

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

DATE: November 17, 2022

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members

Fern Gookin (Chair), Revolution Recovery
Kyle Lewis, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Maurice Sampson II, Clean Water Action
Paul Kohl, Philadelphia Water Department
Jack Embick, environmental lawyer

Others Present:

Maria Horowitz, Philadelphia Water Department
Amy Cornelius, GreenBeams
Benjamin Cromie, CH Planning / PHL Airport
Suzanne Greenwood, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Scott McGrath, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Dominic Fulginiti, Republic Services
Andy Shea, RNG Energy Solutions
Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network
Laura Cassidy, City of Philadelphia – Department of Prisons
Natalie Walker, City of Philadelphia – Parks and Recreation
Kearni Warren, Energy Justice Network
Keith Warren, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Logan Welde, Clean Air Council

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Fern Gookin at 3:07 pm.

Introductions

September 2022 Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from the Sept 22nd General SWRAC meeting were approved by voice vote.

State of Recycling (Kyle Lewis)

- Downward trend of pricing has continued, but it has slowed.
- OCC dropped \$5/tn, month to month.
- Have seen an increase in plastic pricing.
- Expected that pricing will trend upwards as we get closer to the holidays.
- Amy Cornelius asked if the maps of changes in recycling rates are able to be shared yet. Kyle responded that they are working with OIT to get them uploaded so they can be shared. She will keep the group updated.

Organics Subcommittee (Paul Kohl)

- Subcommittee met on November 9th and discussed:

- Meeting hosted by Organics and Zero Waste subcommittees on October 13th
- Urban Agriculture Plan update
- PA DEP permit approval for Rising Sun facility, which went into effect on Nov 10th
- Recent Maryland ban of food waste going into landfills.
- PWD reviewing possible adaptation of anaerobic digesters.
- Kyle Lewis asked if anyone has spoken to Baltimore and their curbside organics pick-up program.
 - Maurice Sampson and Laura Cassidy suggested Institute for Local Self Reliance (ILSR) may have more information.
 - Mike Ewall said city-wide composting in Baltimore has not been rolled out yet, but there are private organizations doing it. If you are a large food-waste generator and there is a compost facility within 30 miles of your location, you must compost.

Zero Waste Subcommittee (Maurice Sampson)

- Summary of meeting hosted by Organics and Zero Waste subcommittees on October 13th:
 - Three speakers: Tim Bennett (Bennett Compost), Rocco D'Antonio (Organics Waste Diversion), Ned Foley (Two Particular Acres)
 - Discussed several topics including history of organics work and dumpster bill specifically for organics.
 - The focus of the City is getting recycling back up and running before working on Organics in a serious way. Organics have low tolerance for contamination.
 - Composting is most effective within a 30-mile radius: where you collect it, where you process it, where you sell the end-product.
 - Bennett Compost's operations are established: little contamination, employees that have a living wage (and benefits) and produce a good product
 - Will have a debrief meeting about the event tomorrow
- Goals of the subcommittee:
 - Increase recycling rates
 - Work on getting C&D out of curbside material
 - Work with Organics subcommittee

Parks & Recreation Update (Natalie Walker)

- Partnership with Bennett Compost started last week
- Have been collecting organics from ~20 Rec Centers for about a year now. Would like to onboard ~25 more in the next year and get all Rec Centers participating within 5 years. (There are ~160 Rec Centers total.) While visiting Rec Centers, will also look at recycling bins.
- Paul Kohl asked for an update on:
 - Community Compost Program: Natalie can get an update from Ash Richards moving forward to bring to this meeting.
 - Wood upcycling program: Natalie said this program is in partnership with Power Corp. They will use a mill to mill lumber for sale. Proceeds will be used to plant trees. A structure needs to be built onsite to the house equipment; the plan is to have this done by the end of the year.

Office of Sustainability (OOS) Update

No one from OOS was in attendance. No update was given.

Kyle Lewis noted that there is a national shortage for municipal employees, which is affecting several departments.

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

- Asked the group if they are seeing more, the same, or less illegal dumping? A few reports of more dumping and a few reports of about the same; no reports of seeing less. Kyle says they have seen less dumping in the camera network.
- If you see illegal dumping in the act, call 911. If you see illegal dumping after the fact, call 311.
- Two detectives in the environmental crimes unit: as of late Oct there have been 10 arrests, 8 warrants outstanding, 6 affidavits for arrest in process
- Have had some success with civil prosecutions. Up to 32 notices of violation.
- America Recycles Day was on Nov 15th. Celebrated at a School – did recycling relays, covered what is recyclable and what is not, got some media coverage
- Diversion is up between 10-12% right now; amount of materials collected is increasing
- Glass is collected for recycling in the City of Philadelphia, in addition to cardboard, paper, cans, plastics, aluminum and cartons.
- A few new sanitation companies have been noticed recently. Please send any new companies that you know about to Kyle so tonnage reports can be requested.
- Mike Ewall asked about the end use of collected glass. Kyle replied: landfill engineering uses (cover and roads), manufacturing (company separates by color and sells cullet); if too dirty it will go into the landfill.
- Ben Cromie: PHL Airport just received an award for using AeroAggregate material (recycled glass) as part of infrastructure projects at the airport.
- Paul Kohl suggested that SWRAC could advise or advocate for increasing markets for glass.

Informational Items, Open Discussion, and Announcements

- Mike Ewall requested that SWRAC advise the Streets Department to keep formal logs of when route trucks are mixing trash and recyclables. He reports that he is still witnessing mixing on his block. Paul Kohl noted that this has also been a historical problem at the Fairmount Water Works, though he's not sure if that is current information. Kyle Lewis requested that people report mixing to her directly.
- Keith Warren asked if this is an open public meeting or a members-only meeting. Kyle replied that it is open to the public, but anything related to official business is for SWRAC members only.

Next Meeting Date

January 19, 2023 on Microsoft Teams

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29pm.