



# Meeting minutes

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Inaugural Meeting  
Date: Thursday, January 9, 2020  
Time: 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.  
Place: Metro Regional Center council chamber (3<sup>rd</sup> floor)  
Purpose: *The purpose of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee is to provide input on certain policies, programs, and projects that implement actions in the 2030 Regional Waste Plan, as well as to provide input on certain legislative and administrative actions that the Metro Council or Chief Operating Officer will consider related to implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.*

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## **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 (PSU)  
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)  
Eben Polk, Clackamas County (*via phone*)  
Jenny Slepian, City of Lake Oswego  
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)

## **1. Call to order and meeting overview**

Roy Brower (Metro) brought the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and previewed the agenda.

## **2. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS & FACILITY SITING**

Dan Blue (Metro), Gloria Pinzon (Metro), and Enrique Vargas (Metro) presented on the west and south facility projects and the community engagement strategy. This presentation is a continuation from the December RWAC meeting.

Mr. Blue introduced the presentation recapping the presentation from December which covered a high level overview of the facility siting projects including why Metro is pursuing new facilities and where/when plans are moving. He noted that today's presentation focuses on public engagement. He is seeking to get input from the committee on whether Metro staff is on the right track. Mr. Blue provided meeting minutes from the last Metro CORE (Committee on Racial Equity) meeting where his team presented on the facility siting project.

Mr. Blue recapped from his December presentation on the south and west projects. Beginning with the south project: this is focused on moving/replacing some or all of the services provided at the current Metro South Station, which is aging, heavily trafficked, and limited in the services it can provide. There are safety concerns for the public as well as for transfer station employees. Improving conditions is one of the highest priorities for Metro South Station. Mr. Blue highlighted that Metro Council and staff are open to considering different solutions to the challenges at Metro South today. Currently there are no viable properties for sale within the south part of the region.

Community engagement and access to suitable properties will inform Metro Council's decision specific to this project. Speaking to the facility siting on the west side: the goal of the west project is to meet a longstanding need for services as identified through the 2030 Regional Waste Plan community engagement process, which was conducted in 2017-18. There is no public facility or services offered on the west side (no recycling facility, paint recycling, household hazardous waste collection, affordable self-haul options, etc...). Metro does currently have a property on the west side with a purchase option which is being held while Metro does due diligence and community engagement.

Ms. Pinzon and Mr. Vargas introduced themselves and shared a little about their work in community engagement. They also introduced Chevy Pham who could not be present for today's meeting. Chevy Pham is part of the engagement team for facility siting.

Ms. Pinzon passed out a handout to the committee with goals from the regional waste plan which committee members read aloud to the group (handout is attached at the end of meeting minutes). The goals outlined at the meeting are some that Ms. Pinzon has indicated can be advanced from the Regional Waste Plan.

Ms. Pinzon shared the spectrum of public participation (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower). The current engagement plan incorporates these various levels of participation at different points through the engagement process. Ms. Pinzon shared with the committee that Metro will be working with community-based organizations (CBOs) through the engagement process which will be on the collaboration level. The CBOs will have influence on how engagement is conducted with the community and providing feedback to Metro.

Ms. Pinzon clarified what it means when she says *community*: current and future customers of Metro transfer stations, people who live, work, or play near the areas, communities who have not traditionally participated in government decision-making processes, community leaders and service providers who can speak to the experiences of Metro's priority audiences, and industry professionals and jurisdictional partners of both communities and neighboring communities.

Mr. Blue and Ms. Pinzon clarified this acronym from the presentation: SPAREDI is the Strategic Plan for Advancing Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Ms. Pinzon shared that Metro recently conducted a survey at the two Metro Transfer Stations. She offered to come back to the committee at a future date to share results from the survey once the data has been analyzed.

Ms. Pinzon shared that Metro is in the early stages of engagement: tours have been conducted with Metro staff and councilors, community members, and jurisdictional partners to King County in the Seattle area which was very informative.

Mr. Vargas shared that it was powerful to see the reactions of individuals on the tour.

Beth Vargas-Duncan (ORRA) asked which community members and elected officials were on the tour to Seattle.

Mr. Blue clarified that there were two tours to Seattle: the first tour was Metro staff only and the second tour focused on the west side with four elected officials from the Cornelius City Council as well as some representatives from Centro Cultural.

Mr. Vargas shared with the committee that Metro is currently engaged with two CBOs: Centro Cultural on the west side who helped inform the Regional Waste Plan, and the other partnership isn't finalized yet, but Metro is working with Unite Oregon whose work involves leadership development. There is currently limited partner activity in Clackamas County.

Ms. Pinzon shared the project's engagement timeline as well as some of the differences between the engagement strategy for the south and west projects (visual available in the meeting slides 13-15). Since there is currently no site available in the south part of the region, at this point engagement will be focused around the industrial zones within that region.

Mr. Brower and Ms. Pinzon noted that Metro is looking at the cost implications of the options at Metro South (moving self-haul versus commercial versus the full facility etc.). Research from a survey from about 5 years ago will inform some of that.

Marilou Carrera (Portland Resident) asked about Metro's proposed community advisory groups in the engagement plan and who would be represented on those advisory groups (staff from the CBOs versus representation from the CBO partnership, non-organizationally affiliated members of the committee, etc).

Ms. Pinzon shared that the advisory committees will be focused on people who may be most impacted by these projects/facilities or those that can speak to that experience. CBO partners are going to help facilitate through that process and help Metro recruit participants, but Metro is focused on people who live or have businesses near those siting areas, prioritizing underserved communities.

Ms. Pinzon responded to a question about how Metro would respond if communities rejected Metro's plans for facilities. She indicated that Metro is moving in the current direction but is open to all feedback from community groups.

Alondra Flores-Aviña pointed out that Centro Cultural does work with specific groups and she asked how Metro would be engaging with other members of the community that aren't represented by that group.

Ms. Pinzon shared that Enrique Vargas will be on the ground which is part of the engagement model. Metro staff will be actively engaging communities beyond the work being done by community partners.

Shannon Martin (City of Gresham) shared his appreciation of Metro's public outreach efforts and noted that the entire region will be paying for these facilities. He wanted to know if there is going to be discussion about comfort level with the cost of building these facilities since they will impact rates to system users. Is this a part of the engagement conversation.

Ms. Pinzon shared that she anticipates this is something that will come up in the focus groups with communities and it can also be incorporated into the open houses.

Mr. Brower acknowledged the cost and part of the cost is tied to the lack of system investment for the past three decades. There will be a rate impact when design and construction gets underway.

Theresa Koppang (Washington County) encouraged Ms. Pinzon and the engagement team to reach out to the Washington County Office of Community Engagement to touch base. She noted that Washington County works with their communities quite a bit as well and there are instances when they hear folks ask why they are contacted so much, who are you, are you Metro? Washington

County?, etc. So it might be worth connecting. Ms. Koppang noted Amanda Garcia as a potential good contact.

Ms. Pinzon communicated that Metro plans to be respectful of those relationships and be mindful as well. It is best practice to use existing networks and not reinvent the wheel. She noted that Enrique Vargas has been in contact with a few individuals at the county.

Mr. Vargas echoed Ms. Pinzon's comments and indicated that he has made some initial contacts (Evan Aguilar) and that he is looking forward to working with the promotores.

Ms. Pinzon shifted gears to talk about the timeline and the role for the committee and Metro Council. All of the engagement is supposed to inform some form of decision. For the Metro west side, staff will use community input and feedback from both RWAC and CORE to make a final recommendation to Metro Council. Metro Council will ultimately make a decision whether to move forward with the project or not, which will be in the fall. For the south side, it is not as much a decision, but helping to determine a direction. Metro staff will inform Council about the top site that have come up using both technical information and the community input and getting guidance on how to move forward with property purchases or approaching property owners.

Ms. Pinzon reiterated that the west side project is at an advantage because Metro has existing partners in the area. With the south side project, Metro is in the process of establishing and building new relationships.

Ms. Pinzon engaged the committee in an exercise to write down comments and questions and discuss in small groups. Here were the questions committee members discussed:

1. Based on what you've just seen, what questions do you have about the engagement strategy?
2. What are your thoughts about the engagement strategy or timeline for Phase 1?
3. Do you have any initial feedback about how the project or engagement plans align with and advance the 2030 Regional Waste Plan?

The committee regrouped together and each group shared a few main points from their discussion.

Responding to the first question, Joe Buck echoed from the presentation the importance of engaging with groups that have not traditionally been engaged. But he also wanted to ask about engagement with groups that are currently existing with long term experience in this field and in the local cities and counties. He wanted to know if this is part of the plan.

Ms. Pinzon shared that in the next month or so, Metro will be reaching out to the haulers to get their input and find out how they want to be a part of the process and how they might be impacted. There will also be staff presentations to various community/government committees.

Mr. Brower also emphasized that Metro will also be going before city councils and county commissions to ensure they are up to speed on what is going on and to create opportunities for input. Metro has already presented to the City of Cornelius and Washington County Commissioners. Metro hopes to repeat some of this on the south side.

Mr. Buck encouraged Metro's engagement team to work with RWAC members as they also have some of these community connections.

Responding to the second question, one group noted that the timeline for phase 1 of the engagement strategy seemed ambitious. Also, having the two projects moving in tandem could be

challenging and that a plan B might not be a bad idea since the two projects will probably advance very differently.

Ms. Pinzon agreed that the project was ambitious.

Ms. Carrera noted that their group felt the strategy for the south side felt good since a property hasn't been selected yet because it gives Metro, government, and community members the opportunity to be proactive in space together rather than being reactive to something that has already been decided. The west side project feels a little unclear since the siting has already been established and that process is already rolling out. It feels more after-the-fact. She noted that community engagement is a huge lift. She asked what would happen if community was against the current siting.

Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) shared that she has been able to go and visit the Cornelius site. She noted that there are houses along the probably heavily traveled truck route. How will Metro involve folks impacted by the truck route? Knocking on doors?

Ms. Pinzon noted that these individuals are a high priority audiences for engagement. To answer the question as to whether Metro would abandon the site if communities were opposed to the site, Ms. Pinzon indicated that it is possible that Metro Council could decide to abandon the site. Ultimately it is the Council's decision.

Mr. Buck wanted to clarify Metro's position with the project: has it been firmly decided that two large facilities are set in stone or is Metro open to stepping back to look at other options like smaller facilities. Is it that the decision is made and Metro wants to know how the committee/community feels about it or is Metro willing to step back with the existing projects to consider other options.

Mr. Brower responded that Metro knows action needs to be taken in the south because of safety concerns, growth, and traffic. The approach to smaller facilities is on the table but we are trying to solve the initial issues at Metro South. He noted that the Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Department has reorganized its structure in order to look at more long-term needs of the system. This could lead to smaller reload/recycling depot options throughout the region. Metro knows that the west and south sides are the more predominant areas with issues which have been brought up for years.

### **3. INVESTMENT & INNOVATION (I&I) GRANT PROGRAM**

Suzanne Piluso (Metro) provided some general information about the Investment and Innovation Grant Program and what has been accomplished so far. She noted that several committee members have served on the last two review panels, and one member helped provide input on the review criteria. Ms. Piluso shared that the goal of the I&I grant program was authorized by the Metro Council as a three-year pilot program. The program's purpose is to advance several of the Regional Waste Plan goals to prevent waste and make better use of the waste that is produced by improvements in the recycling and composting systems. Another core purpose of this program is to advance Metro's equity goals by increasing the benefits of the solid waste system and reduce the burdens on communities of color and other underserved communities. The program is designed to invest in the private sector. Applicants can be private businesses or non-profits. The first year of the program was authorized to invest up to 3 million dollars in grants. The second year was authorized to invest up to 6 million dollars.

Ms. Piluso noted one of the main changes from year one and year two is that the program grants and capital grants were split into two different processes and two review committees since the size

and types of proposals were significantly different. Capital grants are awarded annually through a two-step process: a pre-proposal and full proposal stage with a committee review at both stages. The committee for the capital grants proposals are required by Metro Council to have government, community representatives, a Metro councilor, non-solid waste business member, and Metro staff who are non-voting. The process takes about six months from the announcement of the grant to award stage.

Ms. Piluso shared that for the program grants in the second year, Metro implemented a rolling grant cycle process to turn them around quicker. The tradeoff with the new process is that Metro had to use an internal review process to make grant recommendations. Metro worked with community partners to help shape the criteria used to award the grants/make recommendations.

Ms. Piluso wanted to highlight how Metro encourages equity through the I&I grant program. It is embedded into the program and it is something that Metro has tried to infuse in the application materials, how Metro gets the word out about the program, and the review criteria that is used. Metro also has made sure that the grant review committee has representation from community. There are also sometimes conditions linked with equity outcomes. The two main ways to achieve the equity outcomes are if the project makes life better for communities of color and other underserved groups in terms of the solid waste system (benefits of jobs, income, revenues/profits), or reduces harm to these communities (direct project impacts). Another way that an applicant can get equity into their project is through enhancing workforce diversity and supporting work culture, things that they can do within their own business or organization. These are components that are considered in the review process. It can be challenging because not all projects lend itself easily to these equity goals. Metro does provide coaching and training to help businesses through the grant process.

For more information about the I&I grant program criteria and review process, and the grants that have been awarded for 2018 and 2019, please see the [grant program's website](#).

Ms. Piluso shared that there will be a year 3 grant cycle likely with 6 million dollars in grant funding (though this is yet to be finalized). There will be a period of review of the year 2 grant process and awards before initiating the year 3 cycle. All awards for 2020 should be finalized by December 2020, similar to the previous years. The award program was authorized for 3 years which means there will be a review process at the conclusion of the three-year pilot (was it a success, did the program do what it intended to do, was it well aligned with the Regional Waste Plan and our equity goals...). There will ultimately be a recommendation made to Metro Council whether staff think the program should continue. There will be input from applicants, grantees, Metro staff, and community partners.

Mr. Brower noted that the Regional Waste Advisory Committee will also have a role in weighing in on whether to go beyond the third year.

Ms. Carrera was curious how Metro supports different individuals/organizations who have varied barriers to access.

Ms. Piluso noted that some organizations have equity built in at their core while others do not have equity so embedded. The pre-proposal phase is helpful to help support applicants and provide some guidance or suggestions which are not project specific to bolster their application/proposal. Also, there have been grants awarded where Metro works with specific grantees that Metro would like to continue talking through the contracting process about ways they might be able to use COBID (Certification Office for Business Inclusion & Diversity) contractors and good faith efforts.

For returning applicants, they are getting pushed a little harder on the equity goals in ways that make sense for their business.

Mr. Brower also noted that at an agency level, Metro is working to be able to better build capacity for community based groups – both existing and emerging. Raahi Reddy, Director of Metro's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is working on how we can help our community partners build capacity. Metro does work with several of the same community based organizations which can sometimes create challenges with capacity.

Ms. Piluso also noted that some businesses though the application process also incorporated a request for funds for an equity assessment of their businesses.

Eben Polk (Washington County) noted that the committee might also be interested to hear about Metro's Community Enhancement Grants. This might be a good subject for a future committee meeting.

#### **4. RID (REGIONAL ILLEGAL DUMPING) PATROL**

Stephanie Rawson (Metro) presented a high-level overview of the RID Patrol and the work transition program. RID was started in 1993 working with local governments to clean up dumped garbage on public lands as well as to investigate dumping incidents on both private and public lands. Metro works with three detectives from local agencies who investigate dumping incidents and issue warnings/citations. There are two deputies from the Multnomah County Sherriff's office and recently added an officer from Port of Portland. In addition to cleaning up garbage around the tri-county area, Metro provides support and clean-up services to local government agencies, public entities, and law enforcement, cleaning up illegal dumping on their properties and providing clean-up support in responding to camping impacts. Metro collaborates to try to reduce the impacts of illegal dumping. The clean-up support requires intergovernmental agreements because there are laws and regulations involved in providing that support.

Ms. Rawson noted that RID has historically been a reactive, complaint-based program. Metro is now looking at opportunities to be proactive and provide services to address the impact of illegal dumping. One example of this is the Metro Bag program which was piloted last year. Metro worked with social service partners to develop a way to provide community access to trash service for people living outside who don't have access to trash service. It has been successful and Metro is looking at how to expand the program in 2020 and continue to build trust with the community.

When RID started in 1993, there was one inmate work crew with the Multnomah County Sherriff's office. As demand for services grew, in about 2008-9 a second inmate crew was added. In 2016, a third crew was added through partnership with local non-profit staffing agencies under Metro supervision. Metro staff provide mentorship and guidance in how to safely manage cleanup of dumped trash. This is what we refer to as the RID Work Transition program. In 2018, Metro launched a pilot partnership with Constructing Hope and Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC) to provide employment opportunities and access to support services and pathways to long term employment for the crewmembers. Spring of 2019, Metro Council asked that this program be expanded to offer more employment opportunities. The goal of this expansion is to address the 2030 Regional Waste Plan equitable workforce goals to advance racial equity, provide employment opportunities and career pathways to those individuals with systemic barriers to employment.

Ms. Rawson shared that Metro has added a fourth crew in 2019 as demand has continued to go up. To access the data about regional dump cleanups, see the [RID Patrol website](#) and the [Data Dashboard](#).

The Metro Work Transition program is in the research and planning phase, but Metro is establishing an internal steering committee and an external advisory committee for the expansion of the program.

Beth Vargas Duncan shared that City of Portland has a lot of funding for homelessness and noted that she hopes Metro is coordinating with City of Portland.

Ms. Rawson noted that City of Portland is a close partner and Metro has twelve intergovernmental agreements (IGA) with state and local agencies.

Beth Vargas Duncan asked for a proactive email if/when Metro is looking for input, committee members, etc. so that she can get the work out to her network.

Ms. Sharetta Butcher asked if there are other organizations with whom Metro plans to work beyond Constructing Hope and POIC.

Rob Nathan (Metro) highlighted a few workforce partners that Metro is working with: Central City Concern, Rebuilding Women First, Oregon Tradeswomen, and a number of other workforce partners. We are also in the process of building more relationships and in the research phase of the process as well. Mr. Nathan also noted that Metro is always happy to receive recommendations to build more relationships.

Ms. Rawson noted that currently the individuals on the one Metro crew are contractors. This is something that is being evaluated. Should those individuals be brought on as Metro employees? What are the benefits and challenges?

Mr. Nathan noted that there is not a unified policy with Metro's Human Resources department on the best approach for this program and the employment opportunities.

Ms. Rawson noted that Metro is also learning from the Seattle Conservation Corps and has spent some time getting to know their program which provides workforce development particularly with the houseless community. The hope is that working with partners like this will help Metro's expansion to be successful.

Ms. Carrera asked about the incarcerated cleanup crews and what is the benefit to the inmate crews.

Ms. Rawson noted that this is something that Metro staff discuss frequently and receive comments and questions from the public. She noted that there is much to unpack with the different crews on benefits, getting paid, etc. She shared that it has been enlightening working with and engaging with the inmate crews to understand their experiences. There are also many varied training opportunities and Metro staff are working through how to best manage these groups.

Mr. Nathan acknowledged the impacts of the criminal justice system and their disproportional impacts on people of color and poor people. Knowing this and knowing we are leveraging that labor for cleanups around the region, we have a responsibility not only acknowledge it, but to do something to address it as Metro initiates the Regional Waste Plan. We don't have an answer, but Metro would like to work with the county for some of these relationships to change to have a more restorative justice approach to incorporate curriculum components, compensation, and pathways to employment.



Ms. Rawson noted that Metro has plans to work with Multnomah County to come in and get feedback from inmates working on various crews around the region.

Mr. Buck asked about expanding the program to a roving patrol cleanup crews.

Ms. Rawson noted that the Portland Business Alliance works with Central City Concern on their Clean and Safe program who has trucks and trash cans for 213 blocks of downtown. Gresham works with Central City Concern crews. One of the challenges is that there is so much going on and many different programs that it can be hard to keep up. Metro is working diligently to coordinate and collaborate with local jurisdictions and non-profits.

Ms. Rawson shared that there will be an external committee and extended an offer if there is a member of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee that would like to liaise with this other new advisory committee.

Mr. Brower noted that we can bring this back for discussion at the next meeting.

## **5. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ITEMS**

- December RWAC meeting minutes were approved by committee
- Committee Working Agreements were approved by committee
- November RWAC meeting minutes: committee asked that the final meeting minutes include all original notes along with the correction and the purpose of the correction. These minutes will be considered at the February meeting.

## **6. Announcements**

Mr. Brower noted that the next meeting is Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be an opportunity to take a tour of Metro South Transfer Station and to anticipate details for that. There will also be another trip to Seattle to view some of their modernized facilities. As that date is solidified, communicate with Casey Mellnik if you have interest to be a part of that tour.

Mr. Brower asked for the Committee's local government representatives to provide a presentation for the February meeting on the region's system of haulers.

For future meetings, the agenda will be printed, but in order to reduce waste, Metro won't be printing any additional materials unless specifically requested. All materials will be shared with the committee after the meeting.

There was a request for the Metro calendar and to know when and where all advisory committees are taking place. Here is the link to the main [advisory committee's website](#). The calendar is at the bottom of the page.

## **7. Meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.**