

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

DATE: May 26th, 2016

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members

Michelle Feldman, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful (co-chair)
Fern Gookin, Revolution Recovery (co-chair)
Bob Anderson, ReCommunity Recycling
Jack Embick, Environmental Law
Megan Garner, Philadelphia School District (alternate for Francine Locke)
Sal Iadonisi, U.S. Recycling
Scott McGrath, Director of Environmental Services, Streets Dept.
Denis Murphy, Commerce Department
Charles Raudenbush, Waste Management

Others Present

Laura Cassidy, Philadelphia Prisons System
Nic Esposito, Parks and Recreation
Mike Giuranna, U.S. EPA Region 3

City Staff/Consultants

Marisa Lau, Streets Dept./Recycling Office
Erin Cartwright, Recycling Office/Recyclebank
Jim Osborn, ARI

Call to order/introductions:

The meeting was called to order by SWRAC co-chairs Michelle Feldman and Fern Gookin at approximately 3:10 p.m.

Minutes:

Meeting minutes from the April SWRAC meeting were approved by voice vote. (Raudenbush move, Embick 2nd).

Organics Subcommittee Report (Scott McGrath):

- A new contract for the organics feasibility study needs to be put in place this summer, which may cause a lag in the report production.
- The subcommittee received the report prepared by PWD on food waste pre-processing technologies marketed in the US, and discussed its findings. The report will be made available to the SWRAC and organics feasibility study consultant. A brief discussion took place about the adoption of pre-processing technologies in Europe, which has been more

widespread than in the US. Reasons include a more regulatory-friendly environment in the EU, more homogenous waste streams, and different economic incentives due to dwindling landfill space.

- The consultant has also received questions from the subcommittee about potential opportunities for creating a market for regional food waste processing.

Solid Waste Plan Update (Jim Osborn):

- SWRAC received the link to download the draft plan on May 24th. Comments will be due to the Division by June 16th. Once the comments are received, the co-chairs and Division will review these together. Several paths forward will be identified, and presented at the next SWRAC meeting in June. The revised draft will be submitted to PADEP on July 1 to start the required 90 day public comment period.
- An email describing how to give feedback on the plan will be sent after the meeting.

Presentation on GreenFutures (Megan Garner):

- Draft copies of the plan distributed to SWRAC differ slightly from the final version.
- GreenFutures is the School District's first sustainability plan, modeled on the City's GreenWorks plan. It resulted from nearly two years of gathering stakeholder input and demonstrates an integrated approach to sustainability and education. The document will be updated to track progress in implementation.
- The District has a formal recycling program in place at 42 schools that it will continue to expand. Comparing performance and calculating diversion rates has been challenging. To support this initiative, the District partnered with the City and other stakeholders to create consistent messaging about recycling, including a classroom presentation. In addition, follow up materials are being designed for teachers, including educational tools (cross-curricular activities for students at various levels) as well as resources / guides / and in-person trainings to help teachers work with their students to move towards environmental and civic action.
- McGrath noted that the District leadership is now clearly committed to growing sustainability in the schools.
- Garner responded to questions about composting. Two schools that currently have composting programs in place are Penn Alexander, made possible through a partnership with Bryn Mawr College, and Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences.

Informational Items and Announcements (M. Feldman / E. Cartwright/ M. Lau):

- *MRF Tour* – A tour of the ReCommunity plant has been arranged with the help of Bob Anderson for 8-10 SWRAC members on June 16th at 2:30 pm. Email Ms. Feldman to RSVP.

- *Recyclebank Green Schools Presentations* – Ms. Cartwright reported that participants in the Green Schools Program received their awards at a press conference last week held at the School District. District schools received over \$20,000 for sustainability and greening projects. In total, \$31,711.84 was awarded to a record 16 Philadelphia schools this year. Next week a check presentation to the participating charter schools will take place.
- *Multi-Family Project Update* – Ms. Lau reported that the Recycling Office will conduct outreach to commercial multifamily buildings located in the six neighborhoods where efforts are underway to increase diversion among the residential multi-family population. Property owners and managers of these buildings will receive a letter telling them how to file a commercial solid waste and recycling plan online. About 50 of the largest commercial multifamily buildings citywide (by number of units) will also receive a letter. SWEEP officers will provide additional outreach and enforcement to these buildings this summer.
- *KPB Microgrant Program + June 22nd Panel* – Ms. Feldman noted that her organization’s Microgrant Program for litter abatement projects is accepting applications from community nonprofits through tomorrow. The number of grants awarded will increase to four this year; projects will be funded at higher levels than last year. KPB is partnering with Young Involved Philadelphia to host a *Cleaning+Greening* panel this month that will connect attendees with resources to help improve their blocks.
- *Events* –The next household hazardous waste drop-off will be on June 11th at the Northwest Transfer station.
- *E-waste legislation* – Mr. Raudenbush noted that the PROP board is working to identify a better alternative to the current legislation being proposed, which many believe will have minimal impact on the current issues around recycling e-waste in the state.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:10 pm.