

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

DATE: January 25, 2023

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members

Fern Gookin (Chair), Revolution Recovery
Kyle Lewis, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Chuck Raudenbush, waste consultant
Jack Embick, environmental lawyer
Maurice Sampson, Clean Water Action

Others Present:

Amy Cornelius, Green Beams
Benjamin Cromie, CH Planning PHL Airport
Caroline Burkholder, Temple University
Darren Spielman, Pennsylvania Resources Council
Dominic Fulginiti, Republic Services
Dora Chi, Office of Sustainability
Laura Cassidy, Department of Prisons
Lizzy Weal, Department of Parks and Recreation
Maria Horowitz, Philadelphia Water Department
Melissa McMullen, Department of Aviation PHL Airport
Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network
Natalie Walker, Department of Parks and Recreation
Nina Morris, University of Pennsylvania
Peter Karasik, Resident
Ryan Scails, Tyler School of Art Graduate Student
Suzanne Greenwood, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Kyle Lewis at 3:04 pm.

Introductions

Welcome (Kyle Lewis)

- Preparing for the transition to the new administration, including how to engage the SWRAC
- Have been working on enforcement and issuing notices of violations to continue work towards a cleaner and greener Philadelphia; 92 NOVs were issued last year.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes, as amended, were approved by voice vote for the November 16, 2023 meeting.

State of Recycling (Kyle Lewis)

- Finished the fiscal year with about 81,000 tons of recycling, just short of 85,000 goal.
- Continuing to work on messaging and education to capture more tonnage.

- OCC and fiber markets were strong during the holiday season, as expected.
- Blended rate of about \$85/tn in November dropped to \$80/tn in Dec and is currently around \$78/tn.
- Still experiencing volatility in the plastic markets, but it hasn't been as dramatic as in the past.

Organics Subcommittee (Natalie Walker)

- Notes from the 1/11/2024 subcommittee meeting were reviewed.
 - Discussed creating a 1-page summary document about the subcommittee; the audience would be the new administration. Discussed what should be included in the document.
 - Discussed that it would be helpful to look back on the 2018 Organics feasibility study to think through what has been accomplished in the last few years, what is in progress, and what still remains to be complete.
- Laura Cassidy noted that they are going to apply for a permit with DEP, in partnership with Bennett Compost.
- Ryan Scails asked what happens to the milled lumber from the new Parks and Rec operation. Natalie said they are not sure yet since it's not fully up and running. It will ultimately be up to Cambium Carbon, who is the partner on the project. They are currently looking at options.
- Maurice Sampson asked who is operating the mill. Natalie says it's a public private partnership with Cambium Carbon, Power Corps, and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Parks & Recreation Update (Natalie Walker)

- Looking to expand recycling in the recreation centers.
- Making progress on the composting initiatives. Looking into ways to share learnings and replicate model that has been working well.
- Ramping up for the Broad Street Run, May 5th, and will be leading waste initiatives for the event.
- Have wrapped up litter index audits. Starting to look at the data now.

Office of Sustainability (OOS) Update (Dora Chi)

- Environmental Justice team awarded waste grant to PAR Recycle Works and Bottle Underground to support their waste projects.
 - <https://www.phila.gov/2023-10-06-announcing-the-2023-grantees-of-the-community-resilience-environmental-justice-fund/>

Streets & Philadelphia Recycling Office (PRO) Update (Kyle Lewis)

- Working on Green Schools initiatives, a grant program that focuses on Pre-K-12th grade for projects that have to do with environmental sustainability.
 - https://phlrecycles.com/?page_id=134
- Working on illegal dumping initiatives, including some large cases. Expanding camera network, including mobile cameras.
- Onboarding about 40 employees a month in sanitation laborers. Orientation includes a conversation about recycling.
- Working with the Department of Parks and Recreation on their recycling initiatives.
- Working with Philadelphia Housing Authority to increase recycling coming out of their properties; projects will be kicked off later this year.
- Philly Spring Clean Up and Block Captain Rally are being scheduled. Dates will be shared at the next meeting.

Informational Items, Open Discussion, and Announcements

- Maurice Sampson said Clean Water Action has been collaborating with various groups on an event on Sunday February 4th from 2-4pm at the Academy of Natural Sciences: "Greening Black & Brown Philadelphia":
 - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/greening-black-brown-philadelphia-tickets-793498574597>
- Mike Ewall noted that the trucks in his neighborhood have been putting recycling in the trash trucks again. He has reports that this has been happening in other areas of the city as well. Kyle Lewis asked if he could share any photos or videos with her. She said this should not be happening and asked for anyone to report to her directly.
- Peter Karasik asked if the new administration will be allocating resources to solid waste issues. Kyle Lewis said that she does believe there will be more resources, but she does not know about specifics.
- Laura Cassidy asked if the meetings would return to in-person. Kyle Lewis said attendance was low at the last in-person meeting; she will look at convening in-person for the May meeting.
- There was a group discussion around the impacts of plastic bag bans. Has the ban impacted the number of shopping bags contaminating the recycling stream? Kyle Lewis will look into this more.
- Bob Anderson requested in-person meetings to be scheduled.

Next Meeting Date

March 21, 2024 on Microsoft Teams.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.