

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

DATE: November 18, 2021

ATTENDEES:

SWRAC Members

Fern Gookin (Chair), Revolution Recovery
Kyle Lewis, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Bob Anderson, Retrievr
Jack Embick, Interested Party
Maurice Sampson II, Clean Water Action
Paul Kohl, Philadelphia Water Department

Others Present:

Adam Hendricks, Philadelphia Water Department
Amy Cornelius, GreenBeams
Benjamin Cromie, CH Planning
Helena Rudoff, City of Philadelphia – Office of Sustainability
Josie Lopez, Energy Justice Network
Keith Warren, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Laura Cassidy, Philadelphia Prison System
Maria Horowitz, Philadelphia Water Department
Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network
Neil Garry, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department
Nina Morris, University of Pennsylvania
Peter Karasik, Interested Party
Phil Bresee, MSW Consultants
Sanush Thomas, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by SWRAC chair Ms. Gookin at 3:15 pm.

Introductions.

September Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from the September 16th General SWRAC meeting were approved as amended by voice vote.

State of Recycling (Kyle Lewis)

Contamination rate has decreased from 27.7% in September to 22.9% in November. The department is still working on getting that down.

Celebrated America Recycles Day – gave away bins, doing PR to spread recycling messages.

Pricing is steady, around \$70/tn mark – up a little bit from last month, but steady. For comparison, price in May 2019 was around \$100/tn.

Glass is being made into a daily cover product used in landfills; sold to a glass manufacturer, and per notification following the meeting, landfilled as well.

Plastics and cardboard prices are still high. Encouraging more recycling will allow the City to take advantage of the favorable markets. Pandemic demands and supply chain issues have benefitted Recycling.

Zero Waste Subcommittee Update / MSW Report

- Maurice Sampson gave a presentation on SWRAC's Role for Zero Waste
- Phil Bresee gave a presentation on Philadelphia Recycling & Zero Waste Goals Benchmarking, noting no cities close to the goal.
 - o Maurice highlighted that ZW Subcommittee has been working to create a standard for Zero Waste for a long time; zero waste becomes more sophisticated and broad when you think about it in terms of not creating waste; suggests looking at best practice activities that different cities are doing to help them reach their goals
 - o Paul Kohl talked about California's shift towards tracking waste per capita and asked Phil's opinion about whether or not Philadelphia should make this shift in metrics as well. Phil said yes, he does think the City should track multiple metrics to measure progress.
 - o Kyle Lewis commented that they will share diversion maps pre and post COVID at the next meeting
 - o Amy Cornelius asked if we can study the key obstacles the benchmark cities face in meeting their goals? Phil commented that no cities are close to their end goal, and goals are not being met because they are hard. Amy is wondering how we can look at more creative solutions to get met Philadelphia's goals.
 - o Mike Ewall asked if we can look at cities that may be better models like San Francisco or Oakland? And, how can we follow the Zero Waste Hierarchy and get the back end of the system right similar to Halifax, Nova Scotia? Phil commented that we should be cautious about making the assumption that some of the California cities have a better model – their waste stream is different and there has been question about how they report their high numbers. Maurice noted that there is a big difference in household based payment models versus City collection models.
 - o Mike Ewall asked how many cities have connected their solid waste reduction goals to Net Zero Carbon and methane reduction goals? Phil responded that most of them do connect this.
- Presentation slides will be available for distribution

Organics Subcommittee Update

Paul Kohl reported on the last two meetings:

- Adam Hendricks is working on a report on the Temple WET Center about the bench scale study of anaerobic digestion of source separated organics. Results to be discussed with PWD Waste Treatment Operations.
- Helena Rudoff updated the group on Food Waste Business Challenge
- Daniel Lawson updated the group on the Bennett partnership and the RFP for urban wood waste
- Melissa Pennington from EPA discussed the US Composting Council's changing regulations

- Kyle Lewis reported that she had a meeting with Terracycle, is looking to start up more programs in Philadelphia that may include curbside collection of food & yard waste and collection of specific materials for Recycling.

Parks & Recreation Update

Daniel Lawson from Parks & Recreation was not able to attend this meeting. No update was given.

Office of Sustainability (OOS) Update

Helena Rudoff gave an update.

- Working on Restaurant Challenge / Food Waste Business Challenge. 10 business have signed on, 12 will be the max. CET is the technical assistance partner and will work with businesses on data collection.
- Have been conducting food waste focus groups to inform education campaigns about food waste. Campaign will launch on Earth Day 2022.
- Have been revisiting zero waste targets and metrics and developing a larger framework; the group will be updated once available

Streets & Philadelphia Recycling Office (PRO) Update

Kyle Lewis gave an update

- America Recycles Day was on Monday, a PR event to message recycling importance and how-to's – attendees played recycling sort games, received bins and information
- City of Philadelphia is committed to their recycling program, a report was released that said about 100 programs across the country have been eliminated or significantly modified.
- If anyone continues to see recycling and trash thrown in the same truck, please email Kyle directly to report it so she can look into it.
- Regarding illegal dumping, the Environmental Crimes Unit had 65 active cases through August 2021 with 2 arrests. The Police Department continues to work on this issue.

Informational Items, Open Discussion and Announcements

- Peter Karasik commented that Montgomery County, MD reduced illegal dumping by providing two satellite sites where residents and contractors could dump small loads for no charge. They also did not charge for small loads at the transfer station.
- Maurice Sampson and Mike Ewall asked if the chat can be saved by the host? Kyle Lewis commented that she will have to ask the IT department to change the settings, or we can move the meetings to Microsoft Teams to have more control.
 - o Maurice made a motion to move to the meetings to Teams in the future; the motion was approved by voice vote.
- Mike Ewall reported that he is still seeing trash and recycling mixed together. Suggests that the issue be addressed systemically rather than just on a specific block. Kyle Lewis commented that there is record keeping that the trucks are driving down the streets but it's difficult to know if the correct material is being thrown into the trucks.

Next Meeting Date

January 20, 2022 on Microsoft Teams

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11pm.