented:** Sometimes [businesses] just need help setting up their recycling operation, and there are tools SPU can provide, but it's often about changing behavior. In conducting outreach, we really try to listen to the businesses we work with to understand how to best support them. Are they motivated by the environmental [benefits of recycling]? Compliance focused? Community driven? We have the ability to use enforcement tools like issuing tickets for non-compliance, but I find that leading with education and in-person support is what gets people to change behavior.
- **A SWAC Member asked:** Regarding Seattle's food service ware regulations – there are so many vendors who sell products we don't want in our trash. In developing policy, does [SPU] consider how to make it easier for consumers to understand which products comply with Seattle's regulations?
- **A SPU Staff Member Commented:** In developing these policies we spoke with the food service ware and packaging vendors. They told us that they have customers from beyond Seattle who all use the same website and the law doesn't mandate [that they make explicit which products comply with Seattle's regulations] so they don't. That said, there are state-level policies that seek to eliminate the marketplace [for problematic products and packaging]. An example of this is the ban on green-tinted plastic produce bags at grocery stores. On the flip side, there are businesses that do not carry Styrofoam products at their Seattle locations but still do elsewhere because the state law [banning Styrofoam food service ware packaging] hasn't gone into effect yet. We are in the midst of a transition, where we have been able to eliminate some [problematic materials from the marketplace] but many are still widely available. For example, plastic straws and forks are easy to buy online and can be shipped from anywhere in the world. We continue to try to make progress in this area. In the next update to the Director's Rule, we are considering disallowing plastic-coated brown paper to-go boxes because most consumers incorrectly believe they are compostable and they have become a significant burden on the system. The packaging industry has had 10 years to address this widely understood issue and they have not.

### 4. Illegal Dumping Proposed Fee Schedule

Lee Moman and Tracy Cramer presented a proposed Director's Rule update related to illegal dumping education and enforcement. SWAC was asked to provide feedback on the various fee

schedule options being considered. Lee and Tracy will return to SWAC at a later date to answer questions and receive SWAC feedback.

#### 5. **Around the Table**

- **A Guest shared:** WM Rethink Waste Grant application is open through the end of June:  
<https://www.wmnorthwest.com/seattle/pdf/rethinkwastegrant23.pdf>
- **A Guest shared:** WA State Dept. of Health Enviro Justice Speaker Series:  
<https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/health-equity/environmental-justice/community-engagement>
- **A SWAC Member Shared:** King County is hiring:
  - <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/kingcounty/jobs/4024122/waste-stream-compliance-re-technical-assistance-project-managers>
  - <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/kingcounty/jobs/4020717/grants-coordinator-tlt-sda-project-program-manager-ii?keywords=waste&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

#### 6. **SWAC Chat**

Informal café-style conversations.

- SWAC members and guests responded to the prompt: How are you recycling hard-to-recycle items as an individual/organization?

**Adjourned [7:27 PM]**