



Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Thursday, February 9, 2023, 4-5:30 pm
County Office Building, 402 McIntire Rd
Room 235

Attendance:

SWAAC: Christine Hirsh-Putnam, Peggy Gilges, Victoria Walsh, Betsey Soulsby, Jesse Warren, Kendall Dix, Teri Kent, Adam Gendell, Margaret Eldridge, Monty Harris

SWAAC members absent: Navarre Bartz, Annie White

Liaisons: Jim Andrews, Donna Price, Lance Stewart, Phil McKalips

Guests:

Peggy called the meeting to order at 4:06pm. She announced that Navarre Bartz has resigned from the committee.

Old Business and Action Items:

- February 9, 2023 agenda approved (moved; seconded; all were in favor)
- January 12, 2023 meeting minutes approved (moved to accept by Christine; seconded by Teri; all were in favor of approving as submitted)

Action Items/Followup:

- March meeting guest- Craig Wittig from The Recycling Partnership's community grant partnerships. Isabella coming to March meeting to speak about the assessment of strategies using SMART criteria
- April meeting guest(s) - Invitation to area commercial compost haulers to learn more about the state of compost collection
 - Considering inviting Eric Walter from Black Bear and Matt from Lifecycle Organics to future meetings
- SWIFR infrastructure grant update for baler -
 - Lance reported that the extensive grant application is draft form completed by consultant for Rivanna Solid Waste Authority, due on Feb. 15th, being reviewed by county attorney before being signed by county executive, Lance will submit the grant, hopefully early to accommodate any technical issues when submitting
 - Will know of award in late summer/early fall
 - Requesting \$4 million for baling facility
 - Submission includes letters of support from city manager and director of solid waste authority
 - Full cost is \$6.4 million, grant application details that the remaining cost will be split 70/30 county/city

- Feb 22 recommended budget going to Board of Supervisors
- Facility tours for new members- Feb. 8th tour of Ivy MUC led by Phil - Christine, Victoria, Adam, Betsey, Kendall, Peggy attended
 - All waste from transfer station going to Republic landfill in Henrico County as of last July at \$50.50/ton (Amelia was \$64.25/ton in their bid)
 - 2019 Craig Coker completed a study to compost at Ivy MUC looking at different levels of food waste, organics and biosolids collection, \$6 million estimated price tag

County Report Out:

- Jamie Powers new employee working for Gabe Daley on county's climate action plan
- City has received final GBB report but can't yet talk about it

Planning and Vision:

- Last meeting: Thursday February 8th (Peggy and Kendall)
- Peggy reported out
 - Meet first Tuesday of every month at county office building, 4-5 pm
 - Looked at city's climate action plan to compare with county's
 - City has emissions reduction targets of 45% by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050
 - Specific goals on SMM referencing GBB's report
 - approximately 30% of city's waste is organics and compostable fibers
 - recommended 50% organics diversion goal by 2030 and overall waste reduction goal of 20% by 2030 and 90% by 2050
 - adopt SMM policy and scope Charlottesville's full waste system and partners (i.e., Rivanna and County)
 - education
- AC44 is going on now, we need to keep 2015 comprehensive plan goals in mind
- How can SWAAC help get composting services going in the county?
 - Pilot collection program in disadvantaged area for Justice 40 money
 - Most communities start with solid waste and recycling and then add organics, but why couldn't we start with curbside organics first
 - What about allowing families to drop off their compost at the school's bins when dropping off their kids?

Operations:

- Last meeting on January 26th
- Victoria reported that this committee is regrouping, working to define actionable items that the committee can accomplish

Education and Outreach:

- Last meeting on January 12th
- Christine reported out
- Focusing on school composting
- Discussed plastic bag tax and reusable bags

- Distributing reusable bags at West Haven, Dollar Tree, etc. with reminder card to put on their dashboard until bringing bag becomes a habit
- School composting update
 - Greer
 - Greer has successfully implemented composting - K, 1st and 5th graders doing well, filling one bin, requesting a second
 - Mountain View
 - Christine met with 4th grade teachers
 - Murray
 - interested in starting
 - Christine going to Hollymead after today's meeting to talk about composting there
- Scheduled to meet Feb.9th evening (following SWAAC meeting)
- Litter
 - Christine and Donna reported out on litter pick up on Secretary's Road
 - Lance suggested that libraries could have litter pick up kits to check out
 - Albemarle High School has lots of litter coming off the parking lot into the water retention area

New Business and Discussion:

- Adam's presentation on PET recycling.
 - Adam Gendell - The Recycling Partnership - works with big brands (Coke, McDonalds) and their packaging suppliers
 - Plastic packaging moving toward #1,2 and 5 due to pressure and it's path to recyclability
 - plastic packaging is 5% of MSW by weight, PET is 27% of that (which is 1% of all MSW = 7.7 billion pounds/year)
 - PET is either blow-molded bottles (82%) or thermoformed containers (18%) which are treated differently by recyclers
 - In 2021, 28.6% of PET bottles were recycled, rate has been flat since 2005
 - By comparison, about 30% of HDPE bottles are being recycled
 - Only 28 PET reclaimers servicing the US - big operations being bought up by PE firms, petrochemical companies
 - Variety of end markets for recycled PET - rPET, thermoform sheet, 30% gets made into carpet (bottles only), UNIFI in NC provides reclaimed bottles for fleece
 - Historically, Mohawk has bought half of recycled PET but they are now shutting down half their operations
 - Demand for PET is through the roof, except the highly colored PET (made into black staple fiber used in cars)
 - Bottle bill states like Oregon recycle 60% of their PET
- March meeting: Craig Wittig from The Recycling Partnership will present on their community grant partnerships.

- Peggy and Christine's offices of chair and vice-chair are set to expire in June and neither will seek another term.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40.

Next SWAAC meeting will be held **in person** Thursday, March, 9 2023, 4-5:30 in Room 235 of the County Office Building.