

 **Metro** | *Meeting minutes*

Meeting: Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee  
Date/time: Wednesday, April 13, 2016; 10:00 a.m. to Noon  
Place: Metro Council Chambers

*The purpose of the Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee is to develop policy options that, if implemented, would serve the public interest by reducing the amount and toxicity of waste generated and disposed, or enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the system through which the region's solid waste is managed.*

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**Attendees**

Mike Leichner, Pride Disposal  
Bruce Walker, City of Portland  
Theresa Koppang, Washington County  
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality  
Keith Ristau, Far West Recycling  
Matt Korot, Metro  
Amy Roth, Association of Oregon Recyclers  
Scott Keller, City of Beaverton  
Alando Simpson, City of Roses Disposal & Recycling  
Paul Ehinger, Metro

**Absent**

Casey Camors, City of Milwaukie  
Kathy Kaatz, City of Tualatin

**Presenters:**

Paul Slyman, Metro  
Juan Carlos Ocana-Chiu, Metro  
Cassie Salinas, Metro  
Andy Sloop, Metro  
Aaron Toney, Good Company  
Bruce Walker, City of Portland BPS

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

Chair Matt Korot called the meeting to order and declared a quorum.

**2. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR AND SWAAC MEMBERS**

Chair Korot reviewed the agenda items and noted that the public comment on proposed Title V changes closes April 29, 2016.

**3. CONSIDERATION OF SWAAC MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

The minutes of the February 25, 2016 SWAAC meeting were approved.

**4. METRO STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Paul Slyman introduced the discussion of Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Equity Plan) noting that the plan will influence nearly every service Metro delivers, including solid waste.

Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chíu led an exercise which highlighted that taking a color-blind approach to equality has failed to eliminate disparity in our region. Even with the best intention, people of color frequently experience the most challenging outcomes with regard to housing, transportation, etc. He illustrated that while equality uses the same glasses in the same frame for everyone; equity acknowledges that each one needs a different lens or prescription to achieve better results. The goal of the Equity Plan is to identify barriers that preclude equitable outcomes.

Cassie Salinas shared videos featuring several members of the Metro Council speaking about the Equity Plan and stakeholder conversations in the community. She and Mr. Ocaña-Chíu outlined five long-term goals focused on central services that Metro aspires to achieve in 25-30 years and will set the framework for our future equity work:

Goal A: Metro convenes and supports regional partners to advance racial equity

Goal B: Metro meaningfully engages communities of color

Goal C: Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce

Goal D: Metro creates safe and welcoming services, programs and destinations

Goal E: Metro's resource allocation advances racial equity

In addition, over the next 18 months each Metro department will create its own list of five-year objectives and actions using the framework created in the Equity Plan.

Ms. Salinas noted that the public comment period for the Equity Plan is open until mid-April. The final draft will be finished by the end of April, reviewed by Metro's senior leadership and then presented to the Metro Council for adoption on June 23, 2016. Chair Korot invited SWAAC members to take advantage of the opportunity to comment and to look for upcoming opportunities for engagement during implementation of the Equity Plan. Chair Korot asked for feedback or comments or experiences from SWAAC members.

Mr. Walker inquired about the next step towards Council adoption, and then the 18-month period that Mr. Slyman and others would be tasked with finding ways to implement the strategic plan within their own departments. Mr. Ocaña-Chíu noted that Metro as an organization would implement overall agency actions identified in the plan, while departments are preparing own plans. Staff is eager to get going and many departments are already moving toward implementation.

Mr. Slyman noted that as Metro implements the Equity Plan SWAAC members may see us do things differently than in the past. Mr. Slyman encouraged members to ask for explanation if they have questions. Right now, we are cataloging the things that we already do to advance equity in the region As we gain focus and we move further along in the plan and begin

implementing changes, please engage any of our Metro staff to talk about the actions being taken.

Mr. Simpson asked what weaknesses in Metro's Diversity Action Plan (DAP) is the Equity Plan intended to strengthen? Mr. Slyman remarked that DAP focused on diversity, the *who*, and the Equity Plan focuses on the *how* and *why*, bringing equity and inclusion to the diversity piece. Mr. Simpson noted that this is a big area of how governments are measured and it has historically been difficult for the City of Portland, for one, to accomplish these ideals. The performance indicators show that there has been little shift in the paradigm over the years, and yet regional diversity has increased drastically from 1990-2010. Mr. Simpson feels that the reason for this is that there have not been the metrics to hold folks accountable. He has had an ongoing conversation with Portland Development Commission regarding breaking out Pacific Islanders from the Asian population, for one, to highlight the income disparity. He would also like to know what median income was in 1990, broken out by race and ethnicity, to use as an equity measure today.

Mr. Ocaña-Chiu acknowledged the weaknesses of historic data, as it is often aggregated and does not take into account differences among groups. Ms. Salinas committed to looking into the Asian/Pacific Islander data. Mr. Simpson commented that the report actually looked much better than many others he has had experience with, developed by other jurisdictions. He gave accolades to the equity strategy advisory committee at Metro, which articulated very explicit outcomes and content, and for speaking to many issues that need to be addressed.

Ms. Koppang shared the draft plan with the equity leadership team in Washington County, as they are also working on strategic planning. She commented that just keeping track of efforts in regard to equity strategy has been challenging, and Mr. Slyman agreed that Metro has faced the same challenge.

Mr. Korot asked for further comments from the public; there were none.

## **5. WOOD WASTE MARKET ALTERNATIVES STUDY**

Andy Sloop of Metro and Aaron Toney of Good Company shared an update on a multi-phase study and environmental analysis of the wood waste market. This was an informational update, with comments welcomed on the findings and next steps.

Mr. Sloop reminded the group that the purpose of the study was to identify and assess options for maintaining and improving end-market capacity, stability and environmental outcomes, which can be implemented within next 10 years, and with an emphasis on actions Metro can take in support of the best outcomes. The urban wood waste picture changed dramatically with the loss of a strategic recycling plant last winter, making the market analysis particularly timely.

Mr. Sloop shared that phase 2 of the study built on the phase 1 findings, and assessed the three most likely options for markets for the region's urban wood waste:

- 1) Status quo as hogged fuel
- 2) Production of densified fuels (pellets, logs, etc.)
- 3) Production of engineered wood panels

The Phase 2 findings identified the following:

- Traditional hogged fuel remains a viable option for 3 – 5 years
  - The market is “stable but fragile”
- Pellets for industrial fuel offers potential
  - UWW prohibited for use in residential stoves but allowed for industrial use
  - Western Oregon Wood Products is a potential customer at ~ \$12-15/ton.
- Hogged fuel to charcoal briquettes offers potential
  - Kingsford torrefaction (Springfield)
  - Need to verify scale and health impacts

In answer to Mr. Walker’s inquiry, Mr. Sloop confirmed that Western Oregon Wood needs clean wood, so that excludes painted and treated wood waste. Mr. Simpson inquired about the 3-5 year timeline for hogged fuel. Mr. Sloop responded that this figure represents the “gut feel” of processors and existing users, noting that there are no specific plans, but more an expectation of how competitive this fuel will be versus alternatives. This also involves the stability of the supply and price of natural gas, as hogged fuel as often used as a backfill if the price of price natural gas goes up. Mr. Ristau wondered if Kingsford has the same quality issues as Western Oregon Wood. Mr. Sloop answered that both require clean wood, and exclude painted, treated, but size is also a constraint, as there is a much smaller spec for wood chips. In further analysis, it was found that engineered wood left from other processes would not meet specs for the fiber board industry, so this would not undermine the hogged fuel industry.

Mr. Toney then presented the environmental analysis of the urban wood waste study. The EPA’s WARM methodology employed in the study required conceptual and detail assumptions, particularly for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) impacts; which led to a number of scenarios. The environmental analysis found that panels produced the fewest emissions, hog fuels and pellets performed best in the energy audit and hog fuels performed best in terms of GHG emissions.

The conclusion of the findings were that maintaining the status quo may be the best option, with hogged fuel as the most viable alternative over the next three to five years. Furnishing wood waste for the particle board market is not a viable option. There are potential options for further exploration, such as pellets for domestic or international industrial markets, Kingsford charcoal products and small combined heat and power energy systems. We are now looking at the best defensive situation in terms of recycling urban wood waste and how to continue to recover as much material as in the past, and in the best environmental way.

Mr. Sloop and Mr. Toney outlined several possible Metro actions. For now, there is no intent to go to Council with recommendations; it is just food for thought at this point. In addition, anything to be done to retain the existing hog fuel markets should be designed to retain the demand on a long-term basis, such as a with supply agreement.

Chair Korot asked for comments on the urban wood waste study from SWAAC members.

Mr. Leichner commented that one of the issues raised was Covanta’s ability to accept only clean wood waste due to emissions issues. He asked if had looked at the same scenario for the current mills accepting wood waste, i.e., if they have the same environmental issues with to accepting hog fuels, and if it would require environmental upgrades for them to

accept other than clean wood. Mr. Sloop replied that this was a good comment, and will be noted.

Mr. Walker also observed that there seem to be no options that include disposition of painted or treated wood. There were assumptions based on a seven year-old waste composition study. He wondered if new DEQ numbers would give us a more current snapshot. He is interested what the picture really looks like now and where that material is going now. Mr. Sloop replied that there is some anecdotal evidence that treated wood is going into the hogged fuel market at a minimal level, but most is going into the landfill.

Mr. Walker asked if there were opportunities for upgrades to existing facilities for painted/treated wood waste. Mr. Sloop answered that Covanta is a potential destination or perhaps there are other facilities that can upgrade to accept these materials.

Ms. O'Brien speculated that the air quality regulations are such that mills are getting away from accepting painted/treated wood as it requires a waste incinerator permit which comes with much more stringent controls and air quality program regulations. Mr. Simpson commented that then they would essentially be imposing a fee for treated wood. Mr. Sloop replied that untreated wood would be mixed in with the rest of the solid waste accepted. Covanta, for example, is at capacity now, and in order to consider this it would only be with expansion of capacity at the facility.

Chair Korot noted that there is much more discussion to come on this subject. He then noted that Andy Sloop has taken a new job at Nike, leading their zero waste manufacturing efforts. This will be Mr. Sloop's last meeting with us. There were general congratulations.

#### **6. UPDATE ON SWAAC SUBCOMMITTEE ON MATERIAL RECOVERY AND CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY FACILITY REGULATORY CHANGES**

Bruce Walker provided an update for SWAAC members on the work of the subcommittee on material recovery and conversion technology facility regulatory changes. He gave highlights of the last meeting, which he felt was very productive. Vinod Singh of Far West Recycling and Dylan de Thomas of *Resource Recycling* magazine provided a video showing existing operations in the Metro region to give a better understanding of the issues. Dan Blue shared findings of the recent curbside waste composition study, which showed increased contamination in recycling delivered to MRFs. This provided a look at the landscape of what we are all working with within the broader discussion of processing all of these materials.

There was also a discussion of the different classes of materials presented for recovery. There was a question raised of whether facilities that sort single stream, non-curbside source-separated recyclables should also be considered for regulation. Metro made it clear that this class of facilities is not being considered for licensing and inspection at this time. Mr. Walker shared that Metro staff presented a slideshow of photos taken at source-separated MRFs handling a commingled stream which showed both good practices with clean operations, and some bad practices that are an area of concern. Mr. Walker noted that the meetings have given rise to an excellent discussion on a range of issues. Now we will look at how to address these areas of concern that have come up, like noise, litter and dust. Public comments have brought up performance standards, for example, the number of people on sort lines or belt speed, or the quality of materials leaving the facilities. Metro has

responded that those type of standards are not part of the code changes under consideration. In Mr. Walker's view, which he wishes to share with SWAAC members, there is clearly more work to be done, and there is not full agreement on the steps to be taken

The next meeting of the SWAAC-MRF/CT subcommittee is on Monday, April 18, 2016 in Metro Council Chambers.

**7. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION TO SWAAC AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no citizen comments.

**8. PREVIEW OF THE NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA AND FINAL COMMENTS**

The next SWAAC meeting will be Wednesday, May 11, 2016, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Tim Collier of Metro will be back to discuss the Council response to the Solid Waste Roadmap's Transfer System Configuration project. A complete agenda will be sent to members and posted on the website in advance of the meeting.

The scheduled June meeting of SWAAC conflicts with the AOR conference on June 8, 2016. We will cancel that meeting so members may attend the conference.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.