

MEETING SUMMARY
METRO SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC)
 Metro Regional Center, Council Chambers
 Thursday, November 18, 2010

Members / Alternates Present:

Matt Korot, Chair	Bruce Walker	Michelle Poyourow
Scott Keller	Dave White	Theresa Koppang
Leslie Kochan (substituting for DEQ rep. Audrey O'Brien)	Rick Winterhalter	Paul Ehinger, Alternate

Members / Alternates Absent:

Audrey O'Brien	Amy Pepper	Susan Millhauser
Adam Winston	John Lucini	

Guests and Metro staff:

Jennifer Erickson, Metro	Alando Simpson, City of Roses	Jeff Murray, Far West Fibers
Meredith Sorenson, Harvest Pwr.	Dick Stringer, WMSWCD	Ray Phelps, Allied Waste
Andy Sloop, Metro	Todd Irvine, Total Reclaim	Karen Feher, Metro
Segeni Mungai	Easton Cross, Allied Waste	Will Elder, Metro
Chris Carey, Arrow Sanitary	Holly Stirnkorb, Tabor Consult.	Bill Metzler, Metro
Karen Guillen-Chapman, City of Gresham	Fawn McNeely, Legislative Advocates	Gina Cubbon, Metro
Dean Kampfer, WMO		

I. Welcome and Review of Agenda.....*Matt Korot*

Matt Korot thanked everyone for coming, and explained that three major issues would be discussed, beginning with a continuation of last month's food waste recovery policy discussion. While it would be great to finish the food waste topic at December's meeting, it's important to take the necessary time to reach a recommendation, so that deadline is not set in stone.

II. Food Waste Recovery Policies Discussion Paper.....*Matt Korot, All*

Mr. Korot briefly reviewed last month's discussion, and asked for comments and questions from the members to help further refine and narrow the options. He referred to the attached graph, which matched potential policies to key points made by SWAC members. The goal is to determine options to help Metro Council develop policies that will advance food waste recovery in the region.

The group discussed the option of disposal bans at length. Theresa Koppang pointed out that having Metro institute a ban would work because it would be both within the agency's authority and avoid the prospect of varying bans from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Even the knowledge that a ban is coming can motivate, however. Rick Winterhalter countered that the issue is more about transfer capabilities; the region has composting facilities, but not necessarily enough transfer options.

Dave White prefers the second half of the disposal ban box (see graph, Potential Policies, second box, center), which would have Metro simply enter into discussions about possible bans with local governments. Work as partners, and ask them how they would feel about a ban. Ms. Koppang pointed out that SWAC's local government representatives have the responsibility to keep their elected officials abreast of the Committee's work, so discussions are in essence already happening.

The two options contained in the “bans” box aren’t mutually exclusive, Mr. Winterhalter mused. A ban could be approved that would go into full effect a few years later: “Keep the monkey moving,” he said. If the infrastructure isn’t in place, it’s premature to initiate serious discussion of bans, Scott Keller responded. The transfer capacity needs to be identified first.

Is there any compelling reason that a ban would not be a good idea, Leslie Kochan wondered. If not, implement a disposal ban that includes specific goals and timelines for infrastructure development (similar to how the e-waste ban was implemented) leading up to the date when the ban would take effect.

Impart to the Council that local governments, residents, and businesses throughout the region are clamoring for an organics program to be put in place, Bruce Walker offered. Tell them that, based on discussions with local government representatives, SWAC believes such a program will be developed, Metro’s leadership is needed. Say something to the effect that staff believe programs will be in place and a disposal ban implemented if needed in 2015 or whatever year.

Mr. White countered that yard debris isn’t banned and disposal of that is going smoothly. He remains unconvinced that a ban is necessary, and if one was put into effect, there would still be a percentage of those who won’t comply. Despite what local government representatives have said, their elected officials may not choose to enter into a program that would cause rate increases. The hauling and solid waste industries don’t like bans because it falls on them to enforce them. Mandate recovery, but don’t ban the materials from disposal.

Mr. Korot asked each member, after thinking this idea over further, to take some time in the next few days to e-mail him a short paragraph containing their opinion/advice on the ban/required collection options. He asked the group to next discuss the first box, regarding financial assistance.

Everyone agreed that financial assistance would of course help. Comments included:

- It may be most valuable to provide greater facility development in the region, upgrade Metro’s transfer stations, and coordinate a strong education and outreach campaign
- Both politically and practically, financial help would make it easier for local governments (especially the smaller jurisdictions) to get started. Starting up new programs necessitates more staff, for which money from Metro would be extremely helpful.
- Look at Metro to help the best candidates for transferring and processing the food waste. (Which was countered with, is there a reason would Metro need to give financial assistance to expand a facility owned by one of the largest waste firms in the world?)
- Targeted financial help would be a great help. It may be possible, Mr. Korot responded, to have money go where it’s most needed (i.e., smaller jurisdictions so that their program can develop at the same rate as larger jurisdictions).

Moving on to the fourth box (requiring private transfer stations to accept organics), Mr. Korot explained that Metro has franchise agreements with four private transfer stations, which will be up for renewal in 2013. Should organics be a requirement of the franchises? Responses:

- Since it’s a business opportunity, it won’t need to be required; facilities will likely want to accept the material. However, if a facility is going just fine taking garbage, they may not want to tackle organics.
- Might there be obstacles, such as land-use issues? What about potential environmental problems?
- It’s possible facilities won’t want to take organics, so they’ll jack up the rates to a point that no one will want to bring it in.
- There’s plenty of capacity for garbage, but organics is a completely different animal. Every facility will have to face that challenge and make trade-offs in the services they offer. What exactly would be required?

The fifth box regarded setting up a long-term organics tip fee for Metro Central Station, to help private facilities gauge where to set their rates for the same material. Mr. White said that he is against Metro's rates being subsidized, and said he'd like to know what's in them. (Mr. Ehinger responded that this information is readily available in the Metro Code.)

As a next step, Mr. Korot asked that each SWAC member think about the proposals in the second and third boxes (disposal bans and whether or not to require local governments to develop collection programs), and email them to Mr. Korot. Those comments can be used to hone a policy recommendation. Refinement will continue at the December meeting.

III. Public Comment on Agenda Item II.....All

Mr. Kampfer would like to see financial assistance given to local governments, and suggested that disposal bans not be implemented until a system is firmly in place. He asked whether a ban would be on the hauler, the facility, or the landfill. Also, if private transfer stations are required to accept organics, it should be region-wide.

Jeff Murray added that if food waste is banned, more may just go down the garbage disposal.

The remaining agenda items were tabled until the next meeting, and the meeting adjourned.

Prepared by:

Gina Cubbon
Assistant to the Director
Metro Parks & Environmental Services

gbc
Attachment
T:\SWAC_New\2010 meetings\11-18-10 meeting\SWAC111810min.docx