



METRO

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

MEETING SUMMARY
Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Metro Regional Center, Council Annex
February 25, 2005

Members / Alternates Present:

Councilor Rod Park, Chair	Melissa Finn (for V. Gilbert)	Matt Korot
Mike Hogle	Mark Altenhofen	Ray Phelps
Bruce Walker	Glenn Zimmerman	Lori Stole
Rick Winterhalter	JoAnn Herrigel	
Jeff Murray	Anita Largent	
Heather Hansen	Mike Miller	
Dave White		

Guests and other Metro staff:

Janet Matthews	Marta McGuire	Karen Blauer
Jan Whitworth	Lee Barrett	Matthew Cusma
Kathryn Schutte	Scott Klag	René Eyerly
Jim Watkins	Dan Wilson	Gina Cubbon
Barb Disser	Steve Apotheker	
Chuck Geyer		

I. Call to Order and Announcements.....Rod Park

- Councilor Rod Park convened the meeting, asked attendees to introduce themselves, and asked if there were any announcements. There were none.

II. Solid Waste & Recycling Director's Update..... Mike Hogle

- Postponed until further into the meeting; Mr. Hogle was delayed unexpectedly.

III. Sustainability and the Solid Waste System..... René Eyerly

Councilor Park gave some background on this subject, which grew out of the Let’s Talk Trash meetings held late last year. “The question comes down,” the Councilor said, “as to what are the things we can do, or how important is it to do sustainable things? Do we have the right entities represented on committees [who will consider the subject]?” These are issues SWAC and a subsequent subcommittee will be looking at, Councilor Park said, turning the floor over to Ms. Eyerly.

Ms. Eyerly provided a brief background of the concept and definitions of sustainability. Sustainability, she said, “...is not a new concept. It’s an iteration of how we define ourselves with our environment, and what our generation’s relationship is to future generations.” Definitions abound, Ms. Eyerly commented. The State of Oregon’s description, adopted in 2002, is a variation

of the United Nations' definition, stating that as a society, it is our charge to develop and protect resources in such a way that extends beyond current needs to those of future generations. The term "sustainability" is a way of addressing the interconnections of economics, environment, energy, and quality of life.

"Using [the concept of sustainability] as a road map is a very powerful way of making decisions. It can be very adaptable and a dynamic process," Ms. Eyerly stated. In order to develop sustainable practices for the region, it will be important to bring the right mix of people together for the discussion. "Technical and non-technical people need to be at the table," she explained. "We're talking about a whole system – a whole, core business, and you need to be able to identify the key areas in that system, where you can make the biggest changes, and where you can also have the right people there to do the analysis of where changes can occur, how reasonably, the time-frame, and the costs associated with making those changes." Having a wide range of participants will also help when it comes to implementation. People who participate in development are most likely to carry that enthusiasm and belief back with them and encourage the project.

There are several "tools" available to help develop sustainable practices, Ms. Eyerly continued, including Natural Step, Triple Bottom Line, and LEEDS certification. The tools have a commonality in that they focus on the interconnection mentioned earlier.

Regarding sustainability in Oregon, Ms. Eyerly quipped, "I would almost call it mainstream in this state." There are over 170 organizations who are using sustainability tools in some way, including such high-profile entities as Nike, Ashforth Pacific, Multnomah County, and Metro. She briefly outlined examples to show directions that could be taken for the RSWMP update. Ashforth Pacific took a fairly traditional approach, Ms. Eyerly elucidated, "...looking at air, water, waste, energy uses. They chose to develop very specific goals that are easily measured." At the other extreme, she continued, is Multnomah County "...an incredibly diverse, complex organization with a wide-range of business centers. They're concerned with managing jails, and parks, and looking at habitat, but they also have administrative offices and a whole host of vehicle fleets. As such, they took a very ambitious approach, looking at 11 different action areas." The County has a mix of sustainability goals that include policies for procurement, food, habitat protection and other areas.

The third profile presented by Ms. Eyerly, Metro, adopted a sustainable business practices resolution in 2003 that encompasses all its facilities and operations. The goals are both ambitious and long-lived: The intent is to have them implemented by 2025. For instance, two sustainability goals set for the new transfer station operation contract deal with emissions and greenhouse gases. "Contractors will purchase 15% of their electricity from alternative sources. This should reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 400 tons. The second is our clean exhaust program," she mentioned. This program requires all diesel-powered equipment to be fitted with oxidation catalysts and lose ultra-low sulfur diesel.

Concluding her presentation, Ms. Eyerly asked the Committee for comments about how to address sustainability issues in the revised Plan. The current plan has no specifics on the subject. Additionally, staff would like ideas for who should be "at the table" for this issue.

Matt Korot (City of Gresham) commented that he felt Ms. Eyerly already answered the first question. "Move beyond and look at the system as a whole and how it touches each area that naturally falls under sustainability." He said to take ideas from each of the three examples she used and look at the system in its entirety. The subcommittee can then work on the details.

Citizen representative Heather Hansen asked if Metro has sustainability goals in other areas [than solid waste]. If so, she commented that it would be important to link with those and ensure that “everyone’s on the same page.”

ORRA’s Dave White asked what is meant by “the system.” “How far towards local government’s responsibility, and how far towards disposal, and is it everything in between?” Councilor Park responded that’s exactly why it’s important to bring a comprehensive mix of participants into the subcommittee.

“If you think about the system as a whole, insofar as sustainability,” Councilor Park went on, “take the current price of fuel – the contract that we’re doing up to Arlington works. It’s expensive recently, but it works. But if you think about global warming and other things going on, and triple the price of fuel, do the same things work? Does it make more sense to recycle more things.... just make sure we have the right pieces... How broad do we make the umbrella of sustainability?”

Still, Mr. White pressed, “The ‘system’ may be the generator, the manufacturer of equipment who makes part of the stuff that goes into the system. How far do you go upstream or down?... I just have to say – and it may make me unpopular in this group....There’s an issue regarding Metro being involved in the area of collection. Lake Oswego just did some work on their franchises about a year ago. The City Council (of Lake Oswego) put some sustainable stuff in, and the hauler worked with the local jurisdiction to develop some sustainable goals and guidelines. So local jurisdictions are starting to look at the issue. It’s the local jurisdiction that says to the local hauler and to the community and to the rate-payer, how committed are we to sustainability, and what investment are we willing to make, and what enforcement are we going to take in terms of making those goals happen?”

Concluding his thought, Mr. White asked who enforces the goals put forth in the RSWMP. According to Oregon State Statutes, he emphasized, “If there’s something in your solid waste management plan that’s approved by the EQC, then no local jurisdiction can do anything contrary to that. It puts a huge responsibility and authority, it would seem, on Metro to oversee the sustainability of our region, when it impacts a local government responsibility – which is collection.”

Councilor Park agreed that the issue of how broad Metro’s involvement should be is a good question that needs further discussion. He does not, the Councilor commented, envision Metro becoming part of the collection system.

Solid Waste & Recycling Director Mike Hogle agreed that more internal discussion is needed about Metro’s role in the RSWMP. Using a Transportation Department analogy, he explained that the regional transportation plan is very broad. It includes areas that Metro has no authority over, such as Tri-Met routes, schedules, etc. However, the plan was drafted through a Metro process, and “There is language in [the plan] that says there is a need for a transit system and it should try to do certain things.” Tri-Met worked with Metro on the wording; similar means could be used in the RSWMP update, leaving responsibility to the local governments.

Mr. Korot added that, “If I could dare to speak for the local government folks, there’s a strong policy commitment to making the regional plan truly regional and truly meaningful in addressing all parts of the system. That would apply to this issue, too. We’re just at an impasse on the legal framework that applies. That’s the impasse I think we need to get over, both for [the collection subcommittee] and this.”

The City of Milwaukie's JoAnn Herrigel suggested segmenting the discussion, separating Metro facilities from the rest of the system. Ms. Eyerly replied that yes, there are components that fall squarely into local government responsibility, but when talking about sustainability of the entire Metro region, it's hard to leave out a major component and have it work.

Regarding the question of who should be part of the subcommittee, the City of Portland's Bruce Walker said that manufacturers should be represented in order to help develop the e-waste portion of sustainability. There have been national discussions and a bill at the State level, but unlike some European countries that have been very proactive on the subject, it seems unlikely at this time that a national consensus here. "What we end up with if we don't somehow incorporate some viewpoints there, all we're dealing with is what's left over here... To truly address looking out 10 to 20 years, we're going to need more comments and really engage and get over some huge obstacles."

Mr. White reiterated haulers' concerns with Metro being delegated the authority to oversee what is meant by sustainability. "What we do today affects how we work for the next ten years."

Loretta Pickerell from the Oregon DEQ said it's important to evaluate how to get the biggest bang for the buck. Recovery, for instance, is a very small piece insofar as impact, she said. "The big impact comes in the generation and distribution of materials. So that might suggest we take a closer look at generation and focus on a few things towards that goal versus spending a lot of energy on bio-fuels for trucks that in themselves are very controversial." It's a matter of prioritizing actions, she concluded.

Where does the Committee see the trade-offs happening, Councilor Park mused. Where is the balance between goals and the cost? Ms. Eyerly replied that those details should become clearer as the goals and subgoals are determined. Mr. Korot added that it's hoped that "...meaningful goals will be in there, but to have the decisions on implementing or not implementing reside among the elected officials in whose communities those would be implemented. Metro should not take away local governments' ability to measure those trade-offs, but push them, as part of the region, towards some valuable directions.... The point of a regional plan is to push things along for the next ten years."

Mr. White continued to have concerns about Metro's RSWMP / collection role. Ms. Matthews mentioned that there is already some language in the current RSWMP waste reduction chapter relating to collection. "Was this not of concern the last time the Plan was developed?" she asked. SW&R's Marta McGuire, from the audience, explained that the current Plan has a goal relating to standardizing services, and there are specific recommended strategies in the Waste Reduction chapter about the provision of certain types of collection services, and other very specific strategies.

Councilor Park moved discussion to what interests should be represented in a subcommittee to discuss sustainability. The group brought forth the following suggestions:

- Business
- Natural Step-type organization
- Hauler
- Citizen
- Large generator
- End user
- Local government
- A non-profit with sustainable practice experience
- A business that has a fleet component
- Recycling facility / processor

Ms. Eyerly will be drafting a scope of work; she anticipates three or four meetings over the next two months and hopes to come back to the full SWAC and a Council work session at the end of April.

II. Solid Waste & Recycling Director's Update..... Mike Hogle

- Columbia Environmental’s application process has been started over because Council has put forth new potential criteria. Some earlier criteria were unable to be met by the company. The latest request for waste is 38,000 tons (the original was 55,000 tons). Mr. Hogle said they’re hoping to have a decision within 60-90 days, though the application can take up to 120 days.
- Metro Council has asked SW&R staff to try to wrap up disposal system planning (how wet / dry tonnage allocations to local transfer stations are handled, how criteria are looked at for new transfer stations, and Metro’s role in owning transfer stations) while it is looking at the RSWMP update. Mr. Hogle hopes to have an update on this next month.

Councilor Park mentioned that at a recent Council retreat, they talked about whether RSWMP informs a decision about Metro transfer stations, or if a decision about Metro transfer stations help correct RSWMP. “If you were take a vote at Council right now, you’d probably have 3-3 with one abstention.” It’s a chicken or the egg situation. He asked the group to keep the extra March 3 meeting on their schedule for now (in addition to March 24), saying it’s easier to cancel a meeting than schedule one.

IV. RSWMP Vision, Values, and Policies..... Janet Matthews

Ms. Matthews recapped the Vision Statement discussion of the January SWAC meeting. She directed the Committee’s attention to a table included in the agenda packet that shows support of each concept brought forth at that meeting. Ms. Matthews stressed that an “X” under SWAC, Council, or Staff headings meant simply that at least one in the respective group supported the concept. The Committee glanced over the list, and Ms. Matthews asked that each member select four of the 16 concepts, to help pare down the list. Response was as follows:

1. Build a sustainable futurePhelps, Murray, Winterhalter, Largent, Zimmerman, Hansen, Walker
2. A more sustainable waste system -none
3. Inter-dependence of economic, environmental, and social systems.....Murray, Winterhalter, Korot, Stole, Hansen, Altenhofen
4. Conserve resourcesHerrigel, Finn, Largent, Zimmerman, Walker, Pickerell, Miller
5. Reduce consumption..... Herrigel, Finn, Stole, Pickerell
6. Conservation of natural systems Herrigel, Finn
7. Preserve options for future generations Walker, Altenhofen
8. Recognize link between waste management and resource conservationPhelps, Herrigel, Finn, Winterhalter, Korot, Miller, White
9. Shared responsibility among producers, users, and governmentZimmerman, Stole, Hansen, Walker, Pickerell
10. Producer responsibility -none
11. Economic prosperity Zimmerman, White
12. Waste as a resource to be managed..... Phelps, Winterhalter, Largent, Stole, Miller
13. Waste as an inefficient use of resources -none
14. Waste as a liability to be safely managed, a resource to be productively used..... Korot, White
15. Comprehensive waste management practices enhancing community quality of life Phelps, Murray, Largent, Pickerell, Miller, White
16. Knowledgeable and engaged residents Murray, Hansen, Altenhofen

Of members present, therefore, seven votes were cast for concept numbers 1, 4, and 8; six votes each for numbers 3, 9, and 15; five votes for number 12.

Ms. Matthews said she will take the information and redraft the Vision Statement accordingly.

Moving on to the subject of regional values to be included, Ms. Matthews handed out copies of a table that was recently presented to Metro Council, comparing regional policies, Council priorities, and regional values. Council did agree, she said, that these values are a good addition to the RSWMP update. SWAC comments made at the last meeting will be incorporated into a narrative format and brought back for discussion and approval.

“I’m not sure where this fits,” Mr. White spoke up, “but it’s something I’d like to get on the record, or on the table here. I understand why economic prosperity didn’t make it into the Vision Statement. But when we get into these values.... there might be ten places where it says ‘rates,’ ‘investment,’ ‘cost,’ ‘impact,’ ‘cost-effective,’ those types of things, but it’s really talking about the users... I would like to see something in here that really points out that all of the things we’re considering for the next ten years have economics, whether its for citizens or businesses, for the future of our children: There’s a cost associated with it and we need to have that in the context of what we’re trying to do, and I don’t know where it fits into here.”

Councilor Park, going back to sustainability, said he’s unsure “...how it’s played off against other goals. I’m not sure whether the balancing occurs within the sustainability goal, or occurs out with the other goals of the system.... You raise a point – if the only place you balance it is within that, then it’s valid. If it’s balanced in its entirety, then it doesn’t hurt for this to be more one direction than the other because it talks about economics in another goal. I need to become education about where that balance occurs.”

Ms. Pickerell added that she feels it needs to be made clear how costs will be evaluated. For instance, the Governor is talking about global warming, and may be asking the DEQ to consider the cost of gas emissions actualized into the future. “If we want to look at sustainability, we need to think about how comprehensively we can address costs as a practical matter.”

Ms. Matthews next directed the group’s attention to the agenda packet piece entitled Draft Chapter 3: Future Direction and Regional Policies. The piece points out proposed modifications and additions to the current Chapter 3, and she asked members to comment on if further discussion is needed on each of the pieces.

- Policy 1.0 – No further discussion requested.
- 2.0 – Yes, lay aside for further discussion.
- 3.0 – Yes
- 3.1 – No
- 3.2 – Yes
- 3.3 – Yes A side discussion ensued regarding what “region” means. After several minutes, Ms. Matthews was able to point out that under Policy 3.3, “region” refers to generators in the region, not facilities.
- 3.4 – Yes
- 3.5 – Yes
- 4.0 – Yes
- 4.1 – Yes
- 5.0 – Yes
- 5.1 – No

- 6.0 – No
- 6.1 – No
- 7.1 – Yes
- 7.2 – No
- 7.3 – Yes
- 7.4 – Yes
- 7.5 – Yes

Ms. Hansen asked how Policy 7.2 relates to drop off of household hazardous waste. Ms. Matthews explained, “The cost of disposing household hazardous waste is certainly not directly formulated to the users of the facilities, no. They’d be paying \$75 a carload, for example, if it was.” Mr. Phelps added that hazardous waste disposal is subsidized through the Regional Systems Fee, “which we all pay. So there is the connect, it may not be specific – Janet’s correct that it would cost a heck of a lot more for the individual disposing of the hazardous waste, but as a system – for other hierarchal reasons, that cost is recovered through the Regional Systems Fee.”

In summation, Ms. Matthews said that the next couple of meetings will include fairly detailed discussions of the policies flagged above. She anticipates it taking at least three meetings.

To help save time and perhaps streamline the process, Mr. Phelps suggested that members e-mail or otherwise contact Ms. Matthews with their concerns and ideas prior to the next meeting. “We could have more productive conversation because she’ll be able to come in and address all the issues rather than wait for us to throw the grenade.” Ms. Matthews said that was an excellent idea.

V. Other Business and Adjourn.....Rod Park

- Members will be notified by close of business Tuesday, March 1 whether or not a meeting will be held on Thursday, March 3.

Councilor Park thanked the group for their attendance, and adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

**Next meeting:
Thursday, March 3, 2005
Room 370 A/B**

Documents to be kept with the record of the meeting (copies available upon request):

- Power Point presentation: Sustainability Goals

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