

WHATCOM COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 23, 2014

Members Present:

Eric Johnston, Barbara Brenner, Calvin DenHartog, Pete Edwards, Amber Jones, Greg Young, Marty Kuljis, Casey Heinle, Ed Nikula, Mark Peterson

Members Absent:

Marj Leone

Staff Present:

Debbie Bailey, Gary Stoyka

Others Present:

Jeff Hegedus, - Whatcom County Health; Diana Wadley and Peter Christiansen, - WA Dept. of Ecology; Justin Clary, - Maul Foster & Alongi; Scott Bissell – Republic Services; Elizabeth Larter – NW Product Stewardship Council; Mendy Droke – King County.

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Whatcom County Solid Waste Committee was called to order on Thursday, October 23rd at 5:32 p.m. in the Public Works Meeting Room by Chair, Ed Nikula.

Minutes:

The minutes of the, July 24th, 2014 SWAC meeting were read and approved as written.

Communications:

None

Agenda Items:

1. Northwest Product Stewardship Council

Elizabeth Larter from NW Product Stewardship Council and Mendy Droke from King County, gave a presentation on Product Stewardship, whereby the producers of a product must finance the end of life management of the product. The NW Council is a coalition of local governments that finances a staff to work on policy changes for toxic and hard-to-handle products. The E-Cycle program is one example as is the mercury lights program set to take place January 1, 2015. The Council is currently working on paint stewardship, initiated by the American Coatings Assn. (ACA), a trade group that produces paint. Oregon and several other states currently have such a program for paint. The program is financed by a consumer assessment on paint purchases, and includes convenience standards – 90% of residents within 15 miles or every 35,000 residents in urban areas must have access. It is up to the producers to meet the convenience standards for access to the population. A lot of local governments are on board and Whatcom County is being asked for a resolution supporting paint product stewardship. Eric Johnston asked what was the argument against this program? Elizabeth stated that some see the assessment as a tax; the rebuttal to this is that ratepayers are paying now through disposal and this puts the cost on the consumer. Eric said that SWAC did not need to wait for the Comp Plan to be complete and it is appropriate for County staff to take up a resolution and route it through SWEC. Jeff Hegedus asked how the program would work for MRWs participating? Mendy replied that the MRW facility would need a contract, storage capacity, and would handle notification to the stewardship program for pickups. Containers would be provided. Elizabeth can provide a sample resolution of support. It was decided to discuss the issue at the January meeting. In reference to the mercury lights program, LightRecycle Washington, Greg Young asked what was wrong with the 11th bulb? Elizabeth said that she thought it was so the retailers wouldn't be over-whelmed with space issues. There was nothing in place to stop someone from dropping off bulbs at multiple locations in a single day.

2. Comprehensive Plan

Justin Clary did a review of the project to date – interviews with service providers, county staff, and system description. A summary of key themes and a system description had been sent to SWAC members for review. Changes/edits should be emailed to Justin. November 13th is the

target date for the next sub-committee meeting. Justin led a brief discussion on some key themes identified starting with Composting and followed with Construction and Demolition Waste, Educational Programming, Multi-family Recycling, and Commingled Recycling.

Composting – Fast-food restaurants, with the exception of Taco Time, are not participating in the food-waste/composting programs like Food Plus. Jeff Hegedus stated that restaurants should be the target of outreach programs.

Construction and Demolition Waste – Justin said that the current exemption in place for CDL perhaps should be re-visited. Eric said the question is whether it's better participation by keeping it in-county rather than going to Skagit County? Calvin said there is better control if it's kept local. If it becomes garbage it's put in a hole, and there's plenty that leaves the county and ends up in the ground. By keeping it local you can monitor what's happening to it. Eric said that local industry needs to have the capacity to handle it. Jeff wants to understand the current system as it is being handled and needs more information. Justin asked Eric if local could handle it? Peter Christiansen asked how is it being handled at the point of generation? Snohomish is aggressive with ordinances requiring recycling of CDL. Mark Peterson noted that Whatcom has no requirements for recycling CDL.

Education/Community Outreach – There was discussion of low-hanging fruit, and putting more money into education. Are there ways to fund some of SSC's and Sustainable Connections' community efforts in education? Mark stated that Sustainable Connections has had great success with the commercial sector, but needs more funding for Zero Waste. Barbara Brenner asked if there aren't Solid Waste funds that can go to those efforts? Jeff said he will be looking at expanding the current education program for kids to middle and high-school. There also needs to be good work with the commercial sector. He likes what's going on with organics, Beyond Waste, and wants to explore branding. The private sector sells commercial goals. Barbara said the best way is to explain to people how much money they waste, for example, food waste. Saving money hits hard. Jeff said his own opinion is the answer is resource management, as direction needs input. Peter said there is a growing movement about using the food, not buying so much, selling less than perfect produce. As far as compost, make sure there is processing capacity. Diana Wadley mentioned the EPA movies "Food Too Good To Waste" and "just Eat It." Mark said that National Geographics recently published an article on food waste (Volga River analogy). The average family wastes about \$1400 a year on food, and 5.3 billion acres world-wide are farmed and the food not eaten. Eric Johnston said that both Sustainable Connections and RE Sources have good educational programs and he would rather expand those than create new programs at the county level. There needs to be a master plan. Jeff agrees with Eric and would like to bring the private sector in as well under one umbrella.

Multi-family Recycling – Peter Christiansen said that multi-family is one of the biggest challenges out there. You need to get a good handle on the demographics, and none of the counties have been really successful. Diana reiterated that it is a hot topic state-wide and at WSRA. The WSRA website has Best Management Practices on multi-family. There are barriers and you need to go to the site and really see what the problem is such as identical recycling and trash containers, side by side. Ed Nikula said that he lives in a multi-family complex where the containers are different colors and well-marked, but the people will not take the extra steps to use the right container.

Commingled Recycling - There was consensus that commingled should be taken off the table. Both Barbara and Amber said the contamination issues are much less with the three bin system that Whatcom uses than with commingled. Ed Nikula said studies showed that the 3-bin system produced more good material than the commingled. Peter noted that Whatcom contamination rate is 1 ½% where commingled is around 12%. Calvin said the processors are revolting; they

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do not want material from commingled. Mark said the recycling rate for Whatcom is 45%. Jeff suggested that commercial education/outreach can bump up the recycling rate.

Justin announced that the next step in the Comp Plan is Goal Development .

Other Business

Gary Stoyka reminded the SWAC that this was the last meeting for Public Works. Starting in January, the Health Department would be handling Solid Waste.

Next Meeting Agenda

1. Election of Officers
2. Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan
3. Paint Product Stewardship

Next Meeting Schedule

The next meeting will be held from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 22nd, 2015 at a location to be determined.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Whatcom County Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held October 23rd, 2014.

Attest: Janice Reptuch for
Debbie Bailey, Coordinator Debbie Bailey
WCPW Solid Waste

Mark Peterson Vice Chair
Ed Nikula, Chair
Whatcom County Solid Waste Advisory Committee
MARK PETERSEN, VICE CHAIR