



METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2016
Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Craig Dirksen, Bob Stacey, Shirley Craddick, Sam Chase, Carlotta Collette, and Kathryn Harrington

Councilors Excused: None

Council President Tom Hughes called the Metro Council work session to order at 2:02 p.m.

1. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATION

Ms. Martha Bennett, Metro Chief Operating Officer, made three announcements. First, she relayed information about a recent regional city manager meeting; topics of discussion at the meeting included commercial food waste, the Urban Growth Task Force, and transportation in the region, with a focus on Regional Flexible Fund applications. Secondly, Ms. Bennett announced that the newest regional snapshot was to be published and would focus on Portland area housing affordability. Lastly, Ms. Bennett turned to Mr. Paul Slyman, Metro Property and Environmental Services (PES) Director, who announced to the Council that through a competitive selection process, Metro had selected a new manager of the construction project management office.

2. SOLID WASTE ROADMAP: FOOD SCRAPS PROJECT

Mr. Paul Slyman, Director of PES, introduced the food scraps project. He highlighted that 1.3 million tons of waste went to landfills every year despite efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Mr. Slyman shared with the Council the benefits of removing waste from landfills.

Mr. Matt Korot, Metro staff, used statistical data to explain the significance of food scraps in the waste stream: 40 percent of food in the United States is wasted; food discarded by consumers exceeds waste generated during production and distribution; food in landfills produces methane; landfills are responsible for 20 percent of the methane produced in the United States; and food is the largest component of what the Metro region throws away. Mr. Korot highlighted that recovered food waste created products that had environmental and economic impacts: compost and renewable energy. He noted that food scraps were a Regional Solid Waste Management Plan priority. He indicated to the Council that Metro was specifically focused on food scraps from the commercial sector; residential food waste recovery was occurring at the city and county level.

Ms. Jennifer Erickson, Metro staff, indicated to the Council that food scraps recovery work had been occurring since 1993 and progress in this area had been made. However, she noted that there had been little progress in commercial food recovery within the previous six years. Ms. Erickson shared that the purpose of the food scraps project was to determine what actions Metro should take to

ensure capacity to transfer and process food scraps collected from businesses. Ms. Erickson went on to explain that the region needed to capture a stable and sustained supply of 50,000 tons of food scraps per year. This goal was to be accomplished through business actions, financial incentives, or a combination of the two.

Ms. Erickson provided an overview of the potential business courses of action. Business actions included: allowing voluntary participation; allowing voluntary participation prior to an eventual food scraps disposal ban; a requirement for some businesses to have their food scraps collected; or a requirement for businesses and an eventual food scraps disposal ban. Ms. Erickson explained the likelihood of the different action plans to attract a local processor; voluntary business participation was unlikely to attract a local processor, whereas a food scraps ban would attract a processor. Ms. Erickson then presented financial incentives designed to encourage business participation, and finally, a combined approach of business actions and financial incentives.

Mr. Korot explained the program costs to the Council. He shared that costs for individual customers were determined by: separation effectiveness, service level decisions, collection efficiency, and cost allocation method. He provided an example based on City of Gresham data which highlighted that the cost of the program for businesses was lower if the costs were distributed across all business customers rather than if a single business paid for the service in full.

Ms. Erickson discussed aggregating the recovered food scraps supply, explaining to the Council that Metro could direct flow to its transfer stations and/or determine how to utilize private stations to ensure flow of needed tons to one processor. She briefly introduced communities with required recycling programs and food scraps bans already in place, noting that there was increased recovery in those locations.

Lastly, Ms. Erickson shared stakeholder feedback with the Council. Stakeholders found onsite assistance provided by local governments and access to the right equipment valuable; the majority of businesses were not opposed to a mandatory program; and businesses considered a reliable collection service and program consistency to be important. The Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee encouraged Metro to take a stronger role in the recovery of food scraps.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Stacey inquired about surveys or research conducted in other communities that could build Council confidence in one of the plans of action. Council President Hughes echoed Councilor Stacey's sentiment, announcing that the Council would not make a final decision until it had seen proof of the results. Councilors Collette and Chase noted that they would like to see more actual comments from stakeholders. Councilor Chase highlighted the environmental impacts of this decision, emphasized that the environment needed to be at the forefront of the discussion, and noted the importance of reducing waste before recovering it. Councilor Harrington noted that not enough progress was being made with strictly voluntary programs. She stated her belief that incentive programs were acceptable as long as they had an end date; she voiced concern that incentive programs could be taken advantage of by certain businesses. Councilor Craddick emphasized the potential economic benefits of food scrap recovery, as new businesses would be supported through the anaerobic digestion and composting of food scraps. She inquired if Metro would ever focus on residential food waste, and stated her interest in an eventual region-wide recovery mandate. Councilor Dirksen expressed interest in reducing environmental contamination and moving toward sustainability, and stated that he believed in recapturing the resource value present in waste. He noted that if less waste enters landfills, the life of those landfills is extended.

Councilors supported mandatory food scraps recovery coupled with a disposal ban. Councilors also supported providing incentives to businesses and spreading costs across solid waste disposal customers. The Council agreed to aggregate recovered materials at Metro transfer stations, but preferred if there was a way to make recovery more equitable across the region. The Council also supported the procurement of a local composting or anaerobic digesting facility's services to process the region's commercial food scraps.

3. COUNCILOR LIAISON UPDATES AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

Councilor Craddick and Councilor Stacey provided a Powell-Division Steering Committee update. They noted that a consensus to move forward with a locally preferred alternative was not reached at the last meeting, so a final decision had been postponed. Councilor Harrington, the Metro representative of the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) Policy Committee, made an announcement. She informed the Council that nearly all of the fuel tanks that exist along the lower Willamette River were built before recognition of seismic risks, and were not up to present code. Councilor Harrington explained to the Council that there was a set of recommendations for the area, and a survey asking the Council if they endorse the recommendations. Councilor Dirksen shared that the most recent JPACT finance subcommittee meeting featured presentations which addressed the following transit issues: Southwest Corridor, Powell-Division, and a City of Portland transit enhancement.

4. ADJOURN

Seeing no further business, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the Metro Council work session at 4:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Taylor Unterberg", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Taylor Unterberg, Council Policy Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 25, 2016

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
3.0	PowerPoint	10/25/2016	PowerPoint: Solid Waste Roadmap: Food Scraps Project	102516cw-01