

**City of Philadelphia Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee (SWRAC)  
MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** January 20, 2022

**ATTENDEES:**

**SWRAC Members**

Fern Gookin (Chair), Revolution Recovery  
Kyle Lewis, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department  
Bob Anderson, Retrievr + Closed Loop Partners  
Chuck Raudenbush, Solid Waste and Recycling Consultant  
Jack Embick, Environmental Attorney  
Maurice Sampson II, Clean Water Action

**Others Present:**

Adam Hendricks, Philadelphia Water Department  
Amy Cornelius, Green Building United  
Andy Shea, RNG Energy  
Emi Okamoto, Interested Party  
Helena Rudoff, City of Philadelphia – Office of Sustainability  
Kearni Warren, Energy Justice Network  
Laura Cassidy, Philadelphia Prison System  
Logan Welde, Clean Air Council  
Maria Horowitz, Philadelphia Water Department  
Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network  
Neil Garry, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department  
Peter Karasik, Interested Party  
Sarah Alessio Shea, Pennsylvania Resources Council  
Scott McGrath, City of Philadelphia – Streets Department  
Tamika Davis, Philadelphia International Airport

**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by SWRAC Chair Ms. Gookin at 3:05 pm.

**November 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from the November 18<sup>th</sup> General SWRAC meeting were approved as amended by voice vote.

**State of Recycling (Scott McGrath)**

- The processing rate has been relatively steady for the last few months and is still around \$70/tn. Early in the fall, the rate was lower but the market became flooded with virgin plastic materials, which caused the rate to rise.
- Colored and PET plastic rates have dropped in half from where they were. Rates have stabilized since.
- Aluminum has increased in value.
- Mixed paper and cardboard have remained steady.

- As market demand increases, decreases in processing rates are expected in spring and summer 2022. The overall outlook is positive right now.

#### **Organics Subcommittee Update (Adam Hendricks)**

- The Subcommittee met last week on January 12<sup>th</sup>
- A presentation was given by Rebecca Popowsky from OLIN Labs about using recycled glass in manufactured soils. They are starting the next phase of their research and are looking for sites to test the materials and a site to receive and crush glass. The link to their study was provided:
  - o [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57aa2c16ff7c50a63724b892/t/5d76c7fb5c63ff7ec70bca81/1568065531524/OLIN\\_Labs\\_Soil-less\\_Soils\\_Research\\_Initiative.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57aa2c16ff7c50a63724b892/t/5d76c7fb5c63ff7ec70bca81/1568065531524/OLIN_Labs_Soil-less_Soils_Research_Initiative.pdf)
- An update was given on the food waste digestion study. They are waiting on reports and planning the next steps.
- Helena Rudoff gave an update from Office of Sustainability, which will be reviewed later in this meeting as well.

#### **Zero Waste Subcommittee Update (Maurice Sampson)**

- The committee has been discussing the Waste Workshops held by the Office of Sustainability.
- They would like to first look at goals to get back to pre-COVID diversion levels before focusing on how to get to zero waste.
- Their next meetings will plan next steps for committee.

#### **Parks & Recreation Update**

No one from Parks & Recreation was in attendance. No update was given.

#### **Office of Sustainability (OOS) Update (Helena Rudoff)**

- Food waste
  - o Focus groups wrapped up in December 2021, which including asked questions specific to how food waste is handled in homes. Notes from all sessions and key takeaways have been compiled and will be used to inform messaging. A messaging campaign is expected to launch on Earth Day.
  - o Preparing for first day of food waste business challenge on Jan 31<sup>st</sup>. Businesses will engage in food waste diversion rate challenges over several months.
- Waste Workshops
  - o First Waste Workshop was convened in December 2021
  - o They are still going through the notes, which will be used to shape second workshop
  - o If you want to give one on one feedback about the Workshop, please email [helena.rudoff@phila.gov](mailto:helena.rudoff@phila.gov) and [nidhi.krishen@phila.gov](mailto:nidhi.krishen@phila.gov)

#### **Streets & Philadelphia Recycling Office (PRO) Update (Kyle Lewis)**

- The Department has been looking into a resource finder platform called Circular Merchant to connect people with information on how to recycle or donate materials. It's been used as a commercial resource but it has capabilities at the residential level as well.
  - o <https://www.circularmerchant.com/>
- They have put together diversion maps that compare recycling rates pre-COVID and more recently. The differences show that resources are challenged.
  - o Maurice Sampson commented that the maps are appreciated and valuable. He requested that these maps be made available to the Zero Waste Committee. Kyle will get back to the group on how this information can be made available.

## **Introductions**

### **Informational Items, Open Discussion and Announcements**

- Maurice Sampson let the group know about an event tonight through the Philadelphia Neighborhood Network: Philly Talks Trash
  - o <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/philly-talks-trash-a-virtual-series-on-waste-registration-239186502267>
- Amy Cornelius asked for an update on Retrievr: Bob Anderson says that they are continuing to collect computers, collecting clothes and electronics curbside. They have just collected over 1 million pounds, not all of that is from Philadelphia. They are about to launch a program in Denver that has a large marketing portion; they will use the learnings of that campaign in the Philadelphia area.
- Maurice Sampson asked if there are talks of putting together a Block Captain rally again; Kyle Lewis replied that there are discussions about it but there is not a specific plan yet because of the current COVID surge.

### **Next Meeting Date**

March 17, 2022 on Microsoft Teams

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55pm.