

Draft SWAAC Meeting Minutes  
Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee  
December 9, 2021

Attendance:

SWAAC: Peggy Gilges, Jesse Warren, Margaret Eldridge, Navarre Bartz, Monty Harris, Teri Kent, Victoria Walsh, Betsey Soulsby, Anne Johnson, Sage Bradburn

Liaisons: Liz Palmer, Donna Price, Phil McKalips, Elizabeth Jones, Lance Stewart

Others Attending:

Absent: Christine Hirsh-Putnam

Welcome to new SWAAC members: Sage Bradburn and Betsey Soulsby

Guest Speaker: Chuck Reigle, Senior Vice-President of Government Affairs and Deposit Refund Systems (DRS) Compliance for TOMRA Systems ASA

- TOMRA- has evolved from developing technology for returnable materials to quality control in food sorting, in the mining industry, and advanced optical sorters for recycling MRFs
- Chuck's work with TOMRA focuses on promoting legislation to modernize and expand deposit systems, promote circular economy approaches
- Trends: zero waste, environmental justice, glass recycling issues, COVID and supply chain issues made producers more interested in bottle bill legislation
- Public and trade pressure pushing for producer responsibility bills
- Monitoring of recycled content commitments is key
- Beverage container recovery rate is still quite low in the US
- EU has targets on recovery for all packaging
- Designing a high performing container deposit-return system is complex. Key elements:
  - Performance targets set by governments
  - Redemption needs to be easy and accessible
  - Retailers and producers need to be financially and operationally invested
  - Need to build transparency and trust in system
- Top policies being promoted in US: single use plastic bans, extended producer responsibility (EPR), recycled content minimums, collection targets or bottle bills
- Success of recycling program in EU is due to incentives (required 30% recycled content and effective collection systems) and disincentives (fees and taxes imposed to make it very expensive to landfill)
- Glass is still a challenge in even the most advanced MRFs
- Sage asked how recycling is tracked. Work needs to be done to better track. [TJPDC Solid Waste Plan](#)
- EPR will push producers to design products that are more easily recycled
- Strategies for pushing legislation: promoting benefits such as litter reduction, jobs and economic development

## Old Business:

- November 2021 minutes approved
- Christine completed an updated [recycling blog for C3](#) and assembled a [list of local haulers](#) with contact information and information about where they take waste and recycling.
- Anne reported on PWPAC meetings-
  - November 1st report out- Anne will send link
  - Committee recommendations: To improve and facilitate the adoption of the plastic bag tax and metrics for measuring its effectiveness, to embark on state-wide waste characterization study, and to change rules around reporting requirements for MRFs to better understand what is being processed and where it is going
  - Last report to be completed next fall most likely will address circular economy policies like bottle deposit and EPR
- Supervisor Price reported on concerns associated with the expansion of the Amnesty Days in terms of labor costs/overtime and perhaps some abuse of tire amnesty

## County report, Lance Stewart

- Leaf collection
  - City cooperation in this effort may be challenging. In past years, City crew faced weather and equipment challenges with the bagged leaf pickup and the crew responsible for this work is presently understaffed due to frozen positions. The City now vacuums the leaves from the curb. This program is less expensive to run. City/County street sweeping revealed some challenges for this type of partnership. While working for the City, Lance had reached out to County Waste about picking up and hauling the leaves to Panorama Farm and they were interested so this might be an option.
- Littering at bus stops - trash cans on bus routes are emptied by GFL on a weekly basis as part of the City's trash collection. There is a working group addressing bus stops in high density areas in the County.

## Planning and Vision Group report- Peggy

- Waiting to hear about the GBB Study
- Comprehensive Plan update - need to review and weigh in on Chapter 12 revisions to sharpen toward climate goals
- Will be following GA and new legislation

#### Operations Group report- Jesse

- Met with Tom Syre from Strategic Materials. Will approach the Glass Packaging Foundation to see if they would look favorably on a grant request from Nelson County for glass recycling containers
- Monty still on conversation with Owens-Illinois
- Shirese- Waiting to hear back from DEQ about the draft of the TJPDC Solid Waste Plan. New TJPDC staff member, Isabelle O'Brien has been hired and is taking responsibility for solid waste and recycling. Both Shirese and Isabelle will be at the January meeting.
- School Composting- Teri working on moving things forward at CATEC
- Next meeting is Monday, January 10th at noon.

#### Education and Outreach Group - Peggy

- Margaret contacted Trex about field trip on either January 14th or February 4th. She will let us know when she hears back.

Recognition of the important work that Liz Palmer has done to seek and implement sustainable solutions for solid waste disposal and materials management.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30. The next meeting will be held on January 13th.