



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

Date: November 10, 2015

Commission Members Present: Chrissy Cooley, Sarah Chessman, Rus Higley, Jeff Bessmer, Peter Hickman, Philip Coughlan, Nick Cutting

Commission Members Excused: Ellen Moore, Felicity Devlin, Agnes Pate, Alyssa Illich

Others Present: Kristin Lynett, Emily Watts, Lowell Wyse, Jeanne Walter, Jim Parvey, Lisa Rennie, Jetta Antonakos, Ron Stewart

- **Roll Call**
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm
- **Approval of October 13, 2015 Meeting Notes**
 - The October meeting notes were approved with no changes.
- **Review of November Agenda**
 - The November agenda was approved with no changes.
- **Sustainable Material Management Plan Update**
 - The Cascadia Consulting reviewed the focus of the Materials Management Plan and the goal to reach 70% diversion rate by 2028. They also talked about getting to a *waypoint* towards zero waste.
 - The plan should leverage Environmental Services capabilities, be cost effective, and strive towards social equity.
 - The stakeholder interviews with community members found that the vision and goal are broadly supported and believed to be achievable.
 - Tacoma could improve in areas such as education/outreach, diversion of food, fiber, and wood, commercial, multi-family, and construction and demolition (C&D).
 - Incentives are preferred over mandates and public involvement is a key to success
 - It was found that a new materials recovery facility (MRF) for curbside recycling is not feasible with the current quantity. Other options include continuing to co-mingle residential recyclables or implement a "dirty MRF" with options that include the co-mingling of various materials such as residential, non-C&D, commercial waste, high grade non C&D, and self-haul.
 - After the recycling survey, the recycling rate went from 27% to 55% because the revised rate incorporates private recyclers including C&D which went from a recycling rate of 0% to a revised recycling rate of 82%
 - The raw data from the waste Generation baseline, recycling capture rate, and organics capture rate may be helpful for planning education and outreach in the future.

- Four scenarios were presented, each a potential pathway to achieve the 70% goal while keeping in mind the criteria of a waypoint to zero waste, balance, cost effectiveness, risk, equity/inclusion, and incentives.
- Scenario 1, the low hanging fruit scenario incorporates incentives, education, regulations, and limited new investments
- Scenario 2 includes scenario one elements but includes added regulations and investments.
- Scenario 3 builds upon these ideas but also includes an integrated MRF or dirty MRF with core programs and policies. It would include greater investment and newer technology which poses some risk as technology changes rapidly.
- Scenario 4 seeks to maximize material recovery and exceed the 70% goal. Its key elements have yet to be determined.
- All scenarios will be run in simulation models and Cascadia Consulting will get back to the group about the results.
- Not all waste is the same and can differ greatly like E-waste. How does one target this sector? Currently, the sectors are broken into categories including non-recoverables like household materials and technology. Strategies aimed at this include increasing exchange and reusability of these types of items.
- It was noted we must take into consideration volume as C&D weigh heavily while other components like plastic weigh much less.
- The focus is on meeting the 70% but there is concern that C&D moves the goal post.
- The scenarios will tell us whether or not we can get to 70% without C&D because the variables in each model are dynamic.

- **Environmental Action Plan Update**

- There is currently a long list of potential actions and Kristi would like input from everyone to edit/shape the actions before taking them to the public in December.
- Although the list is long, all of the items are felt to be relevant and important.
- Debrief from the IPS meeting; Council members were pleased but would like measurements included for certain points like the budget/funding for certain actions. Going back to IPS with another draft plan in January.
- There were concerns the list is too long and therefore overwhelming. Some items were too generic and Kristi would like them very specific, as well as Tacoma specific.
- One idea was to break them up into task-specific categories such as *Need to work on your garage?- Try these three things.*
- Another idea was to make it more visual by showing the climate impact by sector. May be easier to education and show citizens if it was more graphic.
- Send Kristi any thoughts/ideas you have about it.
- Maybe we should have a *Tip of the Week* on Facebook.
- Don't forget when making it Tacoma-specific that there are people living in the greater Pierce County area too.
- Maybe create Tacoma playing cards or get a phone ad.
- Currently advertising the December 7th public meeting at Evergreen-Tacoma. Everyone is challenged to invite two people who aren't the usual attendees of such events.

- **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

- Electric Vehicles Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee.

- Outreach and Education Subcommittee

- Current efforts are related to responsible bags.

- Responsible Bags Subcommittee

- This subcommittee has been partnering with the outreach subcommittee and created a Facebook page called *Plastic Ain't Tacoma's Bag*. They are still currently pursuing the Guinness record but need more sites.
- Through sponsorship, they were able to send out a postcard with a tear off pledge to show citizen support, but they need more funding for the website.

- Request to add item to December Agenda; Vote to send formal letter to council that includes a funding request.
- The STC Commission has advocated for council to take action on plastic bags but have heard from council that they would defer to the materials management plan and that they want to hear what the public think.
- Chrissy has the letter drafted and Kristi will send it to all group members.

Green Building Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee.

Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee

- There was no update from this subcommittee.

• **Staff Updates**

Jim Parvey

- The Grant sponsorship program is getting ready to be updated. Jim would like to talk about the possibility of a sustainability grant at the next meeting and requests that it be added to the December agenda.

Disposable Bag Survey

- The Disposable bag survey will launch within a week and a half and be open for about a month. The results will then be taken to IPS with feedback in January.
- There are separate surveys for residents and retail businesses. A letter is being sent out to retail businesses to encourage participation.
- The survey will be detailed and phrased with specific language like *Council is considering doing.....*
- The STC Commission formally recommended the Bellingham model but is opening a broader scope of examples because IPS asked for it.
- There should be a note included in the survey that says *the most common policy in WA is..... with frequently asked questions.*

Methanol Plan Proposal

- There is only a vague proposal for the methanol plant and not yet a formal application. If there is a formal application, the City of Tacoma will lead the SEPA.
- Citizens for a Healthy Bay has interest to be the info clearing house for the project so as to gather all true, unbiased info and share it with everyone.
- The company, North West Innovation Works, is still approaching the permit phase but is proposing state of the art technology with lower emissions. They are active in public outreach and may even be willing to come to the group to talk about it.
- There is some concern about hearing from the company and the need for an unbiased opinion. Others in the group would like to hear from both sides.
- A member of the public commented, stating he wished for an unbiased opinion and raised concerns about potential issues like the volume of water needed daily at the methanol plant.
- It was mentioned that the role of the group is to advise council of the pros and cons so they should hear what everyone has to say, gather information, then have an informed discussion about it.
- There was a motion to send an invitation to NW Innovation works and Sightline but there are concerns about the amount of time available for two presentations. The Sightline presentation can be viewed online and the invitation to NW Innovation works has been tabled for the next meeting.

EV Workshop

- The EV workshop on November 14th is almost full.

Climate Risk Assessment

- The climate risk assessment is due Friday for review after which an executive summary will follow.

- **Public Comment**

- There was no public comment other than the concerns raised in the Methanol Plan Proposal discussion.

- **Objectives for Next Meeting**

- Review the letter concerning the plastic bag ban and make an informed vote about sending it to council.
- Research Sightline and the methanol plant so as to make a vote about whether to invite NW Innovation Works to a meeting.
- Review the individual actions sent by Kristi in an excel spreadsheet.
- Find 2 friends to bring to the Climate Conversations meeting December 7th.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:25pm

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, December 8, 2015, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9th Floor Visibility Center.