

Draft SWAAC Meeting Minutes
Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee
April 9, 2022

Attendance:

SWAAC: Christine Hirsh-Putnam, Ann Johnson, Jesse Warren, Betsey Soulsby, Teri Kent, Navarre Bartz, Monty Harris, Sage Bradburn, Victoria Walsh

Liaisons: Donna Price, Jim Andrews, Lance Stewart, Elizabeth Jones, Isabella O'Brien, Phil McKalips

SWAAC members absent: Peggy Gilges, Margaret Eldridge

Action items

- Phil and Peggy to check updates to RSWA FAQs are made.
- Christine and Jesse to talk to Jay Zook about plastic and glass messaging.
- Lance, Peggy and Christine talk about a plan to move hauler requirements forward.
- Lance to ask GBB about performing a waste characterization study of Albemarle. Important to climate action plan.

Old Business and Announcements

- Agenda for April meeting approved.
- March Minutes approved.
- County Recycling FAQs now link to RSWA. RSWA FAQs still have incorrect and outdated information. Peggy has communicated with Phil about what needs to be updated. Phil will address the corrections.
- Victoria questioned why GFL recycling bins in the City still say they collect plastics 1-7. The reason for this is that the City has a contract with GFL, and GFL says they are still collecting all numbered plastics, although it is doubtful all can be recycled.
- Christine has been appointed to the Advisory Committee for Environmental Sustainability to advise the ACPS, so she will be working with John Coles.
- SWAAC sent a letter to the BOS opposing installation of artificial turf in County parks. This will be discussed further at the end of the meeting.
- Jesse and Christine still intend to discuss plastic bag ban and glass recycling with Jay Zook of GFL.
- Regarding the Paper Sort problems, Lance said the County is now looking at siting the facility at Ivy MUC. Our only baler is on its last legs. Phil said the name of the new facility will be the Baling Facility, as this better describes the function of the facility.

County report on litter pick-up events

- EJ reported on the first of three school litter pick-ups coordinated by the County's "Love Albemarle" group: FES, Communications, SWAAC, Tracy Leverty/Keep VA Beautiful, Community Development, Equity. Two more events will be held, involving 5 schools and 600 kids picking up litter from school grounds.
- Stone Robinson is the only school that does clean ups on a regular basis.
- The County group and schools encouraged and answered questions from the kids, emphasizing pollution prevention and civic responsibility.

Planning and Vision Group

- Peggy and Navarre did not meet this month.

Operations Group

- Jesse was advised by EJ that the group could not meet. Confusion remains about what is required for SWAAC working groups to meet. SWAAC members are not elected officials and can meet requirements (posting publicly the agenda and meeting place, and keeping minutes), so the obstacles to meeting are frustrating.
- Lance will talk to Cynthia Hudson, interim contract attorney for Albemarle, to ensure we all know what the requirements are for working groups to meet.
- Jesse is looking for a volunteer to replace him in heading up Ops, as he has been leading the group for quite some time and currently has a lot on his plate.
- Regarding glass recycling, Nelson County wants to participate but will need some funding. TJPDC can assist by supporting a grant from the Glass Recycling Foundation of \$20,000 which will be matched by \$20,000 from Nelson County. Who will write the grant? Friends of Nelson possibly? Monty or Jesse will contact Steve Carter of Nelson Co. to work out details, ensure Nelson Co. funding. Teri can reach out to Friends of Nelson.
- The quarterly report from Black Bear is coming up, and it will be interesting to see how the composting is going, whether participation is increasing.
- Christine talked with a teacher at Greer who is willing to collect the compostable lunch trays and food waste and make sure they go into the compost bin. Monty will join in the conversation with John Coles on increasing the amount of food waste and compostable trays getting composted. Summer provides opportunity to organize for Fall.

Outreach and Education Group

- Betsey, Sage and Christine discussed the County's Environmental Stewardship Hub, the four elements of which are: biodiversity, water, climate and reducing waste.
- The Welcome to Albemarle part of the County website can also use this information to help new residents.
- HOA outreach may start with an introductory message about what the SWAAC is, how to recycle plastic bags/film and glass, and/or a monthly tip for HOAs that have monthly newsletters.

- The Daily Progress Welcome section and Cville Family Magazine are also willing to provide information about waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting in Albemarle.
- On March 23, Christine and Peggy made a presentation to about 35 Sierra Club members on local recycling and composting.
- A Western Albemarle High School student interviewed Christine and Betsey to jumpstart recycling at WAHS.
- Next meeting will be held at Wegman's 4/28 at 5 pm.
- Navarre's HOA recently switched from County Waste/GFL to Neighborhood Disposal. Neighborhood takes recyclables to van der Linde. We might want to invite a representative of Neighborhood to talk to SWAAC to try to get details about the recycling program.

County report

- Part of Chapter 13 of County Code was recently revised by the BOS to address "clutter," better defining waste kept on private properties (such as old vehicles).
- Clutter ordinance will not apply to the rural area (agricultural equipment, for example), but can compel some clean-up in more urban areas of the county.
- Peggy, Christine and Lance will meet soon to discuss an outline of how to proceed in implementing further amendments to Chapter 13 to establish requirements for waste haulers operating in the County.
- Ann asked if the GBB research changed anything about Chapter 13 recommendations put forward by the SWAAC pre-pandemic. Lance said yes, the GBB study had some ideas that we should incorporate. We need to move it quickly.
- Trevor Henry will address BOS questions/concerns about artificial turf after the 3/23 meeting at a 4/27 BOS work session. BOS waiting for answers.
- SWAAC wants to know what will become of the three artificial turf fields at County high schools when they are removed. The fields are at the end of their useful lives now. How will the County ensure the turf is responsibly disposed of, and what will be the cost of disposal? Monticello's field will be the first of the three to be replaced.
- SWAAC is disappointed that the County's Climate Action Plan has not been part of the discussion on artificial turf. Further, manufacturer claims about BrockFill are being accepted without rigorous examination, and some information that has been presented to the BOS about artificial turf is questionable.

New Business

- We will keep the top priorities we set at the February meeting after reviewing the 2015 Long Range Plan. We thought we should concentrate on four things: metrics, ACPS composting, expanding composting with more drop-off sites in the urban ring, baling facility improvements, lithium-ion battery info.
- Agreement on metrics as most important, as we have no insight into where we are now, which is foundational for making a plan going forward.

- Ann believes we need a waste characterization study, and urged Lance to ask GBB about doing one for Albemarle.
- An improved/expanded Baling Center is also crucial to our operations. Resource Recycling determined that currently VA recycles only 23% of aluminum cans and 9% of PET bottles. Really abysmal rates.
- Liz Palmer recently shared with SWAAC the Albemarle Co. Service Authority's annual detailed accounting of the reuse and recycling of its non-hazardous wastes for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021, which provides weights for each category and income if any and comments about where these materials go. Are weights from Republic or measured internally?
- Betsey asked how we can get better metrics from RSWA. What's possible? Currently we get no figures for separate categories, for example aluminum and mixed metals are lumped together, all types of paper scrap are lumped together.
- There are no scales at the Paper Sort facility. The new, improved Baling Center must have scales so that collected recyclables can be weighed and we can know measure how much of the distinct types of material we are recycling.
- We are working a lot on the recycling and composting, need to do more on the waste reduction side.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Next SWAAC meeting will be held Thursday, June 9.