



Meeting minutes

Meeting: Regional Waste Advisory Committee (RWAC) Inaugural Meeting
Date: Thursday, October 31, 2019
Time: 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center council chamber (3rd floor)
Purpose: Regional Waste Advisory Committee overview and member roles
Outcome(s): 1) Shared understanding of Regional Waste Plan and leading with racial equity
2) Shared understanding of committee charge and member roles

Members in Attendance:

Joe Buck, Small business owner
Sharetta Butcher, North by Northeast Community Health Center (NxNE)
Marilou Carrera, Portland Resident
Alondra Flores Aviña, Student
Jill Kolek, City of Portland
Theresa Koppang, Washington County
Shannon Martin, City of Gresham
Marta McGuire, Metro
Audrey O'Brien, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Eben Polk, Clackamas County
Jenny Slepian, City of Lake Oswego
Beth Vargas Duncan, Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association (ORRA)

Members Absent:

Roy Brower, Metro
Christa McDermott, Community Environmental Services, PSU

1. CALL TO ORDER & MEETING OVERVIEW

Marta McGuire (Metro) brought the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. and previewed the agenda.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. McGuire introduced the group activity for committee member introductions.

Groups began their breakout introductions with the following questions:

1. What was your main interest in serving on the committee?
2. What are you most looking forward to working on as a part of this committee's work?
3. What is your favorite candy or sweet treat?

3. Ms. McGuire introduced Metro Councilor Juan Carlos González.

Councilor González (Metro) welcomed everyone to the first Regional Waste Advisory Committee meeting. He wanted to highlight a few key things specific to the Regional Waste Plan process. First is that this process was lead with racial equity which is one of Metro's major efforts to bring change to the region. This committee has the opportunity to provide that vision and help to hold Metro accountable to what those changes can be. Councilor González worked on the 2030 Regional Waste plan since 2016.

Councilor González noted that when people think about Metro, they think about land use and transportation and don't always think about the impact in garbage and recycling. But this committee recognizes that garbage is the great equalizer. We all produce it. It doesn't matter our income level, we all produce garbage and it all impacts our quality of life depending on how we are able to manage it and how the system serves us, our families, our communities, and our neighborhoods. At the same time, it provides us the opportunity to think about how we can transform this system that has historically been seen as a burden into an asset (the economy, the jobs, and money associated with this system) for the greater Portland region.

Councilor González noted that the Regional Waste Plan details quite a few actions and goals and he felt the vision within the plan should be exciting to move forward. Councilor González noted that this committee was embarking on a journey to inform how Metro improves and changes some of the major aspects of the solid waste system and he noted the need for the committee to inform Metro Council if they are going in the right direction. He thanked the committee for being present today.

4. METRO: OVERVIEW

Andrew Scott (Metro) presented an overview of Metro as a regional government. Mr. Scott is serving as Interim Chief Operating Officer (COO) while the Metro Council completes the search for a new COO at which point he will return to his position as the Deputy Chief Operating Officer (DCOO).

Mr. Scott explained that Metro's region has 24 cities and 3 counties and the idea of Metro is one regional government that brings it all together. Formed in 1979, Metro has gone through a number of stages and different iterations. But today we are the nation's only regional elected government. Being led by this elected council, this unique regional government is intended to ensure that Oregonians have a voice in a variety of decisions at the regional level: land and transportation planning, water and wildlife conservation, garbage and recycling decisions, and arts and venue management. The idea is that we can do things better as a region than we can individually as jurisdictions.

Mr. Scott noted that some of the things that Metro does:

- Creating a unique parks system (e.g. protect 17,000 acres of parks, trails, and natural areas)
- Shaping communities (land use planning, collaborative work on transportation & housing)
- Advancing innovations in the garbage system. Mr. Scott highlighted the example of Metro paint which uses recycled paint and resells as high quality paint. The goal of the waste system is to reuse as much as possible, safely dispose of what remains, and keep as much out of the landfill as possible.
- Visitor venues which are some of the most popular venues in the state including the Zoo, the Convention Center, the Expo Center. Mr. Scott noted that it is amazing how few people know these venues are managed by Metro.

Mr. Scott introduced the 7 Metro councilors:

Council President	Lynn Peterson
District 1	Shirley Craddick
District 2	Christine Lewis
District 3	Craig Dirksen
District 4	Juan Carlos González
District 5	Sam Chase
District 6	Bob Stacey

5. 2030 REGIONAL WASTE PLAN

Dan Blue (Metro) presented on why Metro and the Property & Environmental Services department are leading with racial equity. He shared a brief and selective history of the region's solid waste system.

Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA) commented after Mr. Blue's presentation, noting her comments were coming from her and not necessarily representing all haulers, that she was a franchise and revenue administrator for the city of Salem for 6 years and franchising has run quite a bit through her almost two decade career. She wanted to share her perspective in why local governments franchise (not just garbage, but most utilities are franchised). It is a close, highly regulated partnership between the local government and garbage haulers/other entities. It's important to note that in the garbage industry, one of the main reasons franchising came about was that local governments wanted to increase recycling. On the west coast it has proven to be very instrumental to moving forward the region's recycling. Ms. Vargas Duncan wanted to share her perspective that being able to advance recycling in a way can come at a price. There has been a lot of merging with more regulation. There has been a close and very beneficial partnership with local government which she noted the industry she represents values very highly. It has become a lot more expensive to comply with regulations which create real challenges for all the businesses/franchises/haulers to survive. People retire, companies merge, etc. which is a large reason for the diminishing number of companies in the industry.

Ms. Vargas Duncan (ORRA) shared that when franchising came about in Portland in 1992, the city really sought to advance recycling. The stories that Ms. Vargas Duncan has heard about that history emphasize that it was a very difficult and painful process to establish the territories and it was not done easily. Very difficult thing to achieve. Ms. Vargas Duncan communicated that there are a lot of very hard working and well-intentioned people and businesses in the hauling/franchise industry.

Mr. Blue (Metro) shared that the franchise system provides many benefits and one of the reasons Metro did franchise was to avoid having multiple garbage trucks servicing six residents on the same street. There are environmental benefits, reducing greenhouse gases, efficiency, and education. The rate model is set to compensate haulers fairly to adequately cover their costs and create new investments.

Links/source material related to Mr. Blue's presentation:

<https://www.volgagemansportland.info/>

<https://www.volgagemansportland.info/garbage-haulers.html>

http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1169&context=oscdl_cityclub

Rob Nathan (Metro) presented on the 2030 Regional Waste Plan values, principles & goals.

Mr. Nathan ask the question: How does the case study of Odell Butler presented by Mr. Blue shed light on why Metro's 2030 Regional Waste Plan leads with racial equity?

Theresa Koppang (Washington County) commented that the case study shows the barriers to entry into what is both a dangerous and difficult profession but also very lucrative. It shows how people have been kept out of building wealth. She noted that there is a similar example in Washington County as well.

Jenny Slepian (City of Lake Oswego) commented that it sets the stage that a lot of the garbage world has been designed to service mostly white families. She noted that if we don't have other voices

working in the industry then the only community that gets thought of is people like them. There is historical knowledge about why decisions have been made. The Odell Butler case study shows that as well.

Eben Polk (Clackamas County) noted that the time and place in which the story happened, there were maybe fewer barriers to entry in the garbage and recycling industry. Odell was able to start providing services and was working in that space. It is clear that there was a race issue in the case study of Odell Butler versus some of the other barriers that might exist today.

Mr. Nathan asked the question: what are some examples of how people of color and other disenfranchised groups are excluded from the garbage and recycling system but also services?

Joe Buck (small business owner) noted that in Lake Oswego, single residential households have compost services but multi-family households do not have access to that service.

Mr. Nathan echoed Mr. Buck's comment about gaps in services to multi-family units and commented that multi-family housing is usually with low-income families and people of color and individuals that struggle with other barriers as well.

Alondra Flores Aviña (student) commented that the communities that she works with go through bulky waste issues. There can be a gap in access to resources, education, etc.

6. COMMITTEE PURPOSE & AGREEMENTS

Ms. McGuire led a presentation on how the Regional Waste Advisory Committee fits within the larger Metro committee structure and she began the discussion on committee purpose and agreements:

- Plan oversight and committee charge
- Meeting procedures
- Roles and responsibilities break out discussion

Ms. McGuire let the group know that the discussion on working agreements would continue at the next meeting and the notes will be combined and emailed to committee members for review prior to the next meeting in November.

7. MEETING AJOURNED at 10 a.m.

Next meeting

November 14, 2019 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Metro Regional Center council chamber (3rd floor)