

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

**DATE:** July 20, 2017

**ATTENDEES:**

SWRAC Members

Fern Gookin, Revolution Recovery (co-chair)  
Michelle Feldman, Keep Philadelphia Beautiful (co-chair)  
Dominic McGraw, Office of Sustainability  
Vivian Van Story, Community Land Trust  
Maurice Sampson, Clean Water Action  
Denis Murphy, Commerce Dept.  
Scott McGrath, Streets Dept.  
Robert Anderson, Curb My Clutter  
Paul Kohl, Water Dept.  
Charles Raudenbush, Waste Management  
Jack Embick, Environmental Law

Others Present

Sara King, Penn  
Amy Cornelius, Citizen  
Kathleen Grady, Temple  
Mattea Pechter, KPB  
James Gill, Citizen  
Lauren Howard, Stantec Consulting  
Lilly Freedman, Revolution Recovery

City Staff/Consultants

Erin Cartwright, Recycling Office/Recyclebank  
Everett Burgess, Recycling Office/Recyclebank  
Marisa Lau, Streets Dept/Recycling Office  
Crystal Jacobs Shipman, Streets Dept/Public Affairs  
Keith Warren, Streets Dept/Sanitation  
Haley Jordan, MDO  
Nic Esposito, MDO  
Laura Cassidy, Prisons  
Daniel Lawson, Parks and Rec  
Stephanie Marsh, MDO  
LeAnne Harvey, Office of Sustainability  
Sofia Guernica, Office of Sustainability  
Foster Hardiman, OIT

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**Call to order/introductions:**

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

### **June Meeting Minutes:**

Meeting minutes from the June SWRAC meeting were approved by voice vote.

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

- M. Lau announced that after discussion between the Streets Dept. and Dept. of Environmental Protection, the City will submit a non-substantial plan revision this summer, and a substantial plan revision in 2019. This will allow the substantial revision to include information on the new waste disposal contracts (to begin July 1, 2019). Both plans will cover a 10-year period as is required.
  - J. Embick asked how the ruling by the PA Supreme Court upholding the environmental rights amendment will affect the final draft of the plan.
  - Streets replied that DEP has not addressed this issue in connection with the plan.
- S. McGrath - Streets will have access to new technology that will improve the department's ability to distribute, track, and collect data on recycling bins. Trucks will be installed with new RFID readers this fall, and the City will begin distributing bins with RFID chips embedded. The data obtained will allow Streets to better manage the City's bin inventory.
  - R. Anderson asked for the average number of bins distributed annually.  
[40,000-60,000]
  - A. Cornelius asked if the older bins could be retrofitted with this technology.  
[No.]
- N. Esposito invited the SWRAC to the official announcement of the Zero Waste & Litter Cabinet Action Plan on August 7th at 9:00am in City Hall. Any additional information / changes will be sent.
- F. Gookin & M. Feldman reminded everyone that the SWRAC is not meeting in August. However, look for details about a planning and governance meeting that will take place instead. All are welcome to attend to discuss the future of SWRAC.
  - P. Kohl reported on the July Organics Subcommittee meeting. At the meeting, Adam Hendricks updated the group on the state of the Request for Information (RFI) for pre-processed food waste (FW) released by PWD. PWD is using this RFI to collect information from parties that may be interested in collecting and pre-processing food waste, to deliver a clean food waste slurry to one of PWD's treatment plants for co-digestion with wastewater sludge. An RFI information session held on 07/06/2017 was attended by several members of the PWD staff, as well as industry professionals interested in responding. PWD is currently working on official responses to questions from both the information session and e-mail submissions. The RFI itself, along with any additional

documents, are posted on the web at the following location:

<http://www.phila.gov/rfp/Pages/default.aspx>.

- Adam clarified that PWD is currently interested in a vendor hauling and pre-processing food waste, which would then likely be stored at one of PWD's Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) facilities prior to mixing with the sludge feed into anaerobic digesters.
- Current food waste collection and pre-processing programs similar to the one outlined in the RFI were discussed by the group. These programs included those that are currently running in New York City and Los Angeles, as well as one in the RFI stage in Portland, Oregon.
- PWD will lead a presentation on some of the content of the RFI responses at the September Organics Subcommittee meeting.
- M.Lau and N. Esposito provided updates on the solid waste plan and ZWL action plan. See above.
- M. Giuranna informed the group that a \$20,000 EPA grant was given for organics disposal in Prince George County, Maryland. This allowed for the County to start a curbside organics collection system of food waste and yard waste, and build on other recent upgrades to the composting infrastructure in the region.
- M. Feldman introduced Mattea Pechter, who has just joined the KPB staff.
  - M. Feldman also updated SWRAC on:
    - Two upcoming KPB events in partnership with United by Blue and the Water Department: a cleanup at Heinz Refuge and a fall panel.
    - A \$20,000 Keep America Beautiful grant KPB received in partnership with the School District for a pre-K sustainability initiative at Pratt School.
    - KPB's 2017 cigarette litter micrograntees: Fishtown Neighbors Association, Mayfair CDC, People's Emergency Center, Southwest CDC, and Chinatown Development Corporation.
    - A summer photo project highlighting Philadelphians engaging in zero waste activities.

#### **Mayor's Policy Office advocacy training:**

Nandi O'Connor, Christina Hernandez, and Yuan Huang from the Mayor's Office of Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Affairs provided a presentation to the SWRAC on the fundamentals of the City of Philadelphia government, and how citizens and groups can be effective policy advocates. The first part of the presentation focused on government:

- The three branches of City government and their respective functions were introduced. This structure is determined by the original City charter.

- MDO manages outward-facing or “operating” departments, while the new Office of the Chief Administrator manages inward-facing departments.
- City Council passes the City budget and can pass bills or resolutions by following a required process (hearings, committees, etc.)
- The Legal Dept. represents the City and City Council. There are multiple layers of municipal court, but no designated highest court like the PA Supreme Court.
- The City can hire lobbyists to represent its interests in state and federal legislation. An important piece of state legislation is the Sterling Act of 1932, which granted Philadelphia the power to impose taxes as a First Class city.

The second part of the presentation focused on advocacy:

- Trainers discussed the four types of public policy that can be implemented by the City, and the processes involved for each. These processes can seem archaic, due to restrictions created by the City charter.
- The four types are: Legislative Change, Charter Change, Executive Order, and Internal Policy Change.
- A key takeaway for the group was that policy objectives can help advocates determine which type of policy change to pursue.
- Stephanie Marsh, Senior Attorney was introduced and her contact information distributed if anyone has further questions about policy.

Questions:

- How long do Executive Orders stay in effect? [Until they are rescinded by another Mayor.]

Comments:

- A. Cornelius suggested that the SWRAC’s technical expertise can be better utilized to shape City policy on waste management and recycling. She added that communication with SWRAC members about upcoming departmental policy and program changes could be improved.
- M. Feldman noted that the upcoming work on committee by-laws and membership requirements will help better define the role of the SWRAC as a working body.
- M. Sampson asked for clarification about whether SWRAC members would be expected to give City Council testimony. P.Kohl pointed out that the committee is convened by the Streets Dept, and the Department has given testimony in the past.

Group activity:

A facilitated group activity was conducted for the remainder of the meeting, with a short debrief on the activity afterwards. Participants were divided into smaller groups, and each person was given a role to assume. The goal was to have members practice effective advocacy in support of or opposition to a bill increasing the minimum wage. In order to achieve their

assigned objectives, participants had to navigate the constraints of the governance system (by forming alliances with others, prioritizing certain meetings, making compromises, etc.) using the information they received earlier about the workings of City government.

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

DRAFT