

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting
Date: Thursday January 19, 2023
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 10:05 a.m.
Place: Zoom meeting
Purpose: *The purpose of the Regional Waste Advisory Committee is to provide input on certain policies, programs, and projects that implement actions in the 2030 Regional Waste Plan, as well as to provide input on certain legislative and administrative actions that the Metro Council or Chief Operating Officer will consider related to implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.*

Members in Attendance:

Marta McGuire, Metro
Alondra Flores Aviña, Trash for Peace
Sharretta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Lindsay Marshall, City of Tualatin
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, Clackamas County
Thao Tu, Vietnamese Community of Oregon
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)
Ryan Largura, City of Troutdale
Andrew Bartlett, City of Hillsboro

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Marta McGuire (Metro) brought the virtual meeting to order at 8:31 am and previewed the agenda. Marta welcomes new committee members that were confirmed by Metro Council on January 5, 2023. New members are Ryan Largura representing the City of Troutdale, Andrew Bartlett representing the City of Hillsboro and Eben Polk now representing the City of Portland.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

4. Disaster Debris Grant Program

Marta McGuire introduced Jim Quinn from Metro.

Key points of the presentation included:

The presentation reviewed the new grant program and its guidelines. The new Metro Code 5.11 establishes the purpose of the program, where the funds come from, and establishes guidelines. Draft guidelines include what disasters qualify for grants, how funds are allocated, and the fund dispersal process.

Member Discussion Included:

Ryan Largura from the City of Troutdale, asked how grants would be dispersed dependent on time. Mr. Quinn responded that typically grants would take a couple of months to disperse funds. This would ultimately be determined at the time of the event and could vary for each event.

Eben Polk from the City of Portland, asked what the projected annual influx of funds would be and the total cap for the fund. Mr. Quinn responded that money did start flowing into the fund last July, funds would be 600k to 700k dollars annually, and the cap has been established at 5 million dollars. This will be reviewed on an ongoing balance.

Andrew Bartlett from the City of Hillsboro, asked if the costs associated with the 2021 ice storm were reviewed when creating this fund. Mr. Quinn replied that it was not reviewed and that Metro does not have direct access to what local governments spent to respond to the ice storm. Metro's analytics did review historic disasters and the costs associated with them.

Sharretta Butcher North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE), asked for further detail on how individuals would receive funds. Mr. Quinn responded that currently, it is up to local governments to create those processes based on their residents needs.

Christa McDermott Community Environmental Services, PSU, asked if there is support for local companies from Metro to become FEMA certified to keep funds local. Mr. Quinn replied that the main contractors with expertise are large national contractors, however, they do use local subcontractors. Mr. Quinn has reviewed a contract for a local government and it explicitly states that they focus on using minority businesses when working with subcontractors. Ultimately FEMA has stringent requirements and it can be difficult to focus on minority-owned companies for this type of work.

Mr. Polk supported the idea that this type of work should focus on supporting minority businesses. This might not be directly written into this program, but perhaps find ways to help companies become FEMA certified to better participate.

Ms. Butcher commented that contracts "looking at specific BIPOC companies is different than making sure they are part of the contracts."

Audrey O'Brien Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), was supportive of the program. DEQ does work to respond to some of these disasters and will try to communicate the desire to include minority business in the emergency management meetings.

Ms. McGuire posed that perhaps contracts could be set up in advance to save procurement time.

Mr. Polk is supportive of this program, it may not cover all situations, but it is another useful tool in the toolbox.

Ms. McDermott supports this program and the need it will fill. Supports preparing contracts in advance. Wonders if Metro can play a role in reaching out to local workers to lower barriers to keep money local.

Beth Vargas Duncan supports this program and appreciates the push to focus on small and minority companies. She pointed out that governments have limits on how much money tax payer money can be stored.

Mr. Largura urged the program staff to do as much preplanning and projection as possible to be as well-prepared as possible. Mr. Quinn responded that this is in the works. Mr. Largura also asked for clarification on using grant funds for staff costs. Mr. Quinn replied that administrative costs include costs that are outside of day-to-day expenses would be covered.

Ms. Butcher asked if Metro could teach a class for small businesses to win these contracts.

5. Regional Waste Plan Annual Progress Report

Marta McGuire introduced Rachel Chu and Marissa Grass from Metro.

Key points of the presentation included:

This is the second, Regional Waste Plan Progress report since the creation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan. Moving forward it will be reported on annually. The presentation included an overview of the report and how to use the report to share with other interested groups. The report covers metrics from 2021 and summarizes progress on actions, indicators related to the regional waste plan goals, and success stories from people who did the work or were impacted by the work.

Committee members were asked a series of questions and given a link to leave feedback on the report information, accessibility, and format. This feedback was reviewed as a group.

Final Remarks

Ms. McGuire put forth the December meeting minutes for approval. Ms. McDermott moved to approve the December minutes; Ms. Flores Avina seconded. December minutes approved. Ms. McGuire gave a few final remarks to the committee.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 10:05 a.m.