

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

**DATE:** September 22, 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  
Paul Kohl, Philadelphia Water Department  
Scott McGrath, Director of Environmental Services, Streets Dept.  
Maurice Sampson, Niche Recycling  
Andrew Sharp, Office of Sustainability  
Vivian Van Story, Community Land Trust Corp.

Others Present

Nicholas Esposito, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation  
Amy Cornelius, Citizen

City Staff/Consultants

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

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**Call to order/introductions:**

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

**Minutes:**

Meeting minutes from the August SWRAC meeting were approved by voice vote (Embick move, Anderson 2<sup>nd</sup>).

**Update on Solid Waste Plan (S. McGrath):**

- A list of recycling facilities serving Philadelphia and the region will be added to the plan, as previously suggested by Mr. Anderson. The consultants confirmed that this is not required by Act 101, however.
- SWRAC meeting was listed as the public meeting for the City's Draft Plan Revision. Public Notice started on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and will continue for 90 days. There are hard copies of the plan and the appendix at five libraries. The Department of Streets has printed 10 copies of both the plan and appendix and will issue them upon request. The draft plan is available online at:

<http://www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling/solid-waste-recycling-advisory-committee-swrac/public-notice>

- SWRAC co-chairs asked for public comments on the draft plan.
  - Ms. Cornelius stated that the City should expand the BigBelly network to areas outside of Center City. There is a clear need for more bins in neighborhoods, such as 9<sup>th</sup> Street between the Italian Market and Bainbridge St, where a private citizen has put out a bin for public use to help combat littering. In addition, better recycling containers with lids would improve the litter problem. She has observed that residents often overstuff the containers, which leads to the collection crews dropping recyclables on the street. The City should find a comprehensive solution to address these related issues.
  - Ms. Cornelius brought up the topic of food waste and compostables. She heard it discussed by the director of the Office of Sustainability (OoS) at a recent SBN round table meeting.
    - The regional facility in Delaware is closed – we need to look for another solution.
    - OoS is looking for a regional facility; siting and permitting remain very real obstacles to overcome.
    - Sanitation is working with a consultant and other city agencies to prepare an organics feasibility study.

#### **Informational Items and Announcements:**

- *Organics Subcommittee* – Mr. Kohl announced that the subcommittee cancelled this month's meeting due to lack of substantial new information. He did have two brief updates to share. The City of Los Angeles contacted PWD regarding the Food Waste Disposer Bill and about commercial food waste anaerobic decomposition. They wanted to know the technical viability of these efforts. Also, an EPA internal working group on biogas has a white paper that has been widely read among staff, helping to create a common understanding of barriers to biogas between multiple Federal Agencies and within the Agency itself, where organizational silos are often hard to get out of. Available here:  
<http://www.americanbiogascouncil.org/pdf/AD%20and%20Applications-finalcls.pdf>
- *Office of Sustainability update* – Mr. Sharp announced that the updated sustainability plan will be released on November 2 at the Free Library (rooftop event). It is currently about 90% complete. The plan will be structured around eight visions for Philadelphia based on feedback received at public meetings. The vision statements will allow the City to acknowledge critical issues for the future—like climate change and energy—that are beyond its immediate control, and also demonstrate the integral role of citizens in the plan's implementation. OoS staff will create 1-year work plans with

annual reports and updates. In addition, they will build two new online tools: a sustainability data dashboard, and neighborhood index to help foster deeper neighborhood engagement with the plan, and ensure that issues disproportionately affecting certain areas of the City are addressed. Mr. Sharp then took comments and questions.

- It was noted that the Mayor has committed to finding a comprehensive solution to our city's litter problem and will announce a new, high level (across departments) initiative very soon.
  - The OoS will make summaries of the public meetings held as part of updating GreenWorks available to SWRAC members upon request.
  - Regarding new sustainability initiatives around the plan, staff are investigating different options, and also looking into what would be possible to achieve with the online tools (including 2-way communication with member of the public using these platforms).
- *Other announcements*
    - Several announcements about schools were made. Ms. Cartwright announced Recyclebank's Green Schools program has started and runs until December 4<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Feldman noted that KPB is hosting PhilaSoup's next event at their offices on October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11am to 1 pm. Attendees will learn about KPB's in-school programming on litter, composting, and recycling, and mini-grants will be awarded directly to teachers to implement in-classroom projects. KPB, Recyclebank, and iSpring are also gearing up to start presentations again to support the rollout of recycling in the schools.
    - Mr. Sampson made a request for the Goals and Metrics Subcommittee to resume meeting next month. Mr. Embick seconded this request, and asked for clarification about whether new goals could be included in a revised version of the plan, or the plan appendix.
    - Mr. Kohl wanted to know if there was progress on developing regulations regarding the recent changes in the law passed last legislative session (dumpster bill). He was referred to the minutes of last month's meeting where it was discussed and it was suggested that a new SWRAC subcommittee be formed for this task. However, no progress has been made yet. The Department of Streets is looking for help in the composition of these regulations as it is a large task with many facets.
    - Mr. Anderson announced that ReCommunity would be installing a new baler at their Philadelphia plant, in the latest of a series of new investments there. He also was recently invited to the Mann Center for the Performing Arts to assess potential to capture recyclables. After viewing their operations, he thinks there is strong potential for a recycling program to be implemented.

- *Recycling Coordinator Search* – There was no update given in the hiring process, due to Mr. McGrath having to leave early.
- Ms. Feldman asked if there were any additional public comments on the municipal waste management draft plan before adjourning.

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

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