



# Meeting minutes

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting  
Date: Thursday, May 21, 2020  
Time: 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.  
Place: Zoom video meeting  
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  
Thomas Egleston, Washington County  
Alondra Flores Aviña, Student  
Jill Kolek, City of Portland  
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 virtual meeting to order at 8:05 am and previewed the agenda.

## **2. COMMITTEE INTRODUCTIONS**

Committee members each introduced themselves within the virtual meeting (committee members listed above).

## **3. APPROVAL OF RWAC MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 20, 2020**

February 2020 meeting minutes were approved by committee.

## **4. WPES UPDATE**

Roy Brower began by sharing with the committee on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Metro and solid waste. All of the performing arts centers and the Oregon Zoo have been closed since March, when social distancing became a part of the Governor's Stay-At-Home order. The Convention Center is currently serving as a homeless shelter, which will be ceasing soon. The Expo Center is currently closed, but is being used as a COVID-19 testing site. In April, about 40% of Metro employees were laid off. This was due to all the closures of the facilities mentioned above. This is about 700 employees who were laid off. Metro is working with these individuals to make sure they have healthcare coverage and getting their unemployment questions answered.

As it relates to solid waste, Metro is seeing significantly reduced tonnage. Between March and April, tonnage was down about 20%. This is significant because that is where Metro derives most of the solid waste department funding. It is not clear yet whether the tonnage has stabilized, and Metro is monitoring that. Solid waste management has been deemed an essential service at this time. The Metro transfer stations, as well as many of the private facilities, have remained open. Collection and collection routes have remained operational. Metro continues to clean up illegal dump sites throughout the region. Transport and disposal of solid waste has also continued. Generally, Metro has not reduced services or operational hours at the public facilities (with some exceptions that will be shared in this presentation).

Currently, solid waste tonnage is down about 10%. It is not clear yet whether tonnage will stabilize at this point. Customer counts (particularly at Metro South Transfer Station) are up about 3%. This is probably due to people being home. They are cleaning basements and garages and completing other household projects, and thus disposing of waste materials at the transfer stations at a higher rate. Metro has been looking at the possible need for rate adjustments, but at this time we are planning to keep rates steady until October 1, 2020 at the earliest. Once exception to the rate increases is that July 1, 2020 there will be a rate increase of \$0.90 on the Metro excise tax, which will move the Metro tip fee from \$97.45 to \$98.35. This is primarily due to Metro's collection of excise tax which is used to run the general operations at Metro. For most residential customers, this might add as much as \$0.05 to curbside garbage monthly rate.

Metro is deferring many staff vacancies and is not yet hiring for a number of positions. Also, many of the staffing expansions that were originally planned for the 2020-21 fiscal year have been eliminated. The Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (WPES) department has taken a 20% budget reduction package to the Metro council a few weeks ago. The main areas in which WPES has sought to reduce the budget is through deferral of the third year of the Innovation & Investment grant program. The department is looking at options for an alternative that would be more directly applicable to small, local based community groups, non-profits, and businesses engaged in recycling, reuse, and recovery that are being significantly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. So WPES plans to defer the third year but propose an alternative program for the third year which will be considerably smaller. This topic may come back to the committee in June or July.

Metro has also cancelled all household hazardous waste neighborhood collection events. This is primarily due to the need for social distancing based on the governor's order re: stay-at-home. As information and orders change from the governor's office, Metro will assess the feasibility of starting up collection events again. Usually, there are 30-35 events each year and Metro has been working to offer more of these events in underserved neighborhoods. But we do not want to risk COVID exposure or jeopardize anyone's health through these events. The hazardous waste facilities are still open and operational at Metro's two public transfer stations.

Metro is planning to delay the design and construction phases of the new facilities in Cornelius and in the south part of the region in Clackamas County. Metro is still working toward acquiring and purchasing land for these facilities. The biggest hurdle for the facility siting projects has been the location of land and the ability to purchase industrial-type land.

Metro is delaying the commercial food scraps program implementation. We have officially delayed to September 2020, but this will probably be further extended another six months to next March or April 2021. We have done this because many of the large food generating businesses/institutions are not generating much food currently. Restaurants are closed, most schools are closed, etc. Metro still plans to move the program forward, but will need to evaluate it in the context of future openings of those sectors.

Metro's Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Patrol was planning to expand by adding a few new cleanup crews. Illegal dumping has stabilized a bit, and Metro plans to reevaluate how this program fits into long term plans based on the ballot measure that recently passed. This could give Metro a slightly new role, particularly with our work with homeless individuals.

WPES has made reductions to marketing, advertising and brand development. This is mostly contracted professional services. Also, there are a number of capital improvement projects that have been delayed due to COVID-19.

In January, the WPES department had proposed a fairly robust increase to the budget, primarily to address Regional Waste Plan initiatives and goals 20% cut going into the 20-21 fiscal year. In March/April, the department had to look at significant changes to the budget for solid waste. Throughout the budget review process, the department has maintained an equity lens which will be discussed in more detail. First, we intended to retain existing staff and programs to the extent possible. This includes keeping a number of work transition employees which includes staff at Metro South, RID Patrol, and MetroPaint. Some of these individuals were the newest employees to be hired. We have continued to maintain our investment with community partners, particularly for communities of color. We have maintained supporting sponsorships and events with community partners. WPES is prioritizing existing programs and services that provide or improve access for underserved communities. This includes some of our education programs and outreach programs. The goal is that by July, Metro will have 6 months' worth of data, and we will hopefully be able to forecast solid waste tonnage. This will have a direct impact on how we fund new programs, initiatives, facilities, etc.

Metro continues to move forward with developing commercial food waste processing capacity at Metro Central. Request for proposal will go out in the near future to select a company, design, and install new equipment at Metro Central which will turn food waste into a slurry and deliver it to the City of Portland's waste water treatment plant on Columbia Blvd. Metro is moving forward with the development of regional residential service standards, investing in existing infrastructure and facilities, and continuing to work with DEQ on the statewide recycling modernization package and legislation for the 2021 session of the Oregon legislature.

Marta McGuire (Metro) provided an update on future priorities. Community engagement is an important component of many of the important initiatives outlined above by Mr. Brower. Metro is developing strategies for virtual engagement while social distancing policies are still in effect. Metro will track progress through indicators within the Regional Waste Plan, which will include an annual report.

Christa McDermott (PSU) asked about Metro's reduction of services in household hazardous waste services and RID patrol services. She inquired if there was a way to shift services to accommodate residents who do not have cars. We hear that people are doing more cleaning out in their homes, and for multifamily residences where bulky waste is already a challenge, she wanted to know if there is more than can be done to accommodate those who already have limited access to solid waste facilities.

Mr. Brower shared that Metro has started to prepare for a longer-term social distancing environment which means that services and access to services are being evaluated (e.g. MetroPaint). At the moment, WPES is only able to maintain access to the two public facilities. But this is something that Metro will be considering.

Thomas Egleston (Washington County) shared that Washington County is working with Metro in partnership with a few community based organizations and have developed some pretty innovative

outreach programs. These organizations/programs are also having trouble with engagement and making adjustments through COVID. Mr. Egleston wanted to know if there have been conversations at Metro around how to support the community in pivoting to allow those outreach programs to work of the COVID situation.

Mr. Brower noted that part of the challenge is that the basis of the solid waste funding is very restricted by state law to solid waste activities. As an example, Mr. Brower shared with the group that Metro is currently being sued over how we calculate and use funds. Metro always needs to keep in mind that whatever WPES is doing/funding meets state law.

Mr. Egleston appreciated Roy's comments and emphasized that there may be a need to recognize that for many community based organizations (CBOs), environmental education and recycling education might not be a priority and that it may be a challenge to expend resources while navigating the impacts of COVID on communities. He noted that on the west side, there is a large health disparity in the Latino community. This has had an impact on CBOs and the focus of their efforts/resources.

Mr. Brower noted that Metro has a contract with Centro Cultural related to the new facility siting engagement, and so Metro is engaging with CBO partners as priorities shift.

Joe Buck (Small business owner) asked about the increase in the tipping fee and excise tax. Is the increase in the tipping fee and the excise tax interdependent?

Mr. Brower clarified that the excise tax is a general tax on every ton of waste that gets disposed and it is a calculation in code which looks at the past 12 months. Based on that calculation, that is what has triggered the \$0.90 increase in the rate.

Mr. Buck noted the importance to be aware of the potential impact to residences and businesses in the future when looking at rate increases.

Mr. Brower shared that waste collection in the business and commercial sectors have gone down, but some of that tonnage has shifted to residential users.

Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) shared that the impact can vary depending on the jurisdiction and that she has appreciated a lot of the efforts from local governments around this issue. She recognized Mr. Egleston's work in Washington County in helping establish some monthly reporting. There will be more information in this regard coming forward. She echoed Mr. Brower's comments in that she has heard from some haulers that there has been a steep and abrupt decline in commercial sector and that residential tonnage is up just slightly. She noted that added material at the curb does not always translate to added funding/revenue for haulers, particularly within the recycling markets which are still not particularly profitable. Some haulers have been reporting that they are losing the equivalent to about 3 FTE in drivers and that finances are down. They are riding out this crisis and appreciate the support from local governments. Gresham is planning a rate adjustment only to cover their own added city fees and corporate activity fee.

Jenny Slepian (City of Lake Oswego) noted that she is getting questions from people in multifamily units that there is suspicion about neighbors, and if COVID can be transmitted through shared garbage and recycling containers. She shared that her department and Clackamas County is having a hard time getting information/materials/printed signs out to residents. She is interested in options for virtual resources, particularly for multifamily units and to know what other governments are doing currently around this area.

Shannon Martin (City of Gresham) communicated that the City of Gresham sent out a postcard – the front was COVID specific: make sure to bag trash and don't put things on the ground, and tips to stay safe. It also included a reminder about bulky waste and to work with property manager. Information on proper recycling was on the other side of the postcard. The city had to cut back on the mailing of the postcard due to budget cuts, but now are trying to personally call property managers and ask that they sharing/emailing the content to residents. This is the first time the city has done a direct mail to tenants other than the city newsletters. The content is also in Spanish on the front of the card.

Mr. Brower shared that Jennifer Erickson (Metro) or Thomas Egleston hold a twice-a-week conference call with local governments to discuss this topic in greater depth.

## **5. REGIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS**

Jennifer Erickson (Metro) presented to the committee on regional service standards and shared an overview of some of the code and rule changes that would be coming before the committee later in the summer. The regional service standards set a base level of service for all recycling collection programs in the region in order to meet the 2030 Regional Waste Plan (RWP) requirements as well as to provide consistency throughout the region. It also helps to meet elements of state statute including education outreach minimum standards, collection minimum standards, collectible materials and frequency for all sectors (residential, multifamily, business...). There are some very specific requirements such as the business recycling requirement, which was adopted in 2008 and the business food waste requirement, which was recently adopted.

Ms. Erickson noted that with the adoption of the RWP, there is a need to update the code and rules. Metro is operating under code from 2008 which is no longer relevant. This presentation is to give context to the committee before returning in July with the new proposed code/rule. The presentation will focus on providing some context related to the multifamily regional service standard.

The biggest changes to the regional service standard are those that improve services to multifamily residents. The RWP is the guiding document used by local governments and Metro in the solid waste field. It is both a strategic level plan as well as a blueprint for the work. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> regional waste plan, and it has been a requirement that there be a regional waste plan since 1989. One of the key components of the RWP is to advance equity. Over 40 of the actions in the RWP focus on this goal, which distinguishes it from previous plans. These actions speak to diversity in jobs, quality of jobs, participation in developing and implementing the work, engagement and learning, access in decision making, and leadership opportunities for youth and adults of color. Equity considerations are embedded throughout the plan.

The plan seeks to reduce the health and environmental impacts of the solid waste system across the entire product lifecycle. These include goals and actions designed to reduce the toxicity of products, education and policies that support better purchasing choices, bolstering opportunities for reuse and repair, and minimizing impacts of our solid waste and recycling operations. There are also goals and actions designed to create a more equitable and resilient garbage and recycling system. This means addressing current gaps where improvements are needed, stabilizing the system so that we are more adaptable as conditions change over time, and keeping basic solid waste services going in times of disaster. The Metro code and associated administrative rules are the primary mechanism used to implement some of these key actions and goals. The current code is obsolete and refers to the 2008 plan that is no longer in effect and it refers to state statute which was revised in 2018. The focus is to remove old language, reorganizing the content to fit current structure for writing code and administrative rules, and making the content easier to read and

understand. There will also be proposed substantive improvements to help the region meet equity goals and to ensure that the collection system meets the needs of all residents.

Sara Kirby (Metro) presented to the committee on some of the more substantive changes being proposed. Goal 10 of the RWP is where most of the proposed changes come from. The substantive proposed changes all relate to improvements of multifamily service. Currently, the multifamily service standard is vary non-prescriptive and only requires that recycling service be present on site in order to meet the rule. For this reason, Metro has seen large discrepancies in service levels in multifamily homes versus people living in single-family homes. The specific changes being proposed are per-unit service minimums for garbage, mixed recycling, and glass, setting a weekly minimum collection frequency, and setting a stream-based color standard. That that means for multifamily residents is that garbage would always be collected in the same color bin, mixed recycling would also be collected in a different (but same) colored bin. There would also be required use of regional signage on bins and in collection areas.

Several years ago, Metro and many local cities and counties conducted a project to examine what was going on with multifamily collection system. Multiple data sources were used, service levels, conducted a waste characterization study, conducted engagement with people of color living in multifamily residences, and low income individuals living in multifamily homes. Four findings were produced. The first finding is that there aren't enough collection bins, they aren't conveniently located, and they aren't collected frequently enough. The collection containers are inconsistent and confusing to users which leads to a higher contamination rate with multifamily. Bulky waste is also a common issue for multifamily residences because of monthly move-in move-out cycle and it is inadequately managed. Bulky waste isn't being considered with the current code changes, but Metro recognizes that it is a problem and may come back in the next year or two with proposed changes related to bulky waste.

As part of the project, engagement was done with residents of multifamily homes. The proposed changes to code and administrative rule track with what was heard from residents: it is difficult to recycle, bins fill up quickly, please color coordinate bins, keep the colors simple, change the way things are sorted, pictures and directions in many languages. The project also looked at promising/best practices from recycling programs nationwide, and used volume data from the waste character study, and service level analysis to help inform the current proposals.

Ms. Kirby recapped the proposed substantive changes to code: per-unit service minimum for garbage, mixed recycling, and glass, setting a weekly minimum collection frequency, setting a stream-based color standard, and requiring the use of regional signage on bins and collection areas.

Ms. Erickson shared the next steps in the process. Metro is in the process of revising the code and administrative rules. These will first be shared with the local solid waste directors group. The draft will then go to Metro's various policy committees, including the Regional Waste Advisory Committee and other stakeholder groups through a formal public input process, which will go through the summer and fall. July/August Metro's Committee of Racial Equity will also review the proposed code/rule changes. The goal is to have the proposed changes go before the Metro council in November/December. The administrative rules which will be adopted and approved by the Chief Operating Officer will be on a parallel process and hope they will be ready by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

Ms. Erickson provided a detailed handout (attached at the end of the minutes).

Ms. Slepian noted the importance of service minimums and she was glad to see this included. She was glad to see that there will be consistency in carts. She saw the value in having this coordinated

at the Metro level rather than at the local government/county level. Overall a helpful proposal to address challenges at the multifamily level.

Marilou Carrera (Portland resident) shared that the intention behind the proposed code/rule changes feels person-centered. As the language continues to be developed, she hopes to continue to see that focus throughout the process.

Mr. Egleston appreciated the recommendations. He expressed the importance of considering the policy mechanisms that will be used to implement these recommendations and how local governments might be asked to make adjustments and how that will be communicated/coordinated with local governments. There are people and groups who are not always at the table who are a part of these cooperative programs in Washington and Clackamas Counties. There were some challenges moving through the food scraps requirement, and this is coming up quickly after that, which means there might be some difficult conversations. It's also important that we consider the COVID impacts on local government revenues and attention spans (where they are focused). Mr. Egleston was supportive of the concept but emphasized the importance of considering the approach of implementation and that these changes should not feel top-down heavy from Metro, but rather a collaboration with local jurisdictions.

Alondra Flores Aviña (Student) shared that at Trash for Peace, she hears similar concerns from community members, particularly in multifamily residences.

Jill Kolek (City of Portland) noted that this has been a collaborative process with Metro and she is happy with the results, particularly related to multifamily and the actions outlined. It is user focused which has been a nice process. She appreciated Metro's work on this issue as well as their efforts to clean up the code and make it more broad while focusing the details in the administrative rules.

Beth Vargas Duncan thanked everyone for their work on this update. Beth shared that the haulers are invested in reducing contamination, which is something they spend a considerable time talking about. Beth noted, though, that there are costs and wondered about alternatives that are less costly or that feel more doable (e.g. lids are cheaper than carts). The rules and the process will be moving forward in a parallel manner and they look forward to hearing more details.

Ms. McDermott asked about the per-unit minimum service standard – and wondered if that also takes into account household size.

Ms. Kirby shared that multifamily data can be elusive and hard to come by. For this reason, there is not a great data source for bedroom count or household size. The most granular level available is unit count at a site. Per-unit was the focus of the study. A unit is a household, just like a single-family home is where a household of people live. This is where the study could look at a comparison between single family and multifamily service levels in order to establish minimums. Because Metro is making some generalizations, the code and rule will be a true minimum service level. Metro did not want to make more broad or aggressive assumptions and create significant unutilized capacity.

Ms. Kirby shared that single family households most commonly get a 35 gallon cart for garbage service weekly, a 65 gallon cart of mixed recycling service weekly, and a 14 gallon cart of glass service weekly. There are some exceptions to this (e.g. City of Portland). With the results of the multifamily service level analysis, the median was that multifamily residents had access to 40 gallons of garbage service per unit per week, 17 gallons of mixed recycling service per unit per week, and 1 gallon of glass recycling per unit per week [CORRECTION of content: Ms. Kirby

amended this statement to reflect 3 gallons of glass recycling per unit per week]. This was almost the inverse compared to single family service: double the garbage service in multifamily versus double the mixed recycling service for single family households. Big differences in terms of access to service. Ms. Kirby also noted that bulky waste can be especially problematic because it can take up a lot of capacity. The hope is to do more waste characterization studies in the future and fine-tune the work.

Ms. McDermott wondered if the minimum/floor is going to be too low. She asked if/how design of enclosure was being factored into the rule.

Ms. Kirby shared that this is an important component that will be a 2.0 issue to address. The first goal is to establish the minimums and then begin untangling some of the other service and access questions once minimums have been established.

Sharetta Butcher (NxNE) appreciated the presentation and noted that her questions were answered through earlier comments with the committee.

Mr. Martin shared that it seems like Metro's process of how the code will be structured makes sense and will hopefully give more flexibility to make adjustments where needed. Building from Mr. Egleston's comment, Mr. Martin noted the importance of action, but expressed that these changes will be challenging and costly. It will not be an easy transition. Also, with the minimum requirements and expectations that have been outlined, this will take considerable staff time if we want it to be done correctly. Funding for expertise in the planning departments will be important and how to we ensure that each city is educated on this content. Mr. Martin supports the intent and hopes all will approach this work in good faith, and emphasized the challenges that will come with this project.

Audrey O'Brien (DEQ) shared that DEQ supports Metro's update to the code, as well as adjustments to ensure state rules are being followed. DEQ supports the every-other-week and weekly comparisons so that every other week recycling is considered the same as weekly. Ms. O'Brien echoed Ms. Carrera's comments about Metro's work being person-centered. She acknowledged Ms. Kirby's years-worth of great work on multifamily services as well as the empathy she has brought in explaining the complexity of the issues also from a hauler perspective as well as the needs of the residents. DEQ supports the region's efforts in attempting to address the current multifamily service standards issues.

Ms. Butcher recommended that through this process, Metro consider connecting with community groups like community health workers or master recyclers to take part in this process to help educate community about the changes that are happening. This could be an opportunity to have community engagement.

Mr. Brower opened the conversation up for public comment.

## **6. Public comment period: Regional Service Standards**

KJ Lewis from Republic Services asked about the tip fee increase for July and October.

Mr. Brower noted that July would be a \$0.90 increase and October is still to be determined. A forecast and tonnage projection are still needed as well as looking at cost of services that need to be considered. At this point, the only firm increase is the \$0.90 increase on July 1, 2020 which would bring the rate to \$98.35/ton.



Kristin Leichner from Pride Disposal wanted to echo the comments that were made about multifamily enclosure size and access which is also a big concern for haulers. Ms. Leichner wanted to share that they currently do work with local governments to have the ability to review and approve new construction for access. The way that they approve enclosure designs is to allow enclosures to hold the maximum size available for both garbage and recycling with room for glass carts, food waste carts potentially down the road. She recommended that other local governments explore similar options to help with the long term planning on at least new construction, to have haulers be a part of the required service providers to sign off on each applicant to go through in those cities. She commented on the cost of the potential service standard changes moving forward and the potential impact on the ratepayers to replacement/painting of carts and receptacles that already exist in the system. She suggested a lid/sticker color-coding as a less expensive option.

Scott Farling with Titus MRF Services and a consultant to the recycling services industry shared that not only can you save costs by just having color-coding requirements on the lid, but you can open up future post-consumer recycled content opportunities for the body of roll carts. Mr. Farling recommended consulting with the cart manufacturers and the waste/hauling industry.

Dean Kampf with Waste Management expressed that multifamily service standards are a challenge and that some of the suggestions made today definitely would be helpful. Waste management noted that there would be a cost associated and that there would need to be a phase-in period. Waste Management also supports the color-coding of the lids as an alternative at a lower cost. Waste Management provides the service but cannot mandate that the customer use a certain size container. He posed the question of how the enforcement would work on multifamily properties to require them to use certain container sizes for garbage, recycling, and glass.

## **7. STATEWIDE RECYCLING SYSTEM MODERNIZATION UPDATE**

Pam Peck (Metro) shared that the purpose of her presentation was to update the committee on the process that is taking place in Oregon to look at how to update and modernize the recycling system as well as some of the key policy items being considered. The recycling steering committee was convened by Oregon DEQ to address challenges related to markets in the recycling system, market disruptions that started in 2017-2018, and to work toward solutions to create a more resilient recycling system that protects the environment and strengthens the local economy. The committee represents key stakeholders from local governments, collectors, processors, and others involved in providing recycling services in Oregon, as well as individuals who represent northwest paper and plastic manufacturers who use recycled materials to make products. There was also a much broader group of people involved in the subcommittees, including Shannon Martin and Beth Vargas Duncan (on the engagement committee).

Ms. Peck shared that the group is charged to work together to reach consensus and recommend actions that would optimize benefits for the environment from the recycling system, make the system strong and adaptable to change so that when there are market disruptions, we are not overly reliant on a single market. Another big challenge is that the types of packages that we bring into our homes are rapidly changing. The question is how does the system keep up with the changes. Another key aspect of this work is to maintain public trust in the system, and to look at issues of transparency and accountability in making sure that the recycling system works for everyone and that the system achieves the outcomes sought by the public.

The committee paused for 5-6 weeks due to the COVID pandemic. The committee is now meeting weekly (through Zoom webinar), likely through June to delve into the policy issues. Agendas and meeting materials are on the DEQ's website. Zoom video recordings of the meetings are available to the public, there is a public comment period in each meeting and the committee also receives comment letters. Much of the work in 2019 looked at what types of infrastructure might be needed

in the future. This includes figuring out how we sort and process new materials coming into the marketplace and are there different ways we should consider what we collect or how we operate various aspects of the system, how we do education, and how to reduce contamination. Also questions around what the cost would be. There are infrastructure investment scenarios that have been developed and are currently being modeled so that the different costs can be reviewed for associated options compared to a base case, which is what is in place today in Oregon. This information will be available in June.

The committee will start bringing together the two threads: what are the types of policies that might be needed to support the system that is desired, and what infrastructure investments will be needed. From July-September, the committee will start to bring together these two streams of research and information through a consensus-based process. The goal is to reach consensus on actions and to have a recommendations report completed in September and draft recommendations in August and recommendations that would require changes in state statute which may be introduced in the 2021 legislative session by the Oregon DEQ. The recommendations will also point to things that can happen in other parts of the system that don't need don't necessarily need a state statute change. There may be a range of recommendations for governments at the local level or within private companies.

One of the steps the committee took last year on the framework subcommittee was to look at what are the functions that we want our future system to have and what are the desired outcomes of a future system. Some examples are a system that has whole-system design where all elements are integrated, stable funding, ability to adapt to change, reducing the upstream impacts of products. There is also a desire to see a system that can collect clean materials, reduce contamination, and produce high quality materials that are desirable for manufacturers and don't have high associated costs related to contamination.

Pam Peck shared that she represents Metro on the committee. In this process, Metro is working to advance actions in the RWP and to advance the direction received from the Metro Council. The process is moving from a high level to a more detailed level at this point and we will start to see more detailed proposals come out of the committee. As these details come forward, WPES will continue to work with the Metro Council and the Regional Waste Advisory Committee to confirm our positions. This will likely be in July or August.

Ms. Peck outlined some of the issues currently being discussed:

- Processing standards: standards for how materials are potentially sorted (i.e. what do we want to see from the end of the material recovery sorting and what is acceptable in terms of contamination levels).
- End market transparency requirements: there are issues with where materials flow and we don't necessarily know that materials are ending up in places with adequate solid waste systems for those materials or how materials are recycled.
- Contamination: there is now available research around best practices for reducing contamination with the generator (household or business). What are requirements and standards that could be developed that would reduce contamination.
- Role of producers in the system: producers helping to cover costs in the system and producers operating/contracting for aspects of how the system is run and managed. There is a full range of options being considered.
- Financing: how do we address financing the system, including transportation costs.
- Product packaging and label requirements: truth in labeling. The public is confused about what is and is not recyclable locally. In Oregon law, there are requirements around labeling.

- Expansion of the bottle bill: to include more types of glass bottles, particularly wine and liquor bottles. This would greatly reduce glass recycling at the curb. Glass has a great impact on contamination.
- How to advance equity within the system: transportation costs, levels of access to services, impacts to communities around processing facilities, jobs in the system, opportunities for small businesses.

Ms. Slepian shared that she has been following the DEQ meetings and sees the importance of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). As this is being standardized across the state, it is important to look at how this work affects areas outside of the Metro region, like rural communities with limited access to recycling currently. What will material transport look like and what is the impact. She asked that while the Regional Waste Advisory Committee represents the Metro region, the committee should also consider impacts to other parts of the state and work with the state to ensure that the system is sustainable and equitable.

Ms. Peck shared that this is being discussed within the DEQ committee and that these comments can be shared.

Beth Vargas Duncan shared that she is wrestling with how EPR marries with the equity lens and goals. A report was recently shared with the regional steering committee out of a university in British Columbia that packaging fees increased the product cost by 5-7%. Her concern is that a fee or tax like this would probably impact the lowest income earners the most. Metro has put forward a paper that indicates they support (at the staff level) putting forth a producer responsibility organization (PRO) that would run the system and that DEQ is also interested in looking at EPR that would cover cost of collection.

Ms. Peck expressed that those are great questions and comments. She noted that Metro is advancing concepts from within the process from the RWP which calls for looking at EPR to reduce environmental impacts. Metro Council has also provided direction on pursuing some of these items as well. As the concepts and discussion get more detailed, WPES intends to check back in. With regard to costs, a PRO would potentially be formed to handle product end-of-life and producers would pay fees based on the cost of recycling or disposing their items. Within Canada, they actually haven't seen the cost of products go up, and Ms. Peck wanted to look at the stats cited by Beth Vargas Duncan because her understanding is that they haven't seen the product costs go up. Ms. Peck noted that these are international/multinational corporations selling these products and it is a fraction of a penny of cost right now that goes to support a program maybe in Canada or Europe, but we are likely all paying for all of this now. The other way to look at it is that the cost of recycling that product is internalized in the product. Because this would be applied broadly, Ms. Peck agreed that there is a need to look at this in greater depth. If there were a producer responsibility system, the government would set the goals for what that system needs to do and what the producers need to do. The system in British Columbia is based on direction from the British Columbian government. The State of Oregon could control and provide direction for their specific system (i.e. living wages, opportunities for small contractors, etc.). The idea is for these to run the way the public wants them to be run and they are typically very prescriptive on the way the legislation is written to ensure that there are clear goals and elements.

Mr. Brower added that there will be considerable variation depending on the product. There will be different factors for cost and for equity depending on material (mattresses vs. plastic containers vs. glass, etc.) Mr. Brower encouraged the committee to reach out to Pam Peck with additional questions and comments. He adjourned the committee meeting.

**8. MEETING AJOURNED at 10 a.m.**

**Next meeting**

June 18, 2020 8:00 am – 10:00 am