

SWAAC Meeting Minutes

Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee

August 12, 2021 Online Meeting

Attendance

SWAAC: Anne Johnson, Christine Hirsh-Putnam, Navarre Bartz, Jesse Warren, Margaret Eldridge, Teri Kent, Monty Harris

Liaisons: Liz Palmer, Donna Price, Phil McKalips, Elizabeth Jones, Shirese Franklin

Others Attending: David Rhoades, RSWA Solid Waste Manager stepping in for Phil who had to leave the meeting early

Absent: Peggy Gilges

Action Items:

- SWAAC Report to BOS due - completed
- Teri and Anne will discuss preparing a news story about illegal dumping in Albemarle. Pending
- Phil will contact Atlas EPS recyclers in Martinsville about picking up styrofoam
- Navarre will complete Albemarle's "quick reference" guide and send it to SWAAC members for review
- Monty will contact ABC about any state bagging requirements.
- EJ will share GBB case studies with the SWAAC members once the study has been finalized in addition to providing a formal presentation to SWAAC
- Monty will contact Scott Defife to facilitate an introduction to glass recycling companies.
- Jesse will find new contact at Green Corner Consulting to pull in Nelson County for glass recycling
- Christine and Teri will meet to create an update to the C3 blog about what happens to items in curbside recycling
- Anne will share the Plastic Prevention Advisory Council link to the August meeting. No link.
- All SWAAC members agreed to identify and/or recruit at least one new member.
- Liz will look into how working groups can hold a virtual meeting

Old Business:

- Phil expressed concerns about collecting, compacting, and storing styrofoam, but he will follow through with a phone call to Atlas EPS. Discussion about using solvents in the recycling process.
- Discussed adapting "quick reference" guide to a searchable format. Navarre is working on the update and hopes to be done soon.

County Report: EJ provided this update

- GBB and Hauler requirements update. The County is in the review of the final report. They will look at the hauler requirements recommended by SWAAC and the case studies in the GBB, then consult with the County legal team to see what requirements can be implemented. The requirements will then need to be processed into legal code. The City of Charlottesville is eight weeks behind the County in completing its report. Liz asked that SWAAC get a copy of the City's report.
- SWAAC draft report to BOS is mostly complete. Liz clarified that the subcommittees were never put up for a vote, so they will now be referred to as working groups.

- “Love Albemarle” litter awareness campaign being developed by a cross-department group that includes community development, environmental facilities, parks, and rec, schools, communications, and equity and inclusion offices. The pilot program will include four events during the fall. Each event will take place in a different quadrant of the County and will have a different litter focus (roadways, trails, waterways, and stormwater, furniture and appliances). This will be carried over to an educational campaign during the winter and a joint, collaborative effort with the City of Charlottesville in Sugar Hollow in the spring. Partners include Rivanna Conservation Alliance and ACPS student cleanup events that happen before sporting events. The program will be evaluated for the following year to look at future funding needs and/or partners. EJ will keep the SWAAC updated on the program.

Operations Group:

- Productive July in-person meeting.
- Discussion about future group meetings. Liz will follow up on how these meetings can happen due to the COVID restrictions
- Glass Recycling:
 - Anne suggested the group write a formal letter to the Glass Packaging Institute about the anti-competitive position regarding glass hauling with Strategic Materials.
 - Jesse wants to wait because he thinks Strategic Materials remains a good partner. The price they are willing to pay for the glass remains volatile. It was initially \$20/ton, but has dropped to \$5/ton, below that price it may not be tenable in terms of offering the service to others.
 - EJ expressed concern about SWAAC sending a letter to an entity. Liz said the letter would need to be approved by the BOS and that the board would need an explanation to go along with the letter so the other members would understand the context of the letter. General agreement to wait on this letter for now.
 - Monty described the difficulty he has had in trying to contact Owen-Illinois Glass Inc. Anne recommended writing to Scott Defife at GPI (Glass Packaging Institute)
 - Discussed ways to get Nelson County involved. Looking for the right contact at Green Corner Consulting
- Yard waste:
 - Jesse has been thinking about the best place to put the group's energy. He thinks focusing on yard waste would be a worthwhile effort. He doesn't see any yard waste in his neighbor's yards so it is probably going to the landfill.
 - Discussion about leaf collection in the urban ring perhaps similar to the [program the City operates](#)
 - Christine mentioned the importance of educating landowners about mulching leaves in place and leaving a space for brush piles when possible so this material does not have to be transported. You will find this educational outreach on the City leaf collection website.
- Solid Waste Planning update (Shirese)

- No update available now, but will be meeting soon
- Contacted Piedmont Master Gardeners about composting and waiting to hear back
- Teri and Jesse discussed how partner groups can be involved
- The plan is due in late October and Teri will be invited
- As chair of the Plastic Waste Prevention Advisory Council, Anne would like to see more involvement from the planning districts in order to have more input from the rural areas. Shirese agreed to be contacted and to share her experience in trying to get verifiable data on recycling rates.

Planning and Vision Group:

- Navarre clarified that he is not chairing this group, so it is in need of a chair
- Nothing to report beyond the “quick reference” guide
- Discussed implementation of the plastic bag fee. Navarre, Liz, and Christine attended the Write Climate meeting where this was discussed.
 - Christine suggested renaming it to “Reusable Bag Incentive Program”
 - Anne said it was important that people understand how the collected fees will be spent (education, litter cleanup, etc)
- Discussion about the “quick reference” format so it is searchable and how to do that. In the future, it should be
- Anne expressed concern about the shift from plastic water bottles to aluminum bottles some of which may be made from alloys different from aluminum cans and may present recycling challenges. Anne has talked to Ball about this and they said that most bottles will be compatible with UBC recycling but there is a small amount that will be different. Did not think it would present a major issue. Anne asked Jesse about the challenges of implementing EO77 (Executive Order 77 mandating the reduction of solid waste and elimination of single-use plastic and polystyrene). Jesse said that UVA has requested exemptions for the use of water bottles in controlled areas where they will be recycled. Implementation of the EO77 will take time due to stockpiled materials, etc. Anne asked that Jesse report to SWAAC about the implementation of EO77.

Education and Outreach Group:

- Recycling Ambassadors:
 - Betsey has been volunteering weekly. We are seeing attrition with the volunteers. As it cools off, we will make a push to find more volunteers.
- Composting in schools
 - Christine, Monty, and Teri will be pushing forward with conversations as private citizens and will report to SWAAC
 - Teri described the work that C3 is doing with Cultivate Charlottesville and CATEC to work with the culinary classes on composting
- Virtual Meeting Requirements
 - Discussion about ways to use password protection to conduct a safe public meeting for our working groups
- Litter Events

- The group will support the “Love Albemarle” Campaign
- Education about where recycling goes, specifically curbside pickup
 - Teri described the need for more information about what haulers do with the materials they collect. While presenting to HOAs, Teri has heard a lot of skepticism about recycling.
 - Teri and Christine will meet to look at this so that Teri can update C3 blog on this topic

Other matters:

- The Plastic Waste Prevention Advisory Council will have the first in-person meeting on August 21st. There will be some interesting presentations. Anne will try to share a public link if she can find it. No link.
- No working groups are able to hold meetings at this moment.
- One prospective new SWAAC member was not able to complete the digital SWAAC application. Need to send an email to the Clerk to help this applicant use a paper application.
- Discussion about new officers: Christine offered to move into the chair position temporarily (six months to one year). No one volunteered to act as the secretary.
- There is a need for more committee members. Part of finding new members is raising awareness about the work SWAAC does.
- Need to recruit four new members by December 2021.
- Discussed using a transcript of the recording as meeting minutes. This could be used but it might not be very useful in pulling out action items.
- Anne and Christine will work on a way to handle the minutes in the future

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm. Next meeting will be held September 9, 2021.