

Executive Summary

Solid Waste Advisory Committee November 18, 2002

I. Call to Order and Announcements

Susan McLain

- Approval of Minutes: Mr. White proposed a clarification to the Executive Summary of the October 21st meeting, in Section III, the last sentence of the third paragraph. Food and related wastes are solid waste, however, to encourage recovery efforts, Metro has in practice exempted source separated organics from fees and taxes. Mr. Guttridge proposed that in Section IV, the term "source separation" be replaced with "commingling." With those changes noted, Mr. Merrill moved to approve the summary; Mr. White seconded the motion; none opposed; the Executive Summary was passed as corrected.

II. REM Director's Update

Terry Petersen

- Mr. Petersen announced that Council approved a Designated Facility Agreement (DFA) for Allied's Coffin Butte Landfill. A DFA will require that they collect Metro fees and taxes on waste from this region, and in exchange they can more equitably compete in this region. There is a provision in the DFA that all dry waste be processed before disposal. The DFA also ensures that this facility is subject to the same regulations as similar facilities in the region. Mr. Petersen indicated that Coffin Butte's DFA is the model for any future DFAs. Councilor McLain added that increasing recovery is an important provision, and that the Council is responsible for ensuring that this region's waste is disposed of in a way that protects the public.
- Mr. White said that he knew of recent public information requests and requested that Metro look at how to ensure confidentiality and structure grant applications to protect confidential information. Councilor McLain suggested that Metro's legal counsel be invited to the next SWAC meeting to answer questions on this subject.

III. SWAC Subcommittee Update

Lee Barrett

After an introduction by Councilor McLain, Mr. Barrett reviewed the purpose and desired outcomes of the Subcommittee on Contamination and Loss of Recyclables. There had been 2 meetings of the Subcommittee to date. The group thus far had agreed to determine an acceptable residual level and that glass should not be mixed with fibers. Mr. White added that the group struggled with the semantics of best practices, and the difficulty in determining whether they should determine best practices or suggest regulation.

Councilor McLain stated that she thinks safety is an issue when glass is commingled, and that it is also important to be able to produce an acceptable end product. Mr. Barrett, in responding to a question from Mr. Gilbert, said that about half of the contamination is material that should not have been commingled, and the other half is recyclable material that is in the wrong stream. Mr. Walker added that the Commingled Commercial Recyclables Processing Study is a good resource in considering best practices.

Councilor McLain reminded the group that this subcommittee will form a recommendation to be voted on by the full SWAC, and then delivered to Council. Ms. Matthews added that this issue is also being considered at DEQ's SWAC. Mr. Gilbert asked if there is currently an unacceptable level of contamination. Mr. Barrett explained that while State law prohibits disposal of source-separated material, it is not practical for the State to enforce a zero-percent level. Mr. Murray added that they have rejected contaminated loads in the past, but it rarely happens. Mr. Barrett concluded by reiterating that Metro is merely seeking to facilitate the discussion, and is not interested in regulating MRFs. Councilor McLain said that the group can look forward to another update on this at the next meeting.

IV. Waste Reduction Initiatives: Past results, future plans

WR & O Staff

Mr. Barrett explained that waste reduction work has been categorized into three sectors in order to better focus Metro and local government interest in addressing waste reduction. Metro determined that

we need to recover 120,000 tons of commercial, 90,000 tons of organics and 50,000 tons of construction and demolition debris in order to meet the region's recovery goals. Councilor McLain said that these waste reduction programs will have to pass policy and budget tests as demonstrated by performance measures, and Council will consider them starting next January. Mr. Barrett said that this is Year 3 of the Waste Reduction Initiatives, which is effectively a 5-year program targeting the 3 waste reduction sectors.

Mr. Apotheker said that a coordinated regional approach to commercial recycling had been established by the Commercial Recycling Work Group, which considers commercial waste reduction, waste prevention and reuse. The Group seeks to address barriers in commercial recycling processes and also investigates broader policy impacts such as procurement of commercial recyclables and mandatory disposal bans. In response to Mr. Kampfer's questions, Mr. Apotheker explained that institutional barriers can exist, for example larger national companies can be difficult to reach.

Mr. Jacobson coordinates a construction and demolition (C&D) work group that focuses on 3 tracks: waste prevention, post-collection recovery and market development. C&D is important because it makes up about 25% of this region's waste stream. Mr. Jacobson explained that partnerships with construction industry associations are important by helping him reach about 80% of the industry. The second track for C&D is to pursue incentives for MRFinng dry waste. The third track is to assist in the development of markets for used building materials. Mr. Walker noted that Portland's Green Building program finds Metro's Toolkit very useful and asked about the status of Lakeside Landfill. Mr. Barrett explained that Lakeside is pursuing legal action to be able to open a MRF on their property. In response to a question from Mr. Huyke, Mr. Jacobson explained that C&D generation is hard to predict because it fluctuates with the economy, but that if about 50% could be recovered, the region would probably meet recovery goals. Mr. Phelps asked about source-separation versus commingling, and Ms. Lynch explained that due to site constraints, most C&D is commingled.

Ms. Erickson introduced the organics program, with a goal to recover 90,000 tons per year -- 55,000 tons a year from the commercial sector, and 35,000 tons per year from residential. She explained the two-tiered approach, with diversion and donation being preferable and processing the organics for compost is the alternative. There have been mixed results with a processing infrastructure grant program to date. Metro continues to work with the City of Portland and potential organics processors. Ms. Erickson added that a special rate for organics is being considered for the Metro Central transfer facility. In response to questions, Mr. Walker explained that the City was working with potential processors and that the City is in the process of considering legislation to require organics to be source separated for processing by certain businesses.

V. Other Business and Adjourn

Susan McLain

Councilor McLain congratulated Mr. Walker on being invited to New York City to talk as a recycling expert. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Documents to be kept with the record of the meeting:

Agenda Item III:

1. SWAC Subcommittee on Contamination & Loss of Recyclables (included in agenda packet)

Agenda Item IV:

1. Waste Reduction Initiatives Overview (included in agenda packet)
2. Metro Regional Organics Work Plan 2002-2005 (included in agenda packet)
3. Construction & Demolition Debris Recovery Work Plan (included in agenda packet)
4. Commercial Recovery Work Plan FY 2002-2005 (included in agenda packet)