

SOLID WASTE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

June 1, 1990

The following members and alternates were present

Rich Carson, Metro Planning Director  
Kevin Martin, Washington County  
Merle Irvine, Wastech  
Steve Farnsworth, Multnomah County  
Renee Dowlin, Port of Portland  
Bill Martin, Washington County  
Jim Rapp, City of Sherwood  
Estle Harlan, OSSI  
Ed Druback, City of West Linn  
John G. Drew, Far West Fibers  
Tom Miller, Washington County Haulers Assn.  
Bob Wiggin, Citizen  
Peter Spendelow, DEQ  
Bruce Walker, City of Portland  
Joanne Garnett, Multnomah County

Staff Present

Becky Crockett  
Gerry Uba  
Ron Nagy  
Connie Kinney

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Protocols

The Meeting was called to order by Rich Carson. It was moved to approve the minutes from the March 30, 1990 meeting: the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Updates

Becky Crockett began by giving scheduled updates; Household Hazardous Waste Subcommittee meeting to be held June 7, 7:30 a.m.; Land Use Subcommittee is awaiting research work from a consulting firm (McKeever, Morris) who is working on zoning codes; select waste will be meeting June 22, and they are working on approval of the draft select waste plan; Metro is now beginning to be involved with infectious medical waste and the role they will play related to disposal, a meeting is set for Tuesday, 9:00 in Council Chambers; the Metro Council approved receipt of Washington County's Concept Plan regarding the System Design Program and has authorized the Planning & Development Dept to issue an RFP for an engineering firm to conduct a technical analysis.

The next agenda item discussed was the Yard Debris Plan process and schedule.

Mr. Carson indicated today's meeting had a tight schedule. The changes regarding the Plan made today will be mailed out this afternoon, the Policy Committee will re-evaluate it on June 8; the Council Solid Waste Committee on June 19. He said the Council will pass a resolution and transmit the Plan to DEQ for review and approval. After Metro's receipt of the Plan back from DEQ, a final ordinance must be passed by Metro Council within 90 days. Becky Crockett reminded committee members that at the June 19th meeting when the Plan is submitted to the Solid Waste Committee for public hearing, that it would be helpful for them to give written or verbal testimony as to their support of the Plan.

Becky Crockett reviewed the Yard Debris Workshops. There were 4 workshops held in 3 counties. Some comments and 1 letter were received as a result of the workshops, all of which were kept in mind while drafting the Yard Debris Plan.

The next agenda item was for approval of the Draft Yard Debris Plan.

Ms. Crockett explained that the section 1, background section included the plan objective which emanated from one of the workshops held in Washington County; section 2 deals with the current system; section 3 is the technical analysis section which discusses the source reduction and collection program analysis; section 4 sets the premise for what is required for implementation of the Plan; section 5 is the yard debris forecast which has had some changes which need to be discussed, section 6 is the timeline for implementation; section 7 discusses Metro's, DEQ's and Local Governments five-year work program; section 8 discusses funding and emphasizes that the Plan is based on a user-fee system; section 9 has not been completed and Metro is awaiting a legal opinion as to the EQC rule which applies.

Ms. Crockett opened general discussion with section 4 beginning with the Summary which states the plan to be market-driven; local governments have a choice as to collection options; and that a conservative collection program should be introduced until the market capacity is realized. Ms. Crockett stated that after completion of a short-term market capacity analysis, market capacity could be expected at 151,000 composted cubic yards. This figure was used in establishing a minimum collection requirement for local governments. Ms. Crockett said the Plan suggests that weekly curb-side collection should be viewed as the best collection method. If local governments choose to meet the minimum collection standards through the use of a depot system they will be required to also provide an on-call user-pay drop box collection service.

There was much discussion regarding the requirement of an on-call, user-pay, drop box system. Mr. Carson suggested that perhaps a seasonal user-pay system be adopted. Mr. Druback and Mr. Merle Irvine suggested eliminating "drop box" as a requirement. Mr. Bruce Walker preferred leaving it in. Tom Miller suggested adding

the word "minimal".

Ms. Crockett then discussed "Maintaining stability in establishing rates charged for incoming loads of yard debris" for yard debris processors, the key being that Metro would be required to establish enabling code revisions.

Metro has agreed to pursue regulating the processors based on the recommendations of the subcommittee.

Mr. John Drew, Far West Fiber, commented on Ms. Crockett's mention of "market influences" who said the issue at hand was not only recycling of yard debris but recycling of paper, glass, etc. Mr. Drew wanted to know if the yard debris system was going to be "market driven" or one responsive to "rate regulation by government", and that a concern might be that which ever approach was taken that other forms of recyclables would possibly be influenced by the same policy in the future. If rate regulation by government is chosen, at what point does government cease to maintain support for the material? Mr. Drew gave as an example the recycling of paper and the fact that the market is glutted. The processors are unable to accept any more or it is a financial burden because its purchased at a very low rate. The haulers (who are obviously stuck in the middle having contracted to haul it) will be unable to break-even.

Mr. Merle Irvine, Wastech, said processors have two sources of revenue, i.e., what he can charge and what he can sell his material for, (and those charges fluctuate). His concern with Metro establishing processor rates is they can restrict his ability to charge as well as mandating that he receives material there is no market for. Mr. Irvine strongly endorses the concept of the market-driven approach. He said the haulers were guaranteed a price for removing yard debris but that processors were not guaranteed that what came in would go out at a cost effective price.

Mr. Phillips said that recycling is not market-driven, recycling is a mandated program, plain pure and simple. Mr. Phillips felt a guarantee from Metro was in order as to what kind of rate should be established and where to put materials before implementing the Plan.

Mr. Carson said that it was not Metro's intent to regulate but to keep stability with the market. There was much continued discussion as to a market driven approach vs. rate regulation. It was acknowledged that yard debris recycling appeared to have more potential for growth in this state at this time than did, for instance, newspaper, glass, or tin.

Ms. Crockett said Metro's suggested responsibility included management of the possible oversupply of the market. Ms. Crockett also stated that if a local jurisdiction began a program beyond the minimum standard, that jurisdiction had an equal responsibility to assist in managing the impact of that material on the market place.



Mr. Carson commented that Metro had not made reference to any specific instances or subsidy of the market in the event of oversupply, but that Metro would be "on the hook for it".

Bruce Walker stated the issues presently being discussed had previously been discussed 6 months ago in the Waste Reduction Subcommittee and suggested if there were specific reservations to make a motion to amend.

Peter Spendelow addressing the question of supply said that if everyone in the entire region moved to a monthly spread across the base curbside collection program we would generate about 70,000 tons of compost and the study shows that by just giving it away Metro could dispose of more than 200,000 tons and that exercising caution without being overly cautious is the best course of action.

Ms. Crockett then moved on to the section on yard the debris forecast. She said that the waste reduction subcommittee recommended a change which resulted in the goal for the Plan to reach 80% by 1996, which in turn changed the overall regional waste reduction goal from 56 to 62% -- 64%.

Mr. Drew suggested that the percentage figures would be clearer to him in graph form and broken down as to its numerators and denominators. Ms. Crockett said that although the suggestion was good that timing was so critical she doubted it could be accomplished for the Policy Committee with such short notice.

Ms. Crockett said a workshop would be conducted at the end of the Technical Committee meeting on June 22 and invite local government to discuss their current collection program within their jurisdiction so that Metro could counsel and assist them in order to meet the Plan's minimum standard.

Ms. Crockett then discussed the five-year work program to be carried out by Metro, DEQ and local governments. Ms. Crockett said the Plan calls for DEQ to render technical assistance and in that respect suggested that DEQ develop a database with current national information on yard debris. Mr. Spendelow stated DEQ had no specific plans to create a program for technical assistance. The general consensus of the committee members was that because DEQ was in a position to mandate and review certain requirements of local governments it was appropriate that they be a source of information on national trends, creation and implementation of recycling plans.

Ms. Crockett further discussed a request for a DEQ requirement mandating that state agencies use yard debris compost and sewerage compost for landscape material unless the agency petitions DEQ to do otherwise upon threat of penalty. Members of the committee were very receptive to this suggestion.

Ms. Crockett continued with review of the Plan pointing out

requirements to be met by DEQ, Metro and local governments. In view of the discussions regarding marketing of compost, Mr. Carson suggested moving the statement "Further this includes determining and taking appropriate management steps to intervene in the marketing and/or end-use of yard debris if required collection standards established in this Plan result in the inundation of yard debris on existing markets.", to the summary section of the Plan making it clearer to the reader that this is an intended part of the Plan. There was continued discussion as to what interpretation of "appropriate management steps" might be.

Merle Irvine suggested adding language stating that Metro take " . . . appropriate management steps in a timely manner which minimizes the economic impact to the collectors and processors of yard debris . . . ". The committee agreed with Mr. Irvine's suggestion.

Ms. Crockett pointed out the need to incorporate within the Plan the provision allowing local government to license yard debris processors, stating Metro's responsibility was to evaluate the need to regulate processors.

There being no further discussion of the Plan the meeting progressed to the Finance Chapter of the Solid Waste Management Plan.

Ms. Crockett stated that the Policy Committee had reviewed the Finance Chapter and has agreed it is ready to be sent to local governments for their review and comments.

Mr. Irvine stated that he had one additional comment as regards the Plan referring to page 79 of the document where it said "it should be noted that this market driven concept is somewhat skewed in that current yard debris . . . ." would like to add the words "collection and compost markets include government involvement. . . ." and he had a question as to the last sentence beginning with "however, the degree and influence of government involvement . . . ." -- stating he guessed he had a problem understanding that last sentence. Ms. Crockett asked for discussion on the subject.

Ms. Pamela Kambur added that in reference to Mr. Irvine's first comment stating that Metro was not per se involved in "collection" and Mr. Irvine stated inasmuch as it was a mandated market driven program and Metro was in effect responsible for the marketing that collection was a part of that marketing.

There were no further comments regarding changes to the Plan.

Ms. Crockett read an invitation from McFarlane's inviting committee members to lunch and a tour of their facilities on June 20, 11-1:00, and they would appreciate RSVP's by calling 774-1234.

Mr. Carson said that Agenda item VI was an action item and



requested approval.

Mr. Drew recommended approval and adoption of the Plan including the amendments discussed, Mr. Druback seconded the motion. It was noted that the motion passed unanimously with Peter Spendelow, DEQ abstaining. It was also noted that Ms. Estle Harlan had been called away from the meeting due to a personal emergency.

Ms. Crockett reminded committee members that if they had any suggestions, changes to the Plan to please put them in a written form and mail them to her before the June 22 Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Miller commented there was a need to set criteria on what was an acceptable or unacceptable level of contamination of a load rejection. He also felt the need for placement in the system of a protection for the interests of the collector, i.e., a way to be compensated or reimbursed for the additional costs incurred when loads are not accepted (because of contamination, etc.) at the nearest facility. He added that the haulers suggested that the City add a 20% surcharge to cover this eventuality.

There was discussion regarding educating the public about contamination, what would be considered yard debris, etc., but most committee members felt education and information alone would not eliminate the problem.

It was decided this issue would be further discussed at a later time. The meeting was adjourned.