

MEETING SUMMARY
METRO SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC)

Metro Regional Center, Room 401
Wednesday, February 2, 2011

Members / Alternates Present:

Matt Korot, Chair	Bruce Walker	Michelle Poyourow
Rick Winterhalter	Dave White	Amy Pepper
Susan Millhauser	John Lucini	Paul Ehinger, Alternate
Leslie Kochan (substituting for DEQ rep. Audrey O'Brien)	Theresa Koppang	

Members / Alternates Absent:

JoAnn Herrigel
Adam Winston
Scott Keller

Guests and Metro staff:

Jennifer Erickson, Metro	Matt Miller, Gresham Sanitary	Vern Brown, ECR
Meredith Sorenson, Harvest Pwr.	Ray Phelps, Allied Waste	Will Elder, Metro
Segeni Mungai	Michelle Metzler, Waste Mgmt.	Hannah Smith, Conkling, Fiscum & McCormick
Dan Blue, City of Gresham	Dean Kampfer, WMO	Mike Dewey, Waste Mgmt.
Pam Gilbert, ECR	Alando Simpson, City of Roses Disposal	Gina Cubbon, Metro

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

Mr. Korot thanked the members for finding the time to come to the meeting, which was scheduled in order to take the place of the January date (which had a conflict). He previewed the agenda and noted that Scott Keller would be absent from the meeting.

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

Mr. Korot told the group that comments from the previous meeting were looked at closely and incorporated into the supplemental materials provided prior to this meeting. The Committee began discussion on the first piece.

Policy 1 – Funding

Bruce Walker said it's unrealistic to think that substantial increases in food recovery programs can occur without investment in staff. If there's concern about impacts on the Regional System Fee (RSF), then Metro should look at whether funding this work from solid waste reserves is feasible. Dave White added that the Clackamas County haulers had discussed this the previous day. They feel there is a role for them to play in working with their customers that could supplement work of local government staff.

Rick Winterhalter commented that there will always be a cost impact from programs, and that from an economic standpoint it's not necessarily a bad thing if the cost of disposal goes up. John Lucini responded that the cost shouldn't go up on non-organics, so organics collection should be funded and implemented without raising the RSF.

Mr. White asked how funding might work; Mr. Korot responded that the recommendation could be phrased to reflect the way SWAC would prefer the money be spent. For instance, if the group agrees with Mr. Lucini that the system fee shouldn't be touched, include that in its recommendation.

Michelle Poyourow asked about other funding sources. Paul Ehinger replied that reserves could possibly be used (depending on tonnage), or perhaps budget cuts in other programs might free up funding for organics. Mr. Lucini suggested that organics disposal itself might help fund the program, and Mr. Korot added that funding currently going to local governments could possibly be reallocated to an organics program in those jurisdictions.

Mr. White proposed forwarding a recommendation to Council stating that a certain amount of money be set aside to fund staff at the local government level who would coordinate and promote organics programs. He further proposed that this should occur without an increase to the RSF and that Metro should look at other options, such as savings that could be transferred to this effort through the budget process. While there was some nodding agreement, Mr. Winterhalter said that he would prefer to keep the option of raising the RSF on the table.

Leslie Kochan asked if local governments would be consulted prior to any possible reallocations. Yes, Mr. Korot replied. Discussion continued, including about how decisions would be made regarding the amount of funding that might be given to each jurisdiction. Not all jurisdictions may be ready to implement a program by July 1, so that in itself would help narrow the decision, Mr. Korot commented.

Ms. Kochan suggested that the recommendation state that SWAC would prefer to not raise the RSF if adequate funding could be made available without jeopardizing the integrity of other programs. Susan Millhauser presented the example that it wouldn't necessarily cause layoffs of Recycle at Work staff, but an opportunity to talk to businesses about both programs.

Mr. Walker suggested: "We support funding for this program, and SWAC's priority would be to not increase the Regional System Fee." Mr. Korot summarized by stating that, based on the discussion, there appears to be consensus around this language.

A member asked when would the program sunset? Mr. Korot said that because this would be budgeted annually, it's possible to sunset any year. Ms. Kochan suggested tying it into the disposal ban option.

Policy 2 – Increase organics transfer capacity at Metro facilities

Should clarifications be included regarding whether the program applies to commercial and residential organic waste, or just commercial? Mr. White responded that commercial should happen first, because residential capacity could overwhelm the system at this point. Mr. Winterhalter agreed, saying that if Policies 1 and 2 are put together, it would make sense to begin with commercial. The Committee might even want to point out in the recommendation that commercial organics are a priority in the RSWMP.

Mr. Walker was concerned that stating "commercial" might be limiting, and potentially prevent residential material from being taken at Metro's facilities. He'd prefer the word "commercial" not be included. Mr. Ehinger agreed that it is better to keep the language broad since he has to plan to provide the services. There may be operational ways to accommodate both.

Amy Pepper commented that as these are multi-year policies, they should be kept general. The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan guides staff in how to implement the policies.

Mr. Korot reminded the group that Mr. Ehinger had previously told the Committee about possible modifications to Metro Central to improve its acceptance of organics, and some options to help make Metro South organics-ready. Mr. Walker suggested one language change: "Provide organics transfer

service at Metro South by pursuing options to divert dry waste loads or self-haul customers to other facilities.”

There was consensus on this item.

Policy 3 – Disposal Ban

Mr. White stated there was no need for a disposal ban, and pointed to water usage as an example. There are no bans on certain showerheads or sprinklers, people are just becoming more educated on the subject and changing their behaviors. Focus on education and give the program a chance before going to “Plan Z,” he said. Countering, Mr. Winterhalter pointed out that substantial education has been done to keep plastic bags out of curbside recycling bins, with very little success. A ban is a useful instrument to move and force action. He’d prefer to keep the option of a ban, just move the timetable further out.

Mr. Walker said that he saw a strong rationale for the Metro Council to send a message to the region that there is a need to step up collection, transfer and processing efforts. It would be a strong statement. Ms. Kochan added that with the greenhouse gas implications of organics in the waste stream, we can’t wait ten years for progress; a ban needs to be out there as a real incentive.

The group discussed a suggestion by Mr. White to accept Part A, Option 2. Optimistically, Milestone 1 could be reached in two years. The idea of extending the deadline re-emerged, and Ms. Kochan pointed out that the feasibility study would add time.

The Committee agreed to change Part A, Option 2 of the Disposal Ban policy to read December 31, 2013; move the feasibility study to 2014, and an actual ban to 2016.

III. Food Rescue Policy Discussion Paper.....*Matt Korot, All*

Mr. Winterhalter remarked that food donation is consistent with the RSWMP and higher on the waste management hierarchy than recycling. Ms. Kochan agreed with supporting the infrastructure as laid out in the discussion paper. Mr. Walker said that he would support this policy if the amount does not exceed approximately \$100,000.

Further discussion included Mr. White’s concern that even if it’s a good program, funding would be one more thing placed on the back of the collection rate. Elected officials don’t have unlimited support for raising these rates, he cautioned. Mr. Walker suggested adding language about where the money could be best spent. He asked for information regarding specific capital needs. Mr. Korot told the group that Metro is conducting a barriers/benefits study to answer this question. The study will be complete in approximately six months.

Because of time constraints, this item was tabled until the next meeting (scheduled for February 17), and the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by:

Gina Cubbon
Assistant to the Director
Metro Parks & Environmental Services

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