

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting
Date: Thursday, April 20, 2023
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Place: Zoom 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.*

Members in Attendance:

Pam Peck, Metro
Alondra Flores-Avina, Trash for Peace
Sharetta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Lindsay Marshall, City of Tualatin
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, Clackamas County
Thao Tu, Vietnamese Community of Oregon
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)
Ryan Largura, City of Troutdale
Andrew Bartlett, City of Hillsboro

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Pam Peck (Metro) brought the virtual meeting to order at 8:31 am and previewed the agenda.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

4. Disaster Debris Grant Update

Pam Peck introduced Jim Quinn from Metro.

Key points of the presentation included:

The presentation was a response to previous questions about the Disaster Debris Grant program. The questions were what are the local opportunities for local contractors and workers in this situation. The research found that 60-70% of the workforce is local during cleanup events. Large specialized companies tend to be the contractor for these events. Small companies struggle to be ready to respond to these unplanned events, where larger companies travel nationwide to respond to disaster. FEMA also prohibits local governments from procuring contracts with a local preference. FEMA does have requirements for socio-economic contracting, which includes a requirement that solicitations go to small, women and minority owned companies, and that work be broken into pieces so smaller companies can participate.

There are generally two different types of contracts for this work. First to perform the work, second to monitor the work. Local companies can engage with this type of contracting. Local workers are typically hired, often there are more job opportunities in monitoring disaster cleanup.

Metro and local governments will comply with FEMA requirements as a starting place to work with local contractors. The regional waste plan has an action to provide incentives to small, women and minority owned businesses to participate in waste management work.

Member Discussion:

Ms. Alondra Flores Avina (Trash for Peace) appreciated the Clackamas County example to help her better understand.

Mr. Eben Polk, responded that he worked on the Clackamas County contracting example, and shared that their contracting was driven by the Regional Waste Plan Action 19.2 in mind. He wanted to share that this conversations is speaking about governemnts responsibility to clear rights of way. Contracting won't address whats on private or commercial properties. There will be many opportunities for companies to work for insurance companies or private property owners to initiate cleanup. It could be useful to think about how to support contractors in this work space.

Ms. Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) asked if it made sense for other entities to have contracts at the ready for a disaster event, so they weren't waiting on the contract during the event. Mr. Quinn responded that this would be beneficial but only one jurisdiction has been taking these steps.

Mr. Largura (City of Troutdale) asked how much availability there would be for local workers if the disaster ruined local business's infrastructure and resources. Mr. Quinn responded that depending on the scale of disaster national companies would most likely still need local workers to facilitate work.

Ms. Sharetta Butcher (NxNE) feels that Metro is the leader for this work. If something does happen people are going to look at Metro. Is it possible that Metro could have link to contractors or subcontractors for this work on Metro website.

Mr. Polk supports sharing information through Metro website. Addressing Ms. Vargas Duncan's questions about advance contracting, shared that FEMA encourages advance contracting.

Andrew Bartlett (City of Cornelius) asked if there are templates for debris management plans or contracting. Mr. Quinn responded that FEMA does have many templates, many of which are required to qualify for FEMA resources. He is not aware of a template for a debris management plan template, but can share drafts.

5. System Facilities Plan Update

Pam Peck introduced Estee Segal and Luis Sandoval from Metro.

Key points of the presentation included:

The presentation reviewed the current status of the System Facilities Plan. The project is in Phase 3, working on developing scenarios to address the system gaps. The project timeline is being pushed out by a few months and will now be completed in early 2024. Four scenarios will be developed that will be evaluated by stakeholders and Metro Council. The scenarios are being built in a way that shows extremes to encourage discussion and thought in crafting the final scenario. Currently the scenario options are: Maintain, Build a distributed network, Build through partner investment and regulation and Build anchor facilities. Technical Analysis is also proceeding on this project. This looks at base-line conditions as well as gaps in the system.

An international panel is being planned for September 2023, to engage with professionals who work with innovative waste systems to guide this work.

Member Discussion:

Ms. Vargas Duncan shared that private transfer stations have a number of expenses that public transfer stations don't have to pay such as property and fuel taxes and comparing them is like comparing apples and oranges. Mr. Sandoval replies that he acknowledges that, and that the current work is focusing on the customer experience and perspective.

Ms. Vargas Duncan also asked if it was appropriate for private haulers to lower their rates, or that Metro should raise their rates. She also commented that there used to be a work group where private haulers would meet to review and discuss budget and fee details. She is requesting that Metro acknowledge the differences in private and public rates and that both be evaluated. Ms. Peck responded that she appreciated the feedback and that if anyone wanted more details on the budget process they could be provided upon request.

Mr. Largura asked if the maps from the system's analysis were available to the public to view. Mr. Sandoval shared that they have not been published yet.

Mr. Polk asked that more time be found to have a substantive conversation about the system facilities plan. Sees this as an opportunity to build regional consensus on these issues and allow for iterative conversations for these scenarios. Ms. Segal will look into the best time to come back to the committee.

Final Remarks

Ms. Peck put forth the March meeting minutes for approval. The meeting minutes required edits and were not approved. They will be revised and sent out for approval at the May meeting.

Tom Egleston requested to make a public comment. Shared he appreciated the information on the system facilities plan and information on access to facilities and affordability of access. Washington County residents are impacted by cost barriers to self-haul in Forest Grove. Addressing this barrier will be a solution to illegal dumping in the long term.

Kristin Leichner requested to make a public comment. She requested that public comment be held at the end of the meeting. It is difficult to participate when slides and specifics of the discussion are not shared in advance. She also has questions about the budget process, and how the industry can have more information and be engaged in the budget process.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 10:00 a.m.