



METRO

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

MINUTES OF THE METRO SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE (SWAC) MEETING

Metro Regional Center, Room 370A/B

Thursday, July 27, 2006

Members / Alternates Present:

Councilor Rod Park, Chair	John Lucini	Ralph Gilbert
Mike Hogle	Wade Lange	Dave White
Mike Leichner	Ray Phelps	Mike Miller
Bruce Walker	Glenn Zimmerman	Tom Badrick
Paul Edwards	Lori Stole	Matt Korot
Eric Merrill	Jeff Murray	Theresa Koppang
Rick Winterhalter	Dean Kampf	Rob Guttridge

Guests and Metro staff:

Janet Matthews	Jan O'Dell	Audrey O'Brien
Brad Botkin	Lee Barrett	Scott Keller
Andy Kahut	Vicki Kolberg	Jim Watkins
Easton Cross	Peter Spendelow	Kathryn Sofich
Paul Garrahan	Paul Ehinger	Julie Cash
David Bragdon	Tom Chaimov	Roy Brower
Barb Disser	Jennifer Porter	Bob Sjolander

I. Call to Order and Announcements Councilor Park

- Councilor Rod Park began the proceedings at approximately 10:04 a.m. and introduced newest member Theresa Koppang, Washington County Solid Waste Management Supervisor. Ms. Koppang is originally from Oregon, and worked for King County, Washington for the last 12 years, she said while briefly outlining her background. Additionally, Councilor Park asked Audrey O'Brien to stand and introduce herself in the audience. Ms. O'Brien is about to be confirmed as a SWAC member from the Oregon DEQ; at that time, Loretta Pickerell will become the alternate member from that agency.
- The Councilor asked all those present to introduce themselves. The City of Gresham's Matt Korot announced that their City Council recently approved a food waste collection pilot.
- Regarding the minutes from the May 25 meeting, Ashforth Pacific's Wade Lange noted that a typographical error on the last page rendered "rates" "rats." Metro's Janet Matthews added that clarification needs to be made regarding Clackamas County's contributions towards the outreach campaign.. With these changes, Mr. Wade moved the minutes be approved; the City of Portland's Bruce Walker seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

II. Solid Waste & Recycling Director's Update Mike Hogle

- Mr. Hogle had nothing to report at this time.

III. Reducing Key Contaminants from Residential Curbside RecyclingVicki Kolberg

Councilor Park introduced this item and Vicki Kolberg, Recycling Information Supervisor. Ms. Kolberg reported that a SWAC subcommittee formed to discuss curbside recycling contaminants and the loss of recyclables; their recommendation was “that Metro undertake a significant education and outreach effort” to improve both the situation and material quality. Metro, local government, and industry representatives have cooperatively developed an appropriate outreach campaign, Ms. Kolberg continued. Specifically, the group decided to focus on keeping glass containers separate, and keeping plastic bags out of curbside bins completely. Research found that “people want to do things right ,” Ms. Kolberg added, and many who were surveyed said that they’d like to receive a note from the hauler when they recycle incorrectly.

Ms. Kolberg showed two television ads that are currently running locally, one addressing the glass issue, the other plastic bags. Bent Images Studio created the animated spots, which began running July 17 and will run through September 9. This is the first time that Metro has been able to fund this type of campaign, thanks to the help of local governments. In the first week, Ms. Kolberg reported a rise in website hits, which is expected to grow throughout the campaign. In addition to the television spots, the City of Portland is having notices printed for haulers to inform residents of problems; they also have “Glass Only” stickers that people can put on dedicated buckets or bins.

Another part of the campaign dealing specifically with contamination is a “traveling display” of waste bales that show recyclables mixed in with regular garbage. The display, which is being driven by truck to various public places around the Metro region, represents the roughly 20 tons of similar loads that go to the landfill every day.

Ms. Kolberg then showed a third television spot that has been aired, featuring Community Affairs Supervisor Jan O’Dell. The 60-second piece, which aired on KGW, showed Jan as an “on-air interviewer” to a hauler and a rep from Blue Heron Paper.

To measure the success of the campaign, 25 garbage routes were sampled (total 1,000 samples) prior to the outreach campaign. The same routes will be sampled again after the campaign is completed, and a telephone survey of nearly 500 residents is planned. Concluding, Ms. Kolberg announced that Waste Connections in Gresham reported a noticeable increase in separately set-out glass already.

The group discussed how / where jurisdictions can get the hauler forms and “glass only” stickers.. Ms. Kolberg said that she’s e-mailed local jurisdictions that arrangements can be made through the City of Portland.

SP Newsprint’s John Lucini commented, “On behalf of the end-user, we appreciate the effort to do this, and I think the [television] spots came out really well... I just want to say thank you.” Mr. Walker added that the Master Recyclers are “another way to get this word [because] they staff so many events in the region that governments couldn’t possibly staff... It should end up with end-users seeing a cleaner [waste] stream.”

Councilor Park mentioned that it would be helpful to standardize bins and stickers between jurisdictions so that citizens can avoid confusion if they move to a different part of the Metro region.

IV. Recycling Roll Carts: Regional Experience To-DateScott Keller, Andy Kahut, Bob Sjolander

Prior to the presentation (and bridging this and Ms. Kolberg’s agenda item) Far West Fiber’s Jeff Murray commented that there’s been a drastic improvement in glass separation since Beaverton instituted a roll cart system.

Councilor Park explained that this agenda item would be in three parts: The City of Beaverton’s Scott Keller with the perspective of a local government that has switched to roll carts; Andy Kahut with the collection and processing story, and Bob Sjolander of Allied Waste providing experience from the facility side.

Mr. Keller began by handing out a four-page brochure outlining the background, results, and challenges the City has encountered since converting to a roll cart recycling system March 1, 2006 (attached). Volume was measured prior to start-up, he said, in January and February, and will be measured again in 2007 to measure progress. Mr. Keller recommended that jurisdictions be very careful about readiness: Education is crucial before the roll carts are distributed: Public media, newsletters, and information direct to the resident should all be used. Still, there were some problems, as noted in the “What We Learned” sidebars on the brochure.

Mr. Kahut’s report was about a 3-cart system being used in West Linn. See attached PowerPoint presentation for details of the program, its success and its problems. Highlights include high customer satisfaction (after initial roll-out) and productivity under the program; challenges include education of both the customer and employees, as well as significant capital investment at the front end.

Third up, Mr. Sjolander told the group that Allied Waste has been using roll carts in Lake Oswego for about 18 months. 98% of customers love the system, which uses three carts, plus a separate container for glass. Some customers, Mr. Sjolander said, were initially skeptical of the large carts and were given small ones. However, within weeks most of those households requested the larger carts instead. Using automated trucks has been very efficient, he added.

In answer to a question from Clackamas County’s Rick Winterhalter, Mr. Sjolander said that one thing that’s helped customer education is the fact that cameras have been installed in the truck hoppers. The driver can, therefore, watch for contamination problems as the material is loading. They leave a note for the customer if contamination is an issue; if three notes are left, a personal visit is made to the household.

The group briefly discussed the idea of reducing frequency of glass pick-up. While many area customers only set-out glass once a month, Mr. Kahut said that his customers consistently set-out wine bottles, which have no return / deposit infrastructure. The cost of implementing a roll-cart system was touched upon, as well: “There is a cost, and it is substantial,” Mr. Keller said, but explained that their current rate structure covered it initially. A rate increase will likely be implemented next year, but not solely because of the roll cart system, he said.

V. Disposal System Planning:

Analysis, Decisions, Next Steps Paul Ehinger

Paul Ehinger of SW&R’s Engineering Section reported on the state of the Disposal System Planning (DSP) project, using PowerPoint to highlight points of the transfer station ownership study done by CH2M Hill. (The Executive Summary portion of the final report was included in the agenda packet). The study compared three individual systems (all-private, all-publicly owned, and a hybrid of the two) and matched them to goals and values for the region set out by Metro Council. While an all-public model rated significantly higher than the other models, it dropped in ranking once risk was factored in. Council asked staff at their July 11 work session to look further into the hybrid model. This system would be similar to the status-quo, but with changes to enhance its efficiency.

A recent Council Work Session included presentations from some interested parties with ideas of what the system needs, Mr. Ehinger added. The information given was direct and expressive, he said, and it was a productive session. It was at the following work session that Council asked for more research into possible changes to the hybrid model.

Next steps include a Council Work Session to look at what research is necessary “to address a number of issues that have come up,” Mr. Ehinger continued. A study of transportation options will be done (transfer stations to landfill), rate equity is being studied as well. Other issues include facility caps / allocations, moratoriums, establishing standards for dry waste facilities, and “how to introduce - particularly in the dry waste system – some elements of competition that would achieve some of the goals the region has,” Mr. Ehinger said. Staff and Council want to look at new and creative ways to help private industry and Metro achieve recovery goals.

At the end of the presentation, Councilor Park opened the floor for questions / comments, first asking Council President Bragdon for his thoughts. Addressing the attendees, President Bragdon said that Council looked at the three models examined in the study and noted that none of the three was a perfect fit. "While the extremes of the public and private have some significant political, financial, and maybe even legal transition issues, I think what we're moving towards are reforms to the existing system under the general umbrella of [the] hybrid... That's probably where we'll end up," he continued. He noted that the transfer station system is merely one link of the system chain; another is transportation (particularly to Arlington, which contractually receives 90% of the region's waste). Gillam County has just obtained a grant to construct a barge facility on the Columbia near Arlington, which is an option that will be looked into, President Bragdon concluded.

Councilor Park added that he has asked staff to look not just at the near-term possibilities for DSP, but to look forward several decades. It's unlikely, for instance, that a new landfill will be sited "on the west side of the Cascades... That means most likely, the next 50 years of waste is going to continue to go east, and there are a variety of landfills potentially available besides Waste Management's." He agreed that Council would like to look into all transportation options, as well as market behaviors of different waste streams.

ORRA's Dave White voiced concerns about information presented to Council by Eco Data's Barbara Stephens earlier in the DSP project. He characterized Ms. Stephens' assertions that "hauling is a cost-plus business" as false, and would like a forum to discuss this, as well as how local governments set collection rates. Councilor Park and Mr. White exchanged ideas on the issue; the Councilor stated that Metro would like to look at ways to both reduce overall costs and help local governments, which currently base a portion of their rates on Metro's tip fee, which may or may not reflect private facilities' costs.

Late this summer, Mr. Hogle announced, "...we'll be coming back with a Resolution of Intent for Metro's role in the system that can be moved over into the RSWMP." A work plan will be developed including some of the elements Mr. Ehinger mentioned need further discussion. During review of the Resolution and work plan, Mr. Hogle continued, public comments will be taken on the DSP report and other issues, likely in the autumn.

Council President Bragdon assured that more than one hearing will likely be held in September regarding the Resolution. He assured the group that no one is considering having Metro do local rate-setting. "All the discussions pertain to helping local governments do informed rate-setting of their own.." Many jurisdictions have very small solid waste departments and "rate-setting is a complicated business," he pointed out, "especially when you're talking about large, multi-national, vertically-integrated companies. When transactions – particularly related to transfer stations – are no longer third-party transactions that can be independently verified, but are in effect inter-company transfers, that fundamentally changes the information that local governments have access to. If we can help provide more information in the form of benchmarks or something else, we're going to do that, because that's our obligation to the public."

VI. Final Steps on the Waste Reduction Plan.....Janet Matthews

Janet Matthews very briefly reviewed changes and additions made to the Interim Waste Reduction Plan (IWRP) as a result of comments received regarding the earlier draft. The Executive Summary was included in the SWAC agenda packet. DEQ has reviewed the draft since the last SWAC meeting, as well, Ms. Matthews reported.

The last round of public comment was fruitful, bearing comments from over 400 individuals, Ms. Matthews noted. Major themes included suggestions to focus on waste prevention, improve recycling services in the region (more materials and more convenience), increase education, and product stewardship.

Ms. Matthews went on to point out the changes made to the Plan:

- "Reduce toxic substances" added to the public health and safety portion of the regional values section.

- In the public education section, added emphasis to adult public education.
- Inserted language about front-end fees in the product stewardship section.
- Regarding the “Moving Forward” section of the Executive Summary, a narrative on to achieve the 64% goal was added. Furthermore, emphasis was added to a future review of goals that will take the Plan beyond that near-term goal, such as consideration of non-weight-based goals.

Ms. Matthews also mentioned “unseen goals” that, while absent in the IWRP, will be in the full RSWMP document, such as sustainability goals for the solid waste system. “That represents a lot of work ahead, in addition to the tonnage that we’re trying to recover,” she said.

To address DEQ concerns about the draft, clarifications were made to the “Alternative Program Process.” The process has been in existence for several years, and allows some degree of flexibility for local governments’ programs. Metro wants to ensure coordination with the State, “and that there’s an efficient process for local applicants who are seeking review of these program proposals.” The trigger-point for alternative programs is explained more clearly in the Plan, and the Regional Service Standard is defined. Ms. Matthews told the group. This is the most recent addition to the Plan, she said, and Metro and DEQ agreed that Metro will be the final arbiter of alternative programs. Some local governments were contacted regarding the addition prior to its inclusion. “The process itself remains unchanged,” Ms. Matthews pointed out.

Next steps: A new RSWMP Progress Report will go out this week, and Council will consider the Plan on Thursday, August 17. Another public comment process will begin in early 2007 for the full RSWMP; Council will consider approval of the RSWMP by Spring 2007.

VII. Other Business and Adjourn Councilor Park

With no questions or further business from the members or audience, Councilor Park adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Next meeting:
Thursday, August 24, 2006
Room 370 A/B

Prepared by:

Gina Cubbon
Administrative Secretary
Metro Solid Waste & Recycling Department

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Attachments:
Roll-Cart Recycling in Beaverton
Power Point Presentation: Hauling and Processing Roll Cart Materials in West Linn

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