

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Meeting
Date: Thursday, April 24 2025
Time: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.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 the implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan.*

Members in Attendance:

Chair, Mary Nolan, Metro

Vice-Chair Christine Lewis, Metro

Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)

Chieko Yoshihara, Communities of Color

Daisha Tate, Communities of Color

Fiona Conneely, Environment & Health Advocate

Kristin Leichner, Pride Disposal – Transfer Station

Laura Tokarski, System User

Councilor Angelita Morillo, City of Portland – Local Government

Jackie Kirouac-Fram, Reuse Organizations

Teresa Gaddy, Communities of Color

Denyse McGriff, City of Oregon City – Local Government

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

2. FY2025-26 Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Proposed Budget and Solid Waste Fees

Chair Nolan introduced Marta McGuire and Patrick Dennis from Metro.

Key points of the presentation included:

Staff presented the FY2025-26 Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Proposed Budget and Solid Waste Fees. Staff sought input from the committee using a red-yellow-green feedback framework. Members were asked to assess the proposal by identifying areas of strong alignment (green), areas requiring clarification or potential adjustment (yellow), and areas of concern or potential misalignment (red). Each member was asked to select their top two priorities in each color category to focus the discussion on the most critical issues, while also having the opportunity to submit additional comments beyond their initial selections. This approach was designed to focus dialogue, elevate key themes, and collect meaningful input to inform Metro Council's final budget and fee decisions.

Member Discussion:

Kristin Leichner, Pride, asked about the forecasted decrease in tonnage. Is that my understanding is, the forecast is done in the fall for the next calendar year and correct me on any of this if I'm incorrect. So, when we talk about the tons going down. Is that based on that November forecast from last year? Or is that based on what we're actually seeing coming through the facilities? Mr. Dennis responded that's correct. So, the forecast is created in the fall that predicts the tonnage for the next fiscal year. We have already started discussions with our revenue and analytics division team to try and improve forecasting, revisiting it multiple times a year to see if there's any opportunity for adjusting forecasts over time. But to set the fees we have to have some kind of prediction of what we think the tonnage is going to be in relation to our budget. Ms. Leichner asked so the November forecast is for 2025-26 fiscal year? Mr. Dennis said that is correct. Chair Nolan added that while Mr. Dennis has put the effect of lower tonnage on both the regional system fee and the solid waste fee as provoking an increase in the per ton fee. Let's remember that one of our ambitions, one of our visions with solid waste in the region is, in fact, to reduce the tonnage, especially the tonnage that goes to landfills and it's not surprising that when a lot of your expenses are fixed costs, either in labor or equipment that when you're disposing fewer tons, then each ton will cost a little more, but it should maybe not balance out exactly, but it should be mitigated by the fact that you're charging that on fewer tons. This is a good move for us as a region to make that we are sending fewer tons of waste to the landfills. A little editorializing their chair's privilege. Ms. Leichner explained why I'm curious about that is because I know in my service area on the west side of Washington County, Southwest side. We're seeing some pretty significant areas of growth. And so, you know, we're netting an average of 70 new residential customers a month over the last several years, plus commercial growth. And so, I'm just curious kind of how that plays into the forecast in different parts of the region when one area might be growing, one might be stagnant. And I hear what you're saying about the goal being overall waste reduction. But when we have more people moving into the region there's going, I would think there would be an impact on higher waste generation with more people living in the region too. Brian Kennedy, Metro's Chief Financial Officer, said that's a really good point. And part of what our revenue and analytics team does is build a fairly complex economic model that tries to look at both population forecasts as well as overall economic activity in the region based on known correlations to kind of waste generation. So, they're trying to factor a lot of these things in and particularly in terms of population. It has been a mixed bag across the region over the last couple of years, while there has been growth in some areas, we have seen stagnation and decline in others. So, there's not a consistent region wide trend that we've seen there.

Jackie Kirouac-Fram, The Rebuilding Center, said I participated in the fee task force, which was a very robust discussion, and one of the questions that came up there that I think it

might be really helpful for folks in this room to understand, because this was something that I needed to grok when I was in that task force was in terms of the system, facility, fee, and the solid waste fee. If you could highlight for us, or just explain where are those fees paid, and by whom are they paid by like? I know that they all end up being passed down to the customer. But where are they charged? Where are they paid? Who pays the fees? So, we can understand where the money is actually coming from. Marta McGuire, Director of WPES, so that's a great question. I feel like we need to design another graphic to be able to do to that. I mean, you're right. At the end of the day the fees are passed down to residents and household to pay that. As Mr. Dennis mentioned, the regional system fee which funds all of our regional waste reduction programs. So those were the 2 areas that I talked about, 1st is charged on every ton of garbage that is generated in the region it is charged after that waste passes through a transfer station. So, it's whatever comes out the other end part of that is to incentivize pulling stuff out of it for recovery, because you're only charged on the tons that are headed to the landfill. Ms. Kirouac-Fram asked the transfer station operators pay that fee? Ms. McGuire said yes. Ms. Kirouac-Fram said thank you. Ms. McGuire said and then for the solid waste fee, which is the fee that funds our transfer station operations. That is charged by the customers. So, you know Metro has its fee setting process that you all are a part of for doing that, and private transfer stations have their own fee setting process that they go through to set the rates at their stations. And yeah, in in coordination with the governments and the service providers there. Ms. Kirouac-Fram said thank you that's helpful. Ms. Kirouac-Fram said I have one more question, which is you know it looks like the regional system fee, both fees were fairly steady through till 2021, and then there were some steep increases, and I was wondering if maybe it's a 2 part question. The you have a combination. It sounds like up inflation and lower tonnage that is driving up the fees. And I'm interested in you know, there was a lot of population growth going on before the pandemic, and that doesn't seem to have affected the fees at all, which is curious to me, because, obviously, like the just so, I can help understand like it would seem that it would be. There would be needing to be more and more investments during that time, more equipment, more people, more and more to accommodate all the growth in in waste which I'm assuming was happening. Maybe not. And has that just I mean, obviously the tonnage is going down, and that's good. But it looks like that's a very steep increase over the last 5 years. So that's sort of like question one. And then the second one is related. Which is there? Is there a tipping point in your model where waste continues to go? Do the fees just go up forever? Or is there a point at which the fees come down? Because there's you just don't need as many people or many as many machines? Or and how does that, I mean? Transfer stations are then stuck with all this redundant equipment. What? What's the vision for that? Mr. Kennedy responded if you'll permit me to spend a moment talking about cost accounting. There's a principle in cost accounting when you're looking at things like

industrial operations. Manufacturing solid waste falls in that category, particularly things with large fixed costs at a certain level of activity. Those fixed costs are steady. Then you have an increase in activity, and it doesn't go up gradually it jumps up to the next tier. So, think about it like a stair step up, and so you're right. During the 2010 through 2020 there was a lot of population growth in the region and actually, it did have an impact on fees. That's why they stayed flat because wet waste generation tends to be tightly correlated with population growth. People on average produce about the same amount of waste and we also had a lot of construction activity. So there was a lot of dry waste generation in the region, and with we stayed in that tier where our fixed costs were pretty steady when you look at most of the work Metro's done looking at transfer station capacity through the region we have somewhere on the, you know, maybe up to as much as twice as much transfer capacity in the region as we need. So, we're solidly in in that step. I don't know where we are in the staircase lower, higher, but we were able to accommodate that increased waste without having to make a lot of big capital investments in the region. At that point. Depending on your perspective increased waste generation is going in the wrong direction of where we want to go. But it did have a positive impact in terms of keeping those fees lower. And now we're in an environment where, because of slower population growth because of declines in construction, activity, and other things that generate large quantities of dry waste, tonnage is pretty stagnant or decreasing in like in the current year, and we still have that same block of fixed costs, and that that fixed cost doesn't go down even as the tonnage goes down. Really to reduce those fixed costs it would mean having less transfer stations in the region, for example, which is a challenging thing to implement. So we're in this place where those fixed costs are going to stay pretty constant for a significant period of time, and that is going to put upward pressure on our fees as long as tonnage stays in the on the current trajectory, and then you add into that a lot of the inflationary factors that are hitting average residents of the region also hit our transfer station so we're having a lot of cost pressure and lower material quantities moving to transfer stations. Ms. Kirouac-Fram asked is there a tipping point where it goes so low that this formula doesn't work anymore? Mr. Kennedy said yes, theoretically, I don't think we're anywhere close to that. I think you would have to see a significant decrease in population of the region to get to that point. When I first started at Metro about 15 years ago, we were doing a project looking at what happens when waste falls. It's probably not right to characterize it as a joke, but kind of the joke at the time was, you know, our system costs 15 years ago were about 65 million dollars, and is the last ton in the region going to cost 65 million dollars to process. But in looking at it it's pretty unlikely we're going to get to the point where we have such a reduction like, at least in the next, you know 5 to 10 years. Such a reduction in waste, where we're going to be in that situation where costs are kind of wildly disproportionate with the quantity of waste we have, unless

there's some, you know, kind of revolutionary change in waste recovery, or on the really negative side, something happens in the region, and the population drops by 50%.

Laura Tokarski, System User, asked clarifying question, the tonnage amount here does that include recycling? And everything that is generated or recycling, is completely separate, right? And everything like reuse, just everything that's headed to the transfer stations Does that include illegally dumped as well? Because everything that like rid collects is that also headed for the same. Ms. McGuire said our crews that clean up garbage on dumped lands take it to our transfer station, so it goes through that disposal process. Ms. Tokarski said thank you. Ms. Tokarski asked so you have the annual increase, 5.9%. If we were to look at this and try to kind of say, okay, well, could we adjust this? Is there in like an estimate for like a 1%. So if we say 5% instead of 5.97% how much money would that be equal to in the budget? Is it like 1% a million dollars? Or is possible to kind of more or less what that percentage change would equate to on the money side? Mr. Dennis asked do you have a specific, your specific amount that you're looking for, just a 1% decrease in what it would be. Let's go with 1%. I'm just kind of curious if we're, you know thinking of. Okay, well, this, this looks high. Could we reduce that potentially reallocating things? Is it possible to make that connection? Mr. Dennis said yeah, I could give you an exact amount of what 1% would do. Mr. Kennedy said while Mr. Dennis does some quick math one important nuance that I think probably most people are not going to care about. But when we talk about waste versus recovered materials, so at the Metro transfer stations, the mixed solid waste fee and the regional system fee are assessed at, we call it at the front door. So, every load that comes in you are paying that fee, whether that material ends up being recovered at the end of the day or not, the private transfer stations, those fees are assessed at the back door, so only the disposed materials are being assessed regional system fee. I think just the nuance there is. There are some recovered materials at metro transfer stations where that fee is paid upfront. Mr. Dennis said that decreasing the regional system fee to 5% would be about a \$467,000 decrease. Chair Nolan asked so that means every percent is about \$400,000. Mr. Dennis said it would be closer to \$450,000. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Fiona Conneely, Environment & Health Advocate, asked a couple of clarifying questions. The first one was on a distinction between the fees I see in the solid waste fee no additions proposed, and I know that in the system facilities, plans there are a couple of infrastructural investments in the Metro transfer stations like the organics, depackager and other kind of maintenance and things. So, I just want to clarify that anything that's in that plan is being included in the regional system fee increase. Ms. McGuire said what we have included in the proposed budget for this year includes on the regional system fee is the site planning for the Cornelius depot, because that is focused on reuse and recycling and the Reuse impact Fund,

which would also be a regional waste reduction program. We also have our capital reserves that are separated by fee. So we have regional system fee funds for capital projects for regional system fee programs, like the MetroPaint or household hazardous waste, and improvements in capital projects are funded from those reserves, same with the reserves, for the solid waste fee. Those are focused on improvements at our transfer stations. So they're also separate in our capital improvement plan, and where they're funded from. Ms. Conneely asked so system, facility plan improvements like for organics processing at the Metro stations are coming from the solid waste fee capital. Ms. McGuire said it depends on what they are in the system facilities plan. One of the investments is in pre-processing equipment at Metro Central. So that would be a regional system fee as it's focused on organics and getting waste out of the waste stream. Ms. Conneely said that was kind of my question. Thank you for that. And then other question. It's hard for me to tell the exact kind of percent increases year over year since the exact numbers aren't stated on here but looking at the fee history specifically for the solid waste fee. It looks like the last year was about a 10% jump. Ms. McGuire said it was 16% last year for the solid waste fee and it was 1% for the regional system fee. Ms. Conneely asked a follow-up question, I know a lot of the historical kind of spike increase has been in wage, equity and benefits and things like that, and I remember in part of the preparation packet, there was kind of a chart outlining the average solid waste worker wage increase and that was closer to 4% for that same period. So, I'm just curious where those pay equity priorities are when making those fee adjustments. Ms. McGuire said we have fee adjustments and wages that are determined by our union contracts. But so those are for our Metro employees, and then we have also worked to align two major contracts to operate our two transfer stations through Recology. So, we have worked to align the wages for what Metro employees are making with the wages that the Recology workers are making through those contract operations. We definitely still have more work to do in that area. If you've looked at our median wage indicator, but we have seen some progress in the last couple of years. Ms. Conneely said thank you.

Chieko Yoshihara, Communities of Color, asked if the new investments for the new Cornelius depot and also Reuse Impact Fund are included in regional system fee increase. Are the 3 new employees included in the same regional system fee increase? Ms. McGuire responded yes, that proposed increase includes those modifications that are listed on that slide, both the Reuse Impact Fund and the staffing and the funding to do the planning work. Ms. Yoshihara said thank you. Ms. Yoshihara asked if the solid waste fee increase, and also regional system fee increase account for tonnage decrease. If that's why it looks a little high, like at 11.41% and 5.97%. If the model fails and the garbage increases and then there is a surplus income for Metro, what happens to the surplus income for Metro. Mr. Dennis

responded that would create an ending fund balance higher than we expect. And then to start off the next fiscal year, we take that into consideration as we're developing the fees. If there's a higher beginning fund balance, then there might not be a need to increase fees as much depending on what the cost circumstances are. Ms. Yoshihara said thank you.

Councilor Angelita Morillo, City of Portland, asked if there was mention of any organics yard debris and transaction fee changes in the presentation, because I think, for the City of Portland the organic fee is pretty important to us. Ms. McGuire responded we did not go over the detailed material fees that are accepted at Metro transfer stations, but we have provided that to the city of Portland staff in the last week. Mr. Dennis confirmed. Councilor Morillo said I think it would be helpful to hear. Well, I'll get those materials from staff. Hearing that in this meeting would be helpful as well. Just to get a full context of the fees. To have a I think, a more robust discussion. I'm also a little confused, it sounds like the majority of the fee increases in the way that they've been discussed here is being discussed because of the Covid freeze, but in the last few years it looks like those fees increased at more than 3 times the rate of inflation. Can you dive into that a little bit more? Mr. Dennis responded We had renegotiated contracts at one of our stations. Anytime we're renegotiating contracts at the transfer station there's usually an expectation that there's gonna be an increase in costs. Additionally, Council directed us to disassociate the regional system fee from the solid waste fee. In prior years the regional system fee was helping to support the transfer station operations, and by pulling the regional system fee out, it put more pressure on the solid waste fee to maintain the operations at those transfer stations. And then, finally, I would say that there's capital maintenance needs and investments that require a little bit of increase on fees to ensure that those increasing costs for capital projects are covered. Councilor Morillo said thank you. And then I had just one more question. Can you cover why the personnel costs are going up so much higher than the contract costs at the transfer stations this was part of our materials in the packet that we received. Mr. Dennis responded if you're speaking to the personnel costs that we showed in our slide. Those are specifically Metro staff personnel costs all of the personnel costs for the operations at the transfer stations are paid out of materials and services within our budget. Is that what you're asking? Councilor Morillo said yeah, thank you, I appreciate it. I'll stop taking up so much time. Chair Nolan said the reason we have question is for everyone to get their head wrapped around it so don't apologize. Thank you all for that discussion. I think that does enrich the context of our upcoming prioritization.

Councilor Nolan asked Ms. McGuire to explain the cards dealt out for the activity. Ms. McGuire said pull up the slide deck one more time on the last slide. Ms. McGuire said each committee member will have 6 color coded cards, as I mentioned earlier. Those in person

have 2 green, 2 yellow, 2 red, to share feedback on the proposed budget and fees. Considering those 6 categories that we have shared. Those that are in the virtual space, you will have access to an online document that has 3 columns, green, yellow, and red, for you to enter your input you will have 10 minutes to write your responses, and then we will pause, and you all have 5 minutes to kind of turn to your person to the person closest to you to share and exchange ideas, and then share. Councilor Nolan will bring the group back together, and we will do a group share of your top 2. Following that staff is going to be collecting your cards, and we will take a break, and we're going to do some grouping to identify the major themes and common agreement areas across the committee to then come back for discussion on those. Councilor Nolan asked how did we do on breakout rooms? Carly Tabert, WPES, said we will have to share an additional zoom link for folks online to join another room. So, I will share that after our 10 min are up for you to respond. Councilor Nolan said fabulous, okay, lead the way, Ms. McGuire .

Ms. McGuire said we can start that 10 min now and if you have questions, please feel free to raise your hand, and we're happy to come around to you. Councilor Nolan said great.

Chair Nolan said the plan now was to have people have an opportunity to share a few ideas with a neighbor. Another option would be for us to give each committee member a little more time to share their own thoughts, given that we are split in the room and on remote. I'm inclined to go straight to the individual sharing unless people think there'd be value in chatting with a neighbor. So I'm going to move to going straight to individual sharing unless I hear pushback. The phones, the microphones are open for pushback now. Did anybody hear anything? Ms. Vargas Duncan, I just said sure. Chair Nolan said okay.

Vice chair Lewis said let's put a card up. Ms. Vargas Duncan said I'm just gonna start with the red, and maybe we'll work to green. So with that said don't take it too bad, but sometimes it's easier just to get the hard stuff out first. When I speak, I'm speaking in part for my perspective and what I'm learning and hearing here, so this isn't necessarily what all the Metro area garbage haulers that I represent think. But having that disclaimer I have heard a lot of questions regarding why does Metro need 3 new FTE for working the System Facility Plan, because we all know Metro has done a great job doing a lot of work on that plan and a lot of engagement across a lot of jurisdictions for years. And why not turn those folks that were doing that kind of work into doing the work of starting to turn the dial and get some of this rolling. So that's my first red flag. The second is really on the heels of Counselor Morillo's question regarding, why are the personnel costs so high with the and at the transfer station, so that pertains to the solid waste fee, and was higher than what was outlined in the contract that Metro has for administering those transfer stations. So my

question is, if I'm hearing the answer correctly to that question, is Metro staff and their benefits outpacing what is in the contract, that they're obligated to per the contract and if so why is that? That was also raised a red flag. I'm not verbalizing this very well, but it just sounded like Metro staff was outpacing what's in, I think, the 10 year contract that Metro is engaged in to run those facilities right now, and it just sounded all right. Chair Nolan said thank you, Beth . All we're doing now is putting these things out on the table. We're not getting answers from staff. Chair Nolan asked anything else, Beth . Ms. Vargas Duncan said No, thank you.

Chair Nolan said I would prefer, if it's okay with folks to just go around the table rather than expect everyone to put cards up, because I would like to hear from everyone, even if it's I don't have anything to add at this point.

Ms. Kirouac-Fram said one that I will share is, I'll share one of my red flags, which is just to highlight the fact that the loss of the I&I program means a net reduction of 1 million dollars of investment in reuse in the year. So that is a red flag that I listed and then the yellow. I was putting up a yellow to say that I think that we need to consider the impact of decreasing tonnage. Higher fees will lead to more illegal dumping, because, as you know, in this document, consumers have a limited ability to manage their own waste generation. So we do need to consider, I think I know that there's not. We're not going to get to the tipping point that Mr. Kennedy talked about. But will the fees just continue to go up 10% year over year? And is that sustainable. Chair Nolan said good questions.

Ms. Tokarski said I also actually had a concern about that with increased potential for illegal dumping. I also was concerned that the increase in the proposed solid waste fee would potentially harm small haulers and nonprofits, who kind of rely on hauling their own garbage to the transfer stations, and how that could potentially be offset with some other schemes, maybe potentially, EPR, not sure. Just wanted to throw that out there, that we've worked with a lot of small haulers who an increase in fees really adversely affects their ability to do what they do, which includes diversion and reuse. On the green side I put that the Reuse Impact Fund, I think, is very important, and a very important investment, especially taking into account that reuse and waste prevention are one of Metro's and our region's goals. So I think that's a really important part of this budget. Thank you. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Ms. Conneely said one of my questions is for clarity. My yellow flags was just wanting more clarity around how the solid waste fee increase over the last several years as compared to other transfer stations in the region, and whether this will have an impact to worsen

geographic disparities, or what that effect will be. And then just reiterating the question about transparency regarding where investments in pay equity eventually land, whether that's scaling down to people on the ground. Those were part of the same thing, but I guess those are separate. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Daisha Tate, Communities of Color, said I'll go with a yellow. It's basically regarding the solid waste increases, I definitely understand it a lot more being in the room and being able to hear. I don't necessarily like it, but I do understand it. And so my thing is, just, for, like the everyday people who are not committee members who don't talk this garbage language just getting that explanation in layman's terms of why your fees are increasing, so the everyday person can like once again. They won't like it. I don't like it, but you can get a little bit more understanding about it. My green, though, is the services and community education. I always love that you're meeting the people where they are. This is an open forum people from the public can join, how many people actually do join is very different, and especially, you know, for my community. But like, if there's an event at the park, and I'm there with my kids and you have a table. My kids are going to go. They're going to listen. And, like generally, my kids bring back a lot of information home to me where they're like, oh, no, I learned this, and you shouldn't do A, B and C, so yeah, services and community education. Like, I said, meeting the people where they are, I think, is very important to get the resources and information out. Chair Nolan said thank you.

Ms. Leichner said I'm going to do a red and a yellow. So my red is that the tonnage forecast versus the actual tons has an impact on the Metro budget and on the private facilities. Under the current methodology with Metro having a minimum amount of tons, if that forecast is off, that means that, as we heard earlier, Metro is capable of making a surplus which then affects the budget the following year, and the private facilities have caps. Those same surplus opportunities aren't available to the private facilities and the Metro budget and tip fee affects how private facilities set their rates as well. So that should be part of this overall conversation. And then a yellow, and also related to tonnage, is the System Facilities Plan has Metro moving away from commercial wet waste. And that I think we need to look at the overall minimum 40% Metro tons through the budget lens. How does that impact the need for Metro's capital improvements? If we're looking at going away from Metro handling commercial wet waste? That's just one piece of it. But how does the potential of Metro moving away from that lowering that 40%? How does that affect the overall Metro? Solid waste fee as we've discussed, you know, less tons with fixed cost to spread those tons across has an impact on the tip fee. Hopefully I articulated that in a way that makes sense. Chair Nolan said thank you.

Audrey O'Brien, DEQ, said that DEQ doesn't usually take any kind of a position on fees, and I just wanted to note that it seems the research is very good to evaluate needs in relation to the regional waste plan. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Teresa Gaddy, Communities of Color, said a lot of it is probably agreeing and seconding some of what other folks have already mentioned. I think that I just have a bit of yellow around even if we talk about getting rid of things or moving things or decreasing amounts somewhere like, doesn't that that's just going to stack up somewhere else later on down the line. Because I feel like those changes, those improvements, increased access and opportunity, for, you know, for the community to benefit from all this stuff, it's still it's still there, right? The need doesn't go away, and the need for those, the changes that Metro is suggesting. And all the things that need to happen within this budget like that doesn't change, even if we say, "Oh, that's too much right now." Like there was, Daisha, said I don't like it, but I know that's what needs to happen to make the system function better. But I do have some concerns. I don't know that if we take it away it just doesn't impact it later down the line, right? It seems like you're just moving it to a later date, which I don't know is helpful and then I think I was also just thinking about what Ms. Kirouac-Fram said just because the tonnage is decreasing doesn't mean it's not getting put somewhere else right, especially as prices increase. The illegal dumping and the things that we're maybe not considering or not tracking as easily in terms of how that plays out within the community. If the prices increase and the impact that's gonna have on the communities that are already struggling. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Ms. Yoshihara said I second Jackie and Laura. I have one yellow, here was an I & I fund, which was 2 million dollars and then it's sun setting. So I just thought we could have more Reuse Impact Fund instead about 1 million dollars. A green one I have is I want to focus on education and information. I took Master Recyclers program, and it was very helpful, very educational. I learned how to reduce waste and also how to be resourceful without even buying anything. Especially you know this is the time of uncertainty and people are feeling anxious about how the economy is going, and their wage is not actually increasing. So we should educate people about how to reduce waste, and then also reuse and repurpose things more than anything before. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Councilor Morillo said I had 2 points that I put in the yellow category, and I guess I would kind of frame them by reminding folks, some of this happened before my time, both on Council and coming to these meeting. But it's my understanding that Portland had sent a letter to this body asking for more transparency around fee disposal fee increases specifically and just having more transparency around how these decisions are made. So I

think that that would help answer some of the questions that I have. I added the points about the proposed increase. If the proposed increase is adopted, the RSF will have increased by 80% since 2020, which would be again 3 times more than inflation and that's a very pretty high, I considered putting it in red. But since it's my 1st time giving real feedback, I thought that might be a little too intense. It's also my understanding that the standard has been that if Metro is going to be guaranteeing business and corporate transfer stations, or guaranteeing business with private entities, Metro's fees are also going to be increasing. I just have concerns that Metro is not providing the oversight necessary to ensure that the fees at those private transfer stations are going to be reasonable. And at a time when people are so cost burdened, I just have a lot of concerns about all of that. Chair Nolan said thanks.

Chair Nolan said Marta , I believe now, in the agenda you're gonna go huddle in a corner and consolidate these comments for a few minutes. Ms. McGuire said yes, we'll have a 10 minute recess, and for those in person there's snacks in the hallway and for our audience members, and we will reconvene in 10 minutes. Chair Nolan said see you in 10 minutes.

Ms. McGuire, said we are going to be screen sharing shortly a summary of the most common themes across the different categories for those in the room we put the post-its up on the board for those in the audience. We're going to be screen in the virtual space we're going to be screen sharing a document in a moment. In the interest of time we were gonna review some of the key themes across the green system outcomes and support, and we might need to zoom in on that, so folks can see. But the idea would be to spend the most time either on the on the yellow or yellow and red categories to get additional information for Council consideration. Chair Nolan said great.

Ms. McGuire asked would you like me to read the categories for the yellow and red. Chair Nolan said bring it down a little, in hopes that maybe we can get the whole page on one. If people can still read that. Let's read it, and then in about a minute take questions on whether someone thinks their points. Chair Nolan asked now this, this is a consolidation of all the points, right? Ms. McGuire said correct. Ms. McGuire said common themes across everyone's comments where there was agreement. So there were multiple comments around staffing and scope of the system facilities plan. There were multiple comments around broad support for reuse and waste prevention investments. Chair Nolan said right.

Chair Nolan said we have 11 minutes yet in our scheduled time, so rather than read these out loud I would like to give people on the committee an opportunity to make a pitch that something either should be emphasized more than they think it is in this summary, or it

should be added to this summary of common concerns. This time we'll use hands up or cards up. This is your chance, folks, before the Metro Council considers the budget. Ms. McGuire said Beth and Councilor Lewis both have their cards up.

Ms. Vargas Duncan so I just don't see my comment reflected, regarding to holding the FTE steady. Ms. McGuire said under the 1st category staffing and scope has questions around whether 3 FTE are necessary. Vice Chair Lewis asked Beth is it because yours was red, and this is now yellow? Ms. Vargas Duncan said perhaps.

Ms. Vargas Duncan said I would like mine to be accurately reflected as red, not yellow, and I also don't see my second comment. It could perhaps be captured under more visibility into pay equity outcomes. But I don't think that quite reaches why it looks like Metro staff increase is greater than what is under contract at Metro's private transfer stations.

Vice Chair Lewis said all of this makes sense to me if I'm on Council and receiving it until Jackie we get to yours honestly. Because what you have framed as in that loss of a million dollars, we've actually moved to a different reuse program with the same level of investment. So I guess I'm wanting to hear more critique on if we're not telling that story well enough, or if our new program doesn't solve for what we need to be solving for. Ms. Kirouac-Fram said new program is the intention to move towards a next cycle type. What is the new program? Ms. McGuire responded the Reuse Impact Fund is what is in the system facilities plan to provide ongoing funding to reuse organizations. Ms. Kirouac-Fram said I am not understanding. My point was that the I & I was a 2 million dollars program, and the Reuse Impact Fund is a 1 million dollar program. So it appears to be a net loss of a million dollars of investment. Is that correct? Vice chair Lewis said reduce someplace else, and move to 2 million in future years, our hope is to get back to that level investment. Ms. McGuire confirmed

Ms. Kirouac-Fram said I made the comment about how these fee increases affect private transfer stations and MRFs. It wasn't specifically around reuse, which is how it's characterized here. It was just in general statement and it wasn't necessarily on stakeholder participation. I was just curious what the impacts are when the fees go up. That was just something that we haven't heard in the room, and I think need to be needs to be considered when in the budgetary conversations. So it's more just like financial impact on partners. Chair Nolan said thank you for bringing that up, Jackie. I think part of why we didn't hear much of that in the room. Is that one of our members who has represented private operators is going to have to resign from this committee because of health reasons and we

don't yet have that person a successor appointed. So Kristin was the only one here really to carry that message, and Beth.

Ms. Leichner said I had put one in yellow that I don't necessarily see reflected that is trying to understand how the system facilities plan has an impact on the budget which may not be this year, maybe it's future years, and that's why it's not reflected. But as Metro moves to get out of wet waste operations, how does that impact the need for capital improvement projects as well as overall tip fee increases if the number of tons going to metro facilities is going down as well.

Chair Nolan summarized the group feedback saying there is a more generalized concern about the magnitude of the fees that would be increased that would be required to fully implement the budget request. Chair Nolan asked the committee if that is an accurate reflection.

Ms. Kirouac-Fram said I had more questions than concerns when it comes to the fee increases like, how do they affect private operators and that sort of thing. Operating an organization myself, inflation has had an enormous impact on our ability to do our work without additional revenue. So, I definitely understand what's going on. I just had a lot of questions, but I, personally, don't have concerns about the rate increases, especially considering that when they get to the consumer, do not result at this point, anyway, in very significant increases. Chair Nolan said thank you.

Ms. Vargas Duncan expressed overall concern of just the amount of the increase. Metro will get paid, the haulers we go back to local governments and go through our rate review process. Each of the haulers may or may not get all their costs covered as it varies depending on what the rate of return would be for each company. Chair Nolan said thank you.

Ms. Tokarski said generally my concern is kind of a yellow in general, and I would say that I don't have many concerns about the regional system fee increase. I'm a little more concerned about the solid waste fee increase, and how that could impact system users. But I feel pretty good about the regional system fee increase generally, to clarify. Chair Nolan said thank you.

3.**Final Remarks**

Chair Nolan thanked the committee for their work. Staff will take this back and you will see it reflected back to you in a draft before Metro Council approves, takes action on the budget, and establishes fees for the coming fiscal year. Ms. McGuire said we will be asking for a quick turnaround, if that's possible. We hope to get you the draft report on Tuesday the 28th if not earlier, and then we would, if possible, ask you to review it by that Friday, as we will be taking it to Council the following week. If there's problems with that, please let us know. We'll be in touch by email. Councilor Nolan said thank you.

Public Comment Period

Terrell Garrett, GreenWay Recycling, commented one thing that Kristin has brought up a number of times is that Metro is looking at getting out of wet waste, but in addition the plan is for Metro to get out of dry waste down at South. But there is no comment about Central, and this leads into a loose restatement of my question last month I said I would bring back, and that is, with Central located in the city limits of Portland, as well as 4 additional private facilities that handle dry waste and those facilities having a very, very significant amount of overcapacity. My question is, with Metro's recovery rate being so low, and 3 of the 4 private facilities in Portland having recovery rates ranging from twice to 4 times that of Metro and to quote you, Councilor Nolan, that less garbage to the landfill is good. Chair Nolan said yes. Mr. Garrett said I listen to you, yes, I do. Well, there's an easy way to overnight, keep at least 15,000 tons a year of dry waste out of the landfill and that's to let us private operators take on that commercial dry waste out of Central, just like you're planning on doing out of South. 15,000 tons overnight. So my question is, why don't we do this? Chair Nolan said as you know, Mr. Garrett, you won't be getting an answer to that question today, but we're going to take it as a recommendation for consideration and evaluation. Mr. Garrett said I did ask this a month ago. Chair Nolan said I know. Mr. Garrett asked that means I'm not going to get an answer at all? Mr. Garrett said it's a fair question, I think, to ask. Chair Nolan said it's a fair question, but we will get back to you but we have some things that needed to fit other deadlines. Mr. Garrett said right, I understand, but 15,000 tons is 15,000 tons, and to sit back and make all these plans to do it at other locations and not at Central is pretty unfair to be honest. So I accept no answer today. But I do not accept no answer at all. Chair Nolan said fair enough. Mr. Garrett said we'll keep coming back for an answer. Chair Nolan said thank you.

MEETING ADJOURNED