

MEETING MINUTES: City of Philadelphia Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee (SWRAC)

DATE: January 26th, 2016

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members Present

Michelle Feldman, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful
Fern Gookin, Revolution Recovery
Bob Anderson, ReCommunity Recycling
Phil Bresee, Streets Department/Recycling Office
Jack Embick, Environmental Law
Paul Kohl, Philadelphia Water Department
Dennis Murphy, Philadelphia Commerce Department
Maurice M. Sampson II, Niche Recycling
Vivian Van Story, Community Land Partnership
Sal Iadonisi, Newman Paper Co.

Others Present

Katie Bartolotta, PennFuture
Don Lucy, Waste Management
Mike Giuranna, US EPA
Benjamin Cromie, Philadelphia International Airport
Tamika Davis, Philadelphia International Airport
Laura Cassidy, Philadelphia Prisons System

City Staff/Consultants

Scott McGrath, Director of Environmental Services, Streets Dept.
Maria Vamvakidou, Streets – Sanitation Administration
Marisa Lau, Streets - Recycling Office
Allison Sands, Recycling Office/Recyclebank
Erin Cartwright, Recycling Office/Recyclebank
Jim Osborn, Alternative Resources, Inc.

Call to order/introductions: The meeting was called to order by SWRAC co-chair Michelle Feldman at approximately 3 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the November 19th meeting were approved via voice vote (Anderson move, Bresee 2nd).

Organics Subcommittee Report (Paul Kohl/Phil Bresee):

- The organics subcommittee met earlier in the day. Kendall Christiansen from Gaia Consulting provided a presentation and overview of food-waste grinders as a way to divert organic materials. Mr. Christiansen represented the InSinkErator company when the City conducted its food waste disposer pilot program in 2012-13.

- Bresee provided an update on the status of the organics feasibility study: The project consultant is refining organics estimates and projections from the City and identifying processors of yard waste and food waste/organics in the “Market Region”. Once processors are identified, determinations will be made related to processing capacity, end markets, etc.

Solid Waste Plan Goals & Objectives Subcommittee Report (Bresee):

- SW plan draft ~90% complete mainly needs word-smithing and data updating. **Also needs to identify and recommend goals.**
- Subcommittee has met twice (12/15 and 1/7).
- The first meeting included status report on Philly MSW trends (2014 completed) and existing goals achieved including the state’s 35% recycling /diversion goal and the 70% landfill diversion goal as part of Greenworks.
- Subcommittee has discussed various reporting and methodologies used to calculate MSW generation, diversion, etc., and associated challenges.
- Subcommittee has performed literature reviews and discussions related to establishing goals and objectives, what other jurisdictions are targeting, etc. Staff continues to emphasize that the solid waste stream is changing rapidly, and that goals-setting has become exponentially more difficult.
- SW plan goals will not just need to be reflected in the SW plan (2016-2025 planning horizon), but also in the City’s comprehensive plan (2035), Greenworks 2.0 and possibly as part of Kenney administration policy; syncing will be key.
- Overall challenge is to set something aspirational, but also something that is practical and achievable.
- The subcommittee discussed different interpretations of zero waste and whether waste-to-energy (WTE) technology should be considered. Staff reported that a number of high-profile corporate zero waste goals include WTE, while many cities and counties with zero waste goals include some versions of WTE or thermal conversion towards the goal. Subcommittee members and staff also discussed “sustainable materials management” (SMM) which is a newer concept that assesses the impact of resources throughout their lifecycles, not just at the “end of the pipe.” US EPA and organizations such as GreenBlue have become advocates of SMM as opposed to zero waste.
- Staff and subcommittee members also discussed broader (i.e. state) policy initiatives and support that are necessary to effectively pursue zero waste, including product stewardship, deposit legislation, as well as more local actions such as green procurement and materials bans.
- An outcome of the subcommittee meetings has been recommendation for a new MSW characterization study. Staff received a positive response from DEP on application for another 901 grant to fund the project.
- Subcommittee consensus is that the City should adopt a Zero Waste plan with a goal of achieving it by 2035.

- *Staff continues to compile information or examples of zero waste goals from other jurisdictions and entities.*
- *Staff to provide analysis of MSW projections and ID necessary diversion tonnages to reach goals. Staff will also set incremental benchmarks.*
- *Staff will examine resource needs necessary to meet goals.*

Presentation (Allison Sands): Residential Multi-Family Recycling project

- Ms. Sands shared preliminary information related to an outreach project the Recycling Office is launching that will focus on areas with low diversion rates and with high concentrations of multi-family properties that receive service through the City (properties with between 2-6 dwelling units). Staff believes that renters and tenants in these properties are an underserved audience, and represent potential to capture more single-stream recyclables. The Recycling Office is planning to work and coordinate with landlords and property owners, as well as the tenants through community groups, HAPCO, canvassing, civic association meetings.

Solid Waste Plan Update (Jim Osborn):

- ARI and the Streets Department performed a page-turn review of the latest draft SW plan in early January. ARI is incorporating staff input and should have a revised draft in advance of the February meeting. Chapter 5 of the plan still needs refinement from content and organizational perspectives.

Public Outreach Meetings (Michelle Feldman):

- Ms. Feldman reminded the Committee that SWRAC will need to conduct a public outreach effort around the SW plan, and that previous discussions revolved around meetings themed by relevant topic (i.e. commercial recycling), open to stakeholders in those specific issue areas. SWRAC leadership will continue to work towards implementing this plan in consort with the rest of the Committee.

Informational Items and Announcements:

- *Green Schools Project* – Alison Sands reported that there are 16 Philadelphia schools participating in the project this year. The deadline to donate Recycling Rewards points is March 15 (see attached flyer).
- *GreenFutures Coordinated Education / Outreach* – Michelle Feldman reported that the School District is working with the Streets Department, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful, Recyclebank, iSpring and Community Marketing Concepts on coordinated student presentations focused on recycling. Schools will be targeted as they receive recycling dumpsters and bins as part of the larger GreenFutures sustainability management plan.
- *Council Bill #150748* – Bresee reported that the bill, better known as the recycling ordinance, was passed by the City Council Streets & Services Committee on November 30th; saw final passage on December 8th; and was signed into law by Mayor Nutter on December 23rd.
- *Fall Leaf Program results* – Bresee share results from the fall, 2015 leaves pickup program. See table below:

Fiscal Year	Tonnages
2011	1,054
2012	871
2013	881
2014	1,470
2015	1,750

- *Christmas Tree recycling program* – The announcement of results was deferred until next meeting.
- *Streets Department staff updates* – Bresee introduced Marisa Lau, who joined the Recycling Office on January 11th. Ms. Lau comes to the Department from a parks non-profit in Paterson Great Falls National Park in New Jersey. Ms. Lau has degrees from M.I.T. and Williams College in Massachusetts. Ms. Lau was hired as a city planner, and will eventually focus on commercial, multi-family and institutional recycling initiatives.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4 p.m.