

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

**DATE:** January 25, 2018

**ATTENDEES:**

SWRAC Members

Fern Gookin, Revolution Recovery (co-chair)  
Michelle Feldman, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful (co-chair)  
Robert Anderson, Curb My Clutter  
Jack Embick, Environmental Law  
Sofia Guernica, Office of Sustainability  
Scott McGrath, Streets Sanitation  
Charles Raudenbush, Waste Management  
Sara King, Penn  
Vivian Van Story, Community Land Trust

Others Present

Frank Chimera, Republic Services  
Amy Cornelius, Citizen  
Peter Karasik, Resident/Independent consultant  
Christian Saveoz, Republic Services  
Shreddha Sawant, eForce Recycling  
Andy Shea, RNG Energy Solutions  
Logan Welde, Clean Air Council

City Staff/Consultants

Erin Cartwright, Recyclebank/Philacyle  
Everett Burgess, Recyclebank/Philacyle  
Marisa Lau, Streets/Recycling Office  
Foster Hardiman, OIT  
Adam Hendricks, Philadelphia Water  
Nic Esposito, MDO  
Laura Cassidy, Prisons

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**Call to order/introductions**

The meeting was called to order by SWRAC co-chairs F. Gookin and M. Feldman at 3:05 pm.

**November Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from the November 30<sup>th</sup> SWRAC meeting were approved by voice vote.

## Organics Subcommittee Report

A. Hendricks from Philadelphia Water reported that the Subcommittee met on January 16<sup>th</sup>. The Subcommittee discussed the following:

- Grind2Energy is working with a local grocery store chain to install their industrial-sized grinders. They are in talks with Philadelphia Water to have the slurry accepted at PWD's digester facilities.
- The RNG Energy Solutions co-digestion facility is in the permit application process. The proposed facility would be: located in Point Breeze, cover approximately 22 acres, and be able to process 1,000 tons of food and agricultural waste per day taken from a 60-mile radius. Philadelphia Energy Solutions would be responsible for managing the sale of the biogas. Paul Kohl distributed a project fact sheet, and the group discussed ways to engage the project development team and learn more about the facility.
- Maryland passed a legislative bill requiring the state to conduct an organics diversion feasibility study, as a step toward a statewide organics diversion bill.
- This September, Philadelphia will host the annual conference of the Mid-Atlantic Bioenergy Council (MABEC), formerly the Pennsylvania Biomass Energy Association. The name change better reflects the organization's geographical focus.

## Waste Composition Study Results

S. McGrath presented the results of the 2017 study of the residential waste stream conducted by MSW Consultants. The last waste composition study was released in 2010. The study found that:

- Paper has decreased from 60% to 45% of the waste stream.
- Plastics make up an increased percentage of our waste stream. This increase was not measured by volume, but it is evident that plastics are increasing exponentially. Furthermore, the lightweighting of metal and plastic containers continue.
- Glass is a bigger percentage of the waste stream overall.
- There are recyclable materials left in the waste stream, but moving away from weights-based measurements will be necessary to track progress in diversion. Recovery or capture rate by material may be a more important indicator in the future.

Takeaways for the Streets Dept include the need to focus on:

- Developing strategies to target low performing areas
- Involving Philacyle in messaging to target areas
- Increasing leaf capture
  - Sanitation collects 1,600-1,800 tons of leaves per year with mechanical collection, down from 5,000 to 6,000 tons per year with bagged collection.
- Organics recycling

- Study found that organics represent about the same percentage of the waste stream as in 2010. Organics collection would require strategic planning to purchase trucks, scale up the labor force, and develop a collections program.
- Confronting contamination
  - Contamination has decreased, but it likely peaked between the 2010 and 2017 studies. The study does not show the total reduction in contamination during that period.

J. Embick had several questions about the study:

- Why did the sorts take place in different seasons from the 2010 study?
  - M. Lau noted that collecting data from all four seasons gave the City a complete dataset.
  - S. McGrath added that the industry has found that waste tonnages do not change dramatically from season to season.
- The methodology of the study regarding the collection of glass changed significantly since 2010. What process was used to determine that the wear-strip on the front-end loader bucket should be removed for the 2017 study?
  - B. Anderson noted that during the quarterly recycling sorts done at ReCommunity, they concluded that glass was underrepresented in the samples taken and devised this strategy to collect a more accurate sample.
- How will the study be used?
  - S. McGrath said the Department has shared the study with Recyclebank, and will have them incorporate these results into their messaging. They can also tweak the rewards program to incentivize recycling and waste reduction based on the data.
  - N. Esposito added that there is an opportunity to work with third-party recyclers to divert more non-eligible materials for the City recycling program.
- Why were certain materials moved to different categories from the 2010 study? Study results can't be directly compared if the City keeps changing the methodology.
  - The consultant firm made this recommendation to align with best practices in the industry, based on their own considerable experience.

The group discussed how sorting methodology should continue to evolve along with the waste stream, noting that since 2010 changes in composition of the waste stream have accelerated. This trend will likely continue, perhaps necessitating more frequent sampling overall. A. Cornelius asked if there was a schedule for waste composition sorts through 2035.

### **Philadelphia Recycling Office/Philacycle Update**

E. Cartwright reported that the second Philacycle Captain training took place at Shissler Rec Center. After two trainings, there are 45 captains total. The next training will be announced on [www.philacycle.com/training](http://www.philacycle.com/training) and various social media.

M. Lau explained that final revisions for the solid waste plan are underway. A draft of the organics feasibility study is not available yet. Both will be completed this winter.

## **Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet Update**

N. Esposito updated the SWRAC on the work of the ZWL Cabinet.

- Litter Index results will go live on CleanPHL.org next week.
- The number of short dumps has decreased by 36% since last year thanks to the efforts of the Cabinet and its partners. There has also been a doubling of prosecuting short dumps.
- The Zero Waste event application system is in place and requests for the spring are ramping up. N. Esposito and S. Guernica are managing this process. Each event is different in terms of its footprint, requiring different levels of volunteer and operational support.
- Esposito met with the Building Owners and Managers Association of Philadelphia (BOMA). They offered to promote the commercial waste audit and other new initiatives, like the Zero Waste partnership program, to their members.
- Municipal building audits are due by January 31<sup>st</sup>; currently about 60% are complete. Some follow up may be necessary once the reporting deadline passes. The subcommittee will begin work on the commercial waste audit program. Esposito and Streets Commissioner Williams wrote an op-ed this month that laid the foundation for the audit program by describing the limits of what enforcement can accomplish, and the need to better incentivize waste reduction and diversion practices for businesses. A survey asking for ideas and feedback on the commercial audit program is available online. Please email CleanPHL or Nic Esposito for the link.

## **Greenworks Update**

S. Guernica described this year's Greenworks progress report as more community-oriented and user-friendly than previous reports. The report launch will take place next Thursday at Penn's Landing, hosted by partner Delaware River Waterfront Corporation. The event is open to all but RSVP is needed.

## **SWRAC Planning Meeting Report**

M. Feldman gave a brief overview of the December SWRAC leadership planning meeting. 2018 meeting dates were selected and brainstorming began for potential meeting topics. Administrative items discussed included a City board ethics training, membership development, and committee governance; a list of deliverables and action items was emailed to the executive committee after the meeting. The Department has also requested comments from the SWRAC on the draft waste composition study in early 2018.

## **Informational Items and Announcements**

M. Feldman announced that Keep Philadelphia Beautiful is currently accepting applications for a spring communications intern. They are also working with the School District and their volunteer educators to add additional interactive elements to in-classroom workshops on litter and recycling, based on feedback from in-classroom teachers. In addition, KPB's 2017 annual report will be released in March.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:45 pm.