



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC)
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2019
Time: 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center council chamber (3rd floor)
Purpose: 1) To discuss the results from the roles and responsibilities exercise at the October meeting.
2) To provide the committee with an initial introduction to upcoming topics and issues the committee with discuss in the upcoming year
Outcome(s): 1) Develop committee working agreements
2) Develop questions and comments associated with these topics for further discussion at future meetings

Members in Attendance:

Roy Brower, Metro
Joe Buck, Small business owner
Sharetta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Marilou Carrera, Portland Resident
Alondra Flores Aviña, Student
Jill Kolek, City of Portland
Theresa Koppang, Washington County
Shannon Martin, City of Gresham
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, Clackamas County
Jenny Slepian, City of Lake Oswego
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Roy Brower (Metro) brought the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and previewed the agenda.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Molly Chidsey (Metro) introduced the group activity for committee member introductions.

3. WORKING AGREEMENTS

Ms. Chidsey led the group discussion on committee working agreements, continued from the inaugural meeting (see attachments A-C).

The committee spent some time discussing Metro's position on leading with racial equity.

Ms. Chidsey referenced the equity guiding principles within the 2030 Regional Waste Plan as well as Metro's adopted strategic approach to lead with racial equity in Metro's overall equity work.

Marilou Carrera (Portland resident) expressed the importance of having a facilitated conversation around how equity, and racial equity in particular, will be implemented through the Regional Waste Plan. Ms. Carrera also noted the importance of these conversations occurring early in the process of this committee's work.

Jill Kolek (City of Portland) noted the importance of research, background, and history specific to racial equity in order to provide context.

Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) commented that the conversation thus far has focused on racial equity, which is important, but Ms. Vargas Duncan wanted to also highlight the importance of recognizing other marginalized groups. She was concerned of other groups being overlooked and felt that they should also receive equal attention by the committee, or that the committee should have a discussion as to why not.

Ms. Chidsey offered to follow up with Beth Vargas Duncan and the committee on this particular topic. Ms. Chidsey noted that the strategic plan to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion that the Metro Council adopted strategically leads with dismantling racism as a way to dismantle multiple systems of oppression. This is the guiding framework for equity work as an agency. Ms. Chidsey noted the complexity of equity work and acknowledged the importance of Ms. Vargas Duncan's comments and that there are many different strategic approaches to equity work. She expressed the importance of the committee forming a shared understanding around equity as well as shared understanding of words and how they are defined in the context of the committee work.

Christa McDermott (Community Environmental Services, PSU) commented on the importance of recognizing intersectionality with regard to equity. She noted that things like gender and income level within the solid waste industry should be acknowledged, specifically with regard to workforce development, pay scales, etc.

Ms. Chidsey let the committee know that the decision-making section of the working agreements would be completed at the December meeting, at which point the final working agreements should be organized and presented to the committee for final approval at the January 2020 meeting.

4. GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Hila Ritter (Metro) presented an overview of the garbage and recycling system within the Metro region.

Joe Buck (Small business owner) asked if the region's waste is divided equally between facilities/landfills.

Ms. Ritter responded that Metro has a disposal contract with Waste Management that 87-90% of the region's waste goes to a Waste Management landfill [CORRECTION to clarify the end date of the contract: add "through 2019"]. That disposal contract is expiring at the end of the calendar year. Riverbend and Columbia Ridge landfills are managed [CORRECTION (Waste Management both manages and owns these landfills, but ownership is more relevant in this context): replace "managed" with "owned"] by Waste Management and Columbia Ridge Landfill is where most of the Metro Region's waste is transported.

Mr. Buck asked about the current stages of life for the landfills.

Ms. Ritter shared that the landfills are all in different stages of life and that they currently have over 100 years of capacity at the landfills.

Mr. Brower explained that typically the landfills in the eastern part of Washington and Oregon have ample space – thousands of acres and years of capacity. The landfills on the west side of the Cascades tend to have a wetter climate with more environmental issues and they typically have shorter lifespans.

Audrey O'Brien (DEQ) asked to make a clarification about dry waste facilities on the west side of the region: the ESCO landfill is called an industrial waste captive landfill and only accepts waste from itself and is not open to the public. Also, the Hillsboro Landfill [CORRECTION (relevant to clarify ownership): add ", owned by Waste Management,") does not accept household garbage/putrescible waste. It is a dry waste landfill that only accepts construction debris and other similar materials.

Mr. Buck asked if the 87% of waste that Metro has contracted to dispose in the two Waste Management landfills was just waste gathered at the two Metro-owned transfer stations or at all transfer stations in the Metro region.

Ms. Ritter clarified that the 87% of waste going to the two Waste Management landfills is for all [CORRECTION to clarify the type of waste: add "wet"] waste produced in the Metro region.

Mr. Brower explained that the current contract expires in 2020 at which point the 87% will only cover the Metro-owned transfer stations. But that Waste Management transfer stations will probably also send their waste to Waste Management landfills. That is not through anything compelled by Metro. Mr. Brower provided some background about the reasoning: originally when the St. John's Landfill closed in 1991, the region needed a transfer system, long-haul, and landfill established. This was before any of the eastern landfills. What was done at the time was to guarantee 90% of the Metro region's wet waste to that landfill in order for it to be able to capitalize and become operational. Mr. Brower noted that Metro has a contract in order to secure a better tip fee and make garbage disposal more economical to the rate payer.

[CORRECTION (this paragraph is intended to more accurately what Mr. Brower relayed to the committee and adds clarity): replace paragraph above with "Mr. Brower explained that the current contract expires in 2019, at which point the 87% "flow guarantee" will no longer be a requirement. Beginning in 2020, only the waste transferred by the Metro owned stations will be required to be disposed at Waste Management landfills. It is likely that Waste Management transfer stations in Forest Grove and Troutdale will also send their waste to Waste Management landfills. Mr. Brower provided some background about the reasoning: originally when the St. John's Landfill closed in 1991, the region needed a system of transfer stations and long-haul to a regional landfill. Columbia Ridge was established before any of the other regional landfills located in eastern Washington and Oregon. At that time, Metro provided a flow guarantee of 90% of the Metro region's wet waste to that landfill in order for a regional landfill to be capitalized and built. Mr. Brower noted that Metro has maintained a disposal contract in order to secure a better tip fee and make garbage disposal more economical to the rate payer."]

Ms. McDermott asked if most of the region's waste goes through the Metro transfer stations (Central and South).

Mr. Brower explained that [CORRECTION to clarify timetable: add "beginning in 2020,") a minimum of 60% [CORRECTION (60% was not accurate, this corrects the record): replace 60% with 40%] of the region's waste goes through the Metro transfer stations.

Ms. McDermott asked if the City of Roses is only construction/demolition waste.

Ms. Ritter clarified that City of Roses takes putrescible waste as well.

Ms. McDermott asked if the food composting/processing facilities take commercial food waste.

Ms. Ritter indicated that they do not. The Recology facility in North Plains is residential food waste only. The other facilities will collect commercial food waste. Ms. Ritter also clarified that the food

waste facilities and waste distribution are not regulated in the same way as landfills. There are a series of licenses that control how waste moves to certain facilities, but it is not established through contracts like the landfills.

[CORRECTION (this paragraph is intended to more accurately what Ms. Ritter relayed to the committee and adds clarity): replace paragraph above with “Ms. Ritter indicated that they do not. The Recology facility in North Plains accepts yard debris and residential food waste only. The other transfer stations will be expected to accept commercial food waste at some point in the future. Ms. Ritter also clarified that the food waste facilities and food waste delivery are not regulated in the same way as landfills. There are a series of licenses that control how waste moves to certain facilities. It is not established through contracts like the landfills, but rather authorized by licenses.”]

Mr. Buck asked about how one goes about starting a business with transfer stations/landfills.

Ms. Ritter explained that the system – and what can and cannot be taken by a facility – is heavily regulated by many different [CORRECTION to add clarity and accuracy: add “government”] organizations. A new facility that is accepting any type of solid waste, must first obtain land use with local governments/jurisdictions. One would need to acquire property that is allowed to do these types of activities. There is always a process for the land use specific to zoning. It is likely that there would be requirements/limitations placed by the State (DEQ), Metro, government agencies, etc. It is very complex. It is a bit of a mind shift to think about waste as a limited resource. It is highly competitive and very difficult to enter the market or to expand. Public perception can be a challenge. But managing waste is a necessity.

Mr. Buck asked about facilities outside the region and the role that Metro plays in licensing.

Ms. Ritter explained that it can depend. If a facility/landfill takes Metro-area waste, Metro would need to have regulatory control to make sure that it goes where it should go and that the appropriate fees and taxes are applied. Ms. Ritter noted that Metro and DEQ work closely with some overlapping but also distinct authorities.

[CORRECTION to provide clarity: replace paragraph above with “Ms. Ritter explained that a facility/landfill taking Metro-area waste would need to agree to some level of regulatory oversight to make sure that waste goes to an authorized disposal site and that the appropriate fees and taxes are applied and remitted to Metro. Ms. Ritter noted that Metro and DEQ work closely with some overlapping but also distinct authorities.”]

Ms. O’Brien emphasized that DEQ works very closely with the city/county and Metro when looking at facilities within Metro’s jurisdiction and that DEQ works closely with any applicants wanting to site facilities. There are franchises/licenses with local governments, franchises/licenses with Metro, and the permits from DEQ. There are usually three different regulatory documents and each one has slightly different responsibilities. DEQ’s primary responsibility is to insure that there aren’t environmental impacts from the siting/operation/closure of the facility. Permits include conditions to ensure that environmental protection.

Ms. Sharetta Butcher asked about the Waste Management contract beginning in 2020.

Mr. Brower noted that it is a procurement [CORRECTION to provide accuracy: replace “is a procurement” with “was a competitively procured” contract] with Waste Management. The contract will be valid for the next 10 years.

5. METRO AUTHORITY

Due to time constraints, Mr. Brower asked that the presentation on Metro authority be postponed to the December meeting.

6. INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS

a. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS AND FACILITY SITING

i. QUESTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION NEEDED AFTER DISCUSSION:

- Provide more information about career pathways for the new facilities.
- Information specific to travel times to stations and transportation impacts.
- More in-depth information specific to community engagement.
- Assessment and impacts to capacity at existing private transfer stations. Committee would like to see capacity study findings.

b. MULTI-FAMILY SERVICE STANDARDS

i. Link to Multi-family video and report: [multi-family video](#)

ii. QUESTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION NEEDED AFTER DISCUSSION:

- Multifamily measurement and engagement strategies over time: will project/study measure be repeated?
- Process and progress in multifamily services over time.
- More background information on how bulky waste is handled.
- Information on referrals/references on who to contact with multifamily garbage and recycling issues.
- More information about enclosures design/improvements/issues especially as related to garbage “trains”/compactors.
- Information about how property managers and residents are engaged.
- More information specific to composting in multifamily units/residences.

c. FOOD WASTE UPDATES

i. QUESTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION NEEDED AFTER DISCUSSION:

- Should there be more time between the final phase of the business food waste collection requirement implementation and the disposal ban? Would it be too soon to enforce especially since the final group of businesses are schools and smaller businesses with fewer resources.
- Be careful to fully understand the impacts/burdens of a ban between and among groups (e.g. some haulers are small, don't have the resources to monitor loads or have hi-tech solutions like on-board cameras).
- Keep in mind the different needs of businesses and their capabilities – will this burden some businesses more than others? Equity lens is important here.
- What is the balance between the resources (funding, time) spent on waste prevention and donation versus collection programs?
- Where will the burden of enforcement lie? How will it work? (TBD as the policy develops)
- Where is the program now? How many participants? Tons collected? Goals? Services provided? A written overview on the program would be helpful – perhaps fact sheets? Web links?

ii. GENERAL COMMENTS

- Learn from recyclables contamination reduction efforts/programs. What could apply to the ban development?
- Happy to hear that there is a focused, single topic (ban) coming to them – easier to get arms around one thing that they can expect to see and react to.

- Work to get word out to the general public. There is so much going on and so many important topics just in solid waste and people don't seem to know about them.

7. MEETING ADJOURNED at 10 a.m.

Next meeting: December 12, 2019 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Metro Regional Center council chamber (3rd floor)