

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

DATE: October 30, 2014

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members Present

Michele Feldman, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful
Phil Bresee, Streets Department/Recycling Office
Sal Iadonisi, United States Recycling, Inc.
Paul Kohl, Philadelphia Water Department
Maurice M. Sampson II, Niche Recycling
Vivian Van Story, Community Land Trust Corporation
Bob Anderson, ReCommunity Recycling
Katherine Gajewski, Mayor's Office of Sustainability
Joe Minot, Clean Air Council
Charles Raudenbush, Waste Management
Fern Gookin, Revolution Recovery

SWRAC Members Absent

Debbie Zimmer, Dow Chemical
Andrew Sharp, PennFuture
Jack Embick, Environmental Law
Dan Garafolo, University of Pennsylvania

Others Present

Danielle Bower, Philadelphia Intl. Airport
Laura Cassidy, Philadelphia Prisons System
Rebecca Barnes, Drexel University
Frank Kikuyu, Drexel University
Dylan Wells, Niche Recycling
Logan Welde, Clean Air Council
Mike Roles, Clean Water Action
Mike Giuranna, US EPA Region III

City Staff/Consultants

Scott McGrath, Director of Environmental Services, Streets Dept.
Ian Hegarty, Recycling Planner, Streets Dept.
Jim Osborn, ARI
Virginia Cain, Recyclebank/Philly Recycling Rewards
Shawn McMonagle, Office of City Councilman Mark Squilla
Shoshanna Bricklin, Office of City Councilwoman Cindy Bass

Call to order/introductions:

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

Minutes:

Approval of minutes from the September 25th SWRAC meeting was deferred.

Discussion of City Council Initiatives:

Plastic Bags – Katherine Gajewski introduced Shawn McMonagle from Councilman Squilla’s office who addressed SWRAC on upcoming plastic bags legislation. The proposal, as it is being considered at this time, would levy a fee on single-use plastic bags and paper bags. McMonagle and Gajewski shared findings from review of other jurisdictions’ approaches, the legislation’s reach, exempted packaging, potential legislative pathways, and asked for feedback. SWRAC member comments included:

- Maurice Sampson recommended that paper bags not be targeted due to their recyclability.
- Vivian Van Story expressed concerns that lower income residents would be impacted disproportionately through a bag fee.

Organics – Phil Bresee reminded the SWRAC of the November 12th City Council Streets & Services and Environment Committees joint hearing on organics. The hearing is in response to a resolution introduced by Councilwoman Cindy Bass.

Bresee distributed previous SWRAC comments on organics management, and he and Gajewski led group discussion. Bresee noted that SWRAC co-chairs will be invited by Council to provide testimony.

SWRAC members provided feedback on organics management options for presentation by SWRAC co-chair Michelle Feldman at the Nov. 12th hearing.

New Business:

Scott McGrath discussed the Streets Department’s Fall Leaves collection program which will run from November 10th through December 19th. Key elements of the program include a return to vacuum collections from thick tree canopy parts of the City, as well 22 drop-off locations for bagged leaves. Leaves set out for collections will be picked up with regular trash.

Mr. McGrath and Bresee noted that the City’s leaf vacuum programs have historically captured more recoverable leaves than the curbside pickup program (~4,000 tons to ~1,200 tons).

Old Business:

“Recycle Right” – Bresee provided update the City’s “Recycle Right” outreach initiative. The program is multi-media with a focus on transit ads and web-based ads, using the “I’m Behind Recycling” motif. The Streets Department has also increased random inspections of recyclables loads, and has instituted additional route crew training efforts. Bresee also noted the wide range of City publications and 3rd-party platforms that display Philadelphia’s recycling information. The Recycling Office is working to ensure consistent messaging across all platforms.

New Recyclables Processing Contract – Bresee informed SWRAC that the City’s new contract with ReCommunity Recycling became effective October 1st. Curbside recyclables from the City will be delivered to ReCommunity’s MRF on Ellsworth Street, off of Grays Ferry Avenue. The MRF was previously known as Blue Mountain Recycling. Bresee emphasized that there are no changes to the materials accepted in the City’s curbside recycling program. However he did refer back to the “Recycle Right” campaign, and did note that there may be more or less emphasis placed on different materials.

Solid Waste Management Plan Update – McGrath distributed a new schedule for completion of the SW plan. Targeted completion date is March, 2015. Jim Osborn of ARI provided update on status of various chapters. Bresee added that staff and ARI were taking comments provided by SWRAC at June and August visioning sessions and incorporating them into appropriate sections in the draft plan.

Announcements:

Michelle Feldman announced the Streets/KPB/Recyclebank social media campaign, which is inviting Philadelphians to post pictures demonstrating how they are keeping Philadelphia Beautiful. Participants will earn Recyclebank points, and be eligible for a prize too.

Michelle Feldman and Virginia Cain of Recyclebank announced that there would be a multi-partner event held at Dillworth Park in honor of America Recycles Day on November 13th at 11 a.m. Participants will include Keep America Beautiful, KPB, Recyclebank, ReCommunity, PECO, the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability, EPA’s Region 3 office, and the Streets Department.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Submitted,

Vanessa M. Davis,
Recording

ATTACHMENTS