



Meeting minutes

Meeting: Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee (SWAAC)
Date/time: 10:00 a.m.-noon, Wednesday, July 12, 2017
Place: Metro Council Chambers

Members in Attendance:

Mike Leichner, Pride Disposal
Bruce Walker, City of Portland
Theresa Koppang, Washington County
Mark Ottenad, City of Wilsonville
Peter Brandom, City of Hillsboro
Rick Winterhalter, Clackamas County
Paul Downey, City of Forest Grove
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon DEQ
Reba Crocker, City of Milwaukie
Alando Simpson, City of Roses Disposal/Recycling
Matt Korot, Metro

Members Absent:

Adrienne Welsh, Recycling Advocates
Keith Ristau, Far West Recycling

1. Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum

Matt Korot brought the meeting to order and declared a quorum.

2. Comments from the Chair and SWAAC Members

Mr. Korot reviewed the meeting agenda and how citizen communications would be structured.

3. Consideration of SWAAC Minutes for May 10, 2017

The minutes of the May SWAAC meeting were approved.

4. Solid Waste Fee and Tax Exemptions Subcommittee: Meeting 2 Update

Rick Winterhalter provided an update on the Solid Waste Fee and Tax Exemption subcommittee. The subcommittee reviewed the report and recommendations from the consultant, RRS. Mr. Winterhalter noted the consultants pared the list down to the top four ranking options and those options were discussed at length at the meeting. The resulting recommendation was for option one, which centers around a two-tier system exemption and focuses on material types, not their use. The final version of the consultant's report will be presented at the next meeting on July 25, 2017.

5. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of Landfill and Waste-To-Energy Options

Rob Smoot of Metro, the project manager, presented the context for this assessment as part of the Solid Waste Roadmap's Long-Term Management of Discards project. Mr. Smoot shared that Metro is undertaking this project to explore the viability of options other than landfills for managing approximately one-sixth of the region's discards after the current contract with Waste Management for landfill expires at the end of 2019. The intent is to determine whether more resource value can be gained from the discards from systems other than landfills.

Mr. Smoot noted the project's major phases:

- Researching and assessing 14 technology options



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- Narrowing those options to five
- Issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest to get more detailed information from companies that operate facilities with those five technologies
- Reducing the options to two (in addition to landfill) based on their applicability to our region and waste stream: advance material recovery and waste-to-energy.

Metro staff reviewed the two technologies and, with Council's input, set aside the advance material recovery option until the food scraps enhancement program has matured. Council asked Metro staff to explore if there is enough added value from utilizing waste-to-energy (WTE) to offset its significantly higher cost (approximately \$60 per ton) than landfills.

To help answer this question, Metro conducted a "rapid" HIA to determine the possible health and environmental impacts of sending 200,000 tons of waste per year to the Covanta WTE facility in Marion County and to a generic landfill in eastern Oregon. An HIA utilizes a systematic process with a broad array of data sources and analytic methods, as well as input from stakeholders.

In a rapid HIA, the work relies on existing research and data; no new site-specific data gathering was undertaken. For this project, the research focus was scoped with the input of stakeholders that included public health experts, advocates in the field of toxics reduction and environmental justice, a representative of Physicians for Social Responsibility and a Marion County staff person. The scoping work led to identification of 40 determinants of health for assessment, including air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, soil and water impacts, and limited social and economic factors, including political involvement, potential employment, public safety and employment impacts related to both options. Metro's assessment of this 200,000 tons per year scenario is not transferable to other regions of the state or to individual companies within the Metro region.

Mr. Korot elaborated on the rationale for using a rapid HIA. A full HIA is a huge investment of time and effort and staff wanted to calibrate the level of work to provide enough information to enable Council to make a decision on whether to move onto the next phase of assessing the feasibility of WTE without investing a significant amount of time and resources from Metro and the community.

The main HIA findings were:

- More energy from WTE
- Fewer miles traveled for WTE
- Inconclusive greenhouse gas modeling results
- Negligible impacts on health risks
- 10 additional jobs for WTE and two for landfill

Feedback from the HIA stakeholder group was:

- Consider that regulatory limits do not equate to protection of public health
- Current environment in the region is one of heightened concern about air quality standards and monitoring
- Equity and Environmental Justice needs to be more fully addressed
- Conditions that support WTE (e.g., lack of land for landfills or expensive power) are not present
- No compelling case to do anything differently

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In response to Council's question of whether there would be enough added value from sending 200,000 tons of Metro region waste per year to WTE to outweigh the higher costs, Mr. Smoot said that staff's answer is "no."

Moving forward, staff will discuss this information to Council on August 8, 2017. Staff anticipates providing three options for Council to choose from:

1. Go no further with the work on WTE
2. Conduct more in-depth study of health, environmental and equity impacts
3. Begin negotiating a financial proposal with Covanta

Mr. Smoot asked committee members for their input in advising Council. Mr. Korot asked that the committee respond with questions first and then comments.

Mr. Winterhalter asked for clarity on the WTE cost and asked if this included transportation. Mr. Smoot responded it did not include transportation.

Reba Crocker asked if both options impact surface and ground water. Mr. Smoot responded both options do impact ground water but they impact it in different ways.

Theresa Koppang asked if this project would be an expansion for Covanta. Mr. Smoot responded yes, but would not be a land expansion. Covanta's current site has been permitted for future expansion, requiring no new permits. Covanta would only be adding additional equipment. Ms. Koppang also asked if the desire to diversify is what drove the initial process. Mr. Smoot responded yes. Mr. Korot added that Metro believes it's a good practice to look at its options following expiration of the 30-year landfill contract.

Peter Brandom asked if the capacity of the facility determines the limitation of 200,000 tons. Mr. Smoot responded capacity was a partial factor; the other was to not lose flexibility by having a significant amount of waste go to this one facility.

Bruce Walker offered compliments to Mr. Smoot on the project and asked if the staff recommendation to Council will be to go no further. Mr. Smoot responded staff position is to present these options to Council, informed by staff's response to Council's guiding question.

Paul Downey asked how confident staff was with the \$60 per ton cost of WTE. Mr. Smoot responded there was a range of cost for WTE with \$60 being the lowest estimate and \$90 being the top cost given in the RFEOI. Mr. Downey asked if the \$25 per ton cost is in range. Mr. Smoot responded no, it is an estimated cost based on the current contract price with Waste Management.

Mr. Simpson asked who defines the values, the public, staff, Council? Is it solely contingent on economic value? Mr. Korot responded that for this discussion with Council, the values are based on what we found through the HIA. Answering that question is based on what we found on air toxics, GHGs, community benefits and burdens.

Mark Ottenad inquired as to Metro council having funding and authority to order more environmental study data. Mr. Smoot responded yes, the Metro council could ask staff to provide additional study data. Mr. Korot added that if extended data were requested, Metro would coordinate with state and local authorities.

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Mr. Downey asked why staff did not choose a mid-point for the estimated cost for WTE. Mr. Smoot responded the lower end cost was chosen to present a positive perspective as opposed to the higher end that would be more negative. From there they considered the risk to be able to achieve the lower end cost. In addition, the \$90 cost included other services not specifically requested by Metro in the cost estimate. Mr. Korot added this is not a formal cost estimate, but information to help Metro council make a decision. Mr. Korot also stated that staff would share with Metro council the WTE cost range.

Ms. Koppang asked if this report will be going before MPAC. Mr. Korot responded it would not. Ms. Koppang asked if MPAC would be engaged if Council directed further work be done on assessing WTE. Mr. Korot responded it could, depending on the nature of that work.

Audrey O'Brien asked why the focus is on best available control technology and if the consultant looked at hazardous air pollutants. Mr. Smoot responded there is some information on hazardous air pollutants in the study. Ms. O'Brien also asked if an increase of 200,000 tons would trigger an additional air pollutant study. Mr. Smoot responded that he anticipates that would be the case.

Mark Ottenad suggested that the \$60-\$90 range be presented to Council. Mr. Smoot stated that Metro Council is familiar with that range from prior staff reporting. Mr. Korot stated that he and Rob hear and understand the concern from Mr. Downey and Mr. Ottenad that Council receive the full range.

Mr. Winterhalter stated he appreciates the conclusion staff has reached and feels it is the right decision to go no further.

Mr. Walker said the stakeholder feedback seemed to lay out an accurate assessment. He stated that the HIA raised a number of concerns for him and his recommendation would be go no further.

Mr. Brandom stated he believes there is value to this work and it is justified as there is now more data. He also stated he does not see any justification to spend a half million dollars to go any further with research.

Ms. Koppang stated her staff reviewed the report and they were impressed with the caliber of the work. She also stated she would hate to think Metro council would jump to the third option (begin negotiating financial proposal) without doing a much more thorough engagement of people who live around the facility.

Ms. O'Brien stated DEQ supports Metro in its recovery and waste prevention efforts and Metro's recommendation to go no further. She noted she felt the report's inconclusive evaluation for greenhouse gas should be stated as additional information is needed. If Metro does move further, DEQ would support Metro staff recommendations 14 and 15.

Ms. Crocker suggested option number 3 should be removed as an option for Council and agrees that Metro should go no further. Mr. Smoot stated the option was not intended as a stand-alone one, but rather to loop back to option 2. He noted that it was not clear and he would adjust it for the Metro Council presentation.



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Mr. Ottenad stated he agreed with the observation of other committee members and Metro staff to go no further on the WTE.

Mr. Downey stated he agreed with going no further.

Mr. Korot asked for any additional comments from the committee, there were none. He invited citizen comments to the HIA report.

6. Citizen Communications to Agenda Item 5

Matt Marler (Covanta) stated he felt the report did a disservice regarding analysis done on greenhouse gases. He stated Covanta has sent a letter to Mr. Korot, Mr. Smoot and Paul Slyman (Director of Property and Environmental Services). Mr. Marler stated he felt it was unfair to look at the models presented in the report and not make any conclusions. He stated his view of the difference between the Decision Support and WARM analytic models. He also stated he understood the cost concerns surrounding WTE and appreciated Metro's work on this issue. Mr. Marler made it clear he was not disagreeing with the situational decision for this instance, but objected to the greenhouse gas findings. He requested that all committee members have the chance to review the responses Covanta made to the report in its letter. Mr. Korot stated the letter Matt Marler referred to came in at 9:30 this morning and that he would distributed it to committee members following the meeting.

A number of individuals testified that Metro should not utilize WTE because of its greenhouse and air toxic emissions and expressing their agreement with the staff conclusion that the cost of WTE is adequately offset by other value. These individuals were:

- Laurie Dougherty (350 Salem, 350.org)
- Jim Schepcke (350 Salem, 350.org)
- Joe Miller (Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility)
- Patricia Bellamy (Northeast Portland)
- Damon Mote-Storey (Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility)
- Sharon Miller
- Regna Merritt (Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility)

7. 2030 Regional Waste Plan Values

Marta McGuire stated that the purpose of her presentation is to update the committee on the work of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan and the outcomes of Phase 1: Values. Ms. McGuire is also asking for feedback and input before staff presents to Metro council.

Ms. McGuire began with a refresher on the 2030 Regional Waste Plan and reiterated the waste plan development phases:

- Phase 1 – Values
- Phase 2 – System scenarios and vision
- Phase 3 – System analysis and goal setting
- Phase 4 – Building strategy
- Phase 5 – Plan adoption

She covered the process being used for Phase 1 and noted that the Equity Work Group portion has been completed and discussing the draft values with SWAAC and MPAC are the final steps before Council review.

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Ms. McGuire provided a high-level list of the values, noting that they are meant to be broad and will be refined as the process continues.

1. Protect and restore the environment and promote health for all
2. Conserve natural resources
3. Advance environmental literacy
4. Foster economic well-being
5. Ensure operational resilience and adaptability
6. Provide excellent service

She also listed the draft guiding principles that are intended to highlight the racial equity elements that tie each of the values together. These were developed by the Equity Work Group:

1. Community restoration
2. Community partnerships
3. Community investment

Mike Leichner asked for explanation or clarification of the third value relating to educational literacy. He was unclear if this involve educational outreach or going in to schools? Ms. McGuire noted it may involve both. Mr. Leichner specified his question to if Metro will be funding some schools education programs? Mr. Korot clarified that this is something Metro currently does. He explained that Metro provides presentations and curriculum, but what this value would look like in practice in the future is still a question.

Mr. Brandom appreciates the challenge of broader visions and narrowing them down to actions. He requested more specificity with value 6. He suggested the addition of access to program services and infrastructure. Mr. Brandom suggested this wording: "excellent service for equitable system access for all of the region's communities."

Mr. Ottenad added that Wilsonville is focusing on multifamily recycling and felt it was worth noting or calling out multifamily communities. He pointed out these communities are not historically as well integrated in infrastructure and education aspects of the solid waste system.

Mr. Simpson asked why for the first guiding principle it doesn't identify specifics regarding actions that will be taken related to diversity in staff, management and executive positions at Metro. He also noted that the principles and values are vague on how this work will be done in relationship with the private sector. These things need to be explicit in equity conversations. Mr. Korot responded that Mr. Simpson's comments were very helpful.

Ms. McGuire thanked the members for their comments and promised an updated and refined version of these values after the Metro Council work session on August 1, 2017.

8. Citizen Communications

Mike Lindberg (consultant to compostable serviceware industry) asked how does the HIA conclusion affect the anerobic digester process discussed at prior meetings? Mr. Korot explained that Mr. Smoot's presentation was solely regarding the management of discards after everything has been recovered. Metro is simultaneously looking at food scraps recovery, which is where the anerobic digester fits in the system. The RFP currently open is for dealing with commercial food

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scraps. He clarified the two projects are interrelated, but distinct from one another.

9. Preview of the next meeting agenda and final comments

Mr. Korot shared that the next meeting will be on August 9, 2017 and primarily devoted to the food scraps work (policy and the RFP).