

## **SWAAC Meeting Minutes**

Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee

July 8, 2021

### **Attendance**

- SWAAC: Anne Johnson, Christine Hirsh-Putnam, Peggy Gilges, Jesse Warren, Margaret Eldridge, Teri Kent, Navarre Bartz, Monty Harris
- Liaisons: Liz Palmer, Donna Price, Phil McKalips, Elizabeth Jones, Lance Stewart, Shirese Franklin
- Others attending: Betsey Soulsby, Melanie Arthur, Lindsay Snoddy

### **Action Items**

- Teri and Anne will discuss preparing a news story about illegal dumping in Albemarle.  
Pending
- Melanie will forward contact information to Phil for Atlas EPS recyclers in Martinsville.
- Peggy and Navarre will work with EJ to update Albemarle's "quick reference" guide.
- Monty will investigate whether there are any state bagging requirements.

### **Old Business**

- The June meeting minutes were approved.

### **County Report**

- Lance has received some information from GBB on hauler requirements. More information will be forthcoming.
- Ideally we would collaborate with the City on setting requirements. Charlottesville's point person working with GBB has given notice and it's not clear yet whether this will slow down Charlottesville's waste reduction and diversion work with GBB.
- Examples of hauler requirements around the U.S. include ensuring loads are covered to prevent litter, setting vehicle maintenance standards, fuel efficiency standards, establishment of service districts coordinated by a local waste authority, providing data and data tracking.
- EJ reported on plastic bag tax implementation. The County can take this legislation up possibly as early as Nov./Dec. 2021 or Feb./Mar. 2022. So far, two Virginia localities have moved to establish the tax: the City of Roanoke and the County of Fairfax.
- Monty noted that some stores think they are required to use a bag when they aren't. For example, many stores believe it is a legal requirement to bag beer, wine or liquor. We should ensure that stores know this is not a law. He will find out if there are any legal requirements to use bags in Virginia.

### **Planning and Vision Subcommittee**

- Navarre has rejoined us after a paternity leave.

- Peggy will send the Virginia Dept. of Taxation draft guidelines for the plastic bag tax to SWAAC.
- We will work with EJ to update and redesign the Albemarle Co. quick reference guide on reuse, recycling and safe HHW disposal.
- Peggy will check past meeting minutes to see what the proposed threshold for hauler regulations was and to which companies it would apply.

### **Operations Subcommittee**

- No meeting was held in June due to requirements placed on online public meetings. If allowed, the next meeting will be an in-person meeting at Kardinal Hall on July 23, 5 pm.
- Glass collection update- only Happy Little Dumpster has responded so far with information about which areas they could service and what their charges would be to provide roll-offs and regular collection. In the meantime, the economic situation is shifting. If Strategic Materials will not pay for the material or at least pick up the glass for free, this recycling program may not be feasible. Jesse will speak to Scott DeFife at GPI to let him know what's going on.
- Shirese said there has not been a meeting of the Solid Waste Planning Unit so no update right now. Kristel Riddervold will be participating as the City's representative on the SWPU group.

### **Education and Outreach Subcommittee**

- No meeting held. If allowed, the next meeting will be in person, July 23, 6pm at Kardinal Hall.
- Christine let us know that the County now has an Environmental Stewardship Hub on its website, which brings together information on climate action and water protection, native plants and sustainable materials management.
- Anti-litter radio PSAs have been prepared and sent to community radio, so we should be hearing them soon!
- Melanie found out that there is an EPS recycler in Martinsville. She will give contact info to Phil to see if any collection would be feasible. It is not clear whether they reuse EPS or recycle it in some way and what forms they would accept.
- Recycling Ambassadors are finding conditions hot during the summer at McIntire. Christine said that perhaps "No Idle" signs should be posted as many people leave their cars idling while doing their recycling.
- Phil said that a recent survey at McIntire from June 21-July 2<sup>nd</sup> showed that 2,807 vehicles entered during that period. 1,705 were from the County, 980 from the City and 122 from elsewhere. That is the second highest ever tally for the facility since counts were initiated.

**Guest: Lindsay Snoddy**, Deputy Director, Building Management, Albemarle Co. Schools

- Lindsay is open to providing for back of house compost collection at all ACP schools. The most interested schools could probably do this, as well as front of house composting, as soon as this coming school year, with other schools moving to composting in subsequent years.
- She hopes to create a budget for school year '22-'23 that would include money for stipends for school staff who would work in support of good composting practices in their schools, including “front of house” – ensuring elementary school children learn to compost correctly and providing guidance and oversight in upper school cafeterias.
- SWAAC would like to help the reintroduction and expansion of composting in any way that we can. Christine, who set up and managed the composting program at Tandem Friends School, volunteered to work at schools with kitchen staff and students to ensure there is no confusion about what can and cannot be composted. Other SWAAC members are also interested in helping in this way. Perhaps we can use volunteer ambassadors as we do with recycling.
- Teri said there is also a short video of the Black Bear Composting process that could be shown. Eric Walter of Black Bear is an enthusiastic proponent who has given hands-on demonstrations at our schools in the past. He returns finished compost to the schools for their gardens, and provides detailed metrics.
- Teri said that NOPE also can provide metrics, and regularly provides them to RSWA for the McIntire composting.
- Liz asked if more could be done to bring local produce into our schools. We do use hummus from Red Hill. Lindsay will put Liz in touch with the head of child nutrition.
- In terms of reducing waste, some schools still use reusable lunch trays. Some schools use compostable lunch trays. The schools currently use disposable plastic utensils. We asked if it was feasible to use reusable (metal) utensils or compostable utensils. Lindsay said that there is significant loss of reusables as they can end up in trash accidentally. Compostable utensils are more expensive than conventional plastic.
- Margaret said it might be possible for the State to use procurement contracts for compostable utensils to reduce their price to schools.

### **Announcements**

- Anne is one of four citizens on the Governor’s Plastic Waste Prevention Advisory Council, created to facilitate the Governor’s Executive Order 77, and will serve as Chair.
- A separate task force is being created to concentrate on waste diversion and recycling. SWAAC should stay engaged and take part in public participation on the work of these committees.
- Anne has invited Marion Carter and Melanie Arthur to apply to join the SWAAC.
- Panorama Farms is continuing to develop their food waste composting operations. They currently receive food waste from only select sources (Blue Ridge School, Snowing in Space, for example).

- It's time to elect new officers! Vice Chair Christine is already serving as Chair of the County's Natural Heritage Committee.

Meeting dismissed 5:30 pm. Next meeting will be August 12.