

Plan Implementation Advisory Committee Minutes

9/26/22 | 9:00AM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Bukowski, Ohren, Simmons, Stone, Weinert, Williams, Mason, Seegert

Members Absent:

BPW Liaison: Smith

Public Present:

Staff Present: Eggermont, Porta

Stone called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Roll Call

Todd Bukowski is present and attending remotely from City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI.

Sarah Mason is present and attending remotely from City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI

Matt Naud is on leave.

Joe Ohren is present and attending remotely from the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI.

Dave Seegert is present and attending remotely from Salem Township, Washtenaw County, MI

Chris Simmons is present and attending remotely from City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County, MI.

Lauren Smith is present and attending remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI.

Nancy Stone is present and attending remotely from the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI.

Bryan Weinert is present attending remotely from City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI.

Marc Williams is present attending remotely from City of Chelsea, Washtenaw County, MI

Public Comment

None

Approval of Agenda

Approval of agenda without amendment moved by Ohren, seconded by Bukowski. All in favor.

Approval of 7/25/2022 Minutes

Stone indicated in the education subcommittee section that ‘Abrams’ needs to be changed to ‘Albin’.

Approval of minutes with amendment moved by Ohren, seconded by Bukowski. All in favor.

Reports and Updates

County Updates

Eggermont provided on update on the School Recycling Program. An agreement was made between contractors to collect all recyclables in dumpsters and transport them to the Ann Arbor MRF. That system is working for some schools but not working for others. Since many schools have requested continued use of the blue carts, the county has been working with municipalities that have existing residential contracts to work the schools into those routes where available. This has started in Dexter and is being worked on for other schools.

Eggermont shared that the Ypsilanti Township cart grant is moving forward on November 1st. An educational campaign is being worked on to accompany the roll out of the carts. Ohren noted that there was good news coverage in the Ann Arbor News and MLive about the cart rollout.

Porta provided an update on the County Clean-Up Days. All five events this year saw an increase in attendance and materials collected. Most notable was the Saline event, which saw more than double the attendance from the 2021 event. Porta noted that a partnership with the Saline Environmental Commission for advertising the event and volunteer support helped make the event successful.

Eggermont shared that WRRMA is working on a grant project called App to Action as a follow up to last year's grant. The project targets households with no/low participation to encourage and identify barriers to their participation. A mailer will go out in October to the identified households that includes education about what their recyclables get turned into and a link to a survey that has questions about recycling carts and recycling behavior.

Mason provided an update on the cart tagging in the City of Ann Arbor that began in early July and went through the middle of August. A MRF audit focused on materials from single family residences was conducted before and after the tagging process, which showed a decrease in contamination after the tagging. Eggermont indicated that there was a little over 20% reduction in contamination and a significant decrease in scrap metal, which was the focus item of the top issue mailer that went out. Smith asked where people were instructed to take their scrap metal for recycling on the mailer. Mason responded that it instructed residents to take scrap metal to the Drop-Off Station.

Ann Arbor DOS

Eggermont shared that RRS received the contract for the consulting work for the new DOS project. The project's planning group recently met to discuss what materials the site would accept and how that impacts the facility design. The plan is to host a couple public education meetings, with the first one targeting stakeholders that would be more knowledgeable than the general public. The first meeting is anticipated for December. Bukowski inquired what the main topics would be. Eggermont responded that they would have a few designs to review with the first group, with the goal of narrowing it down to one design and then bringing that to the public.

WWRA quality improvement survey

Eggermont indicated that a quality improvement grant project is in progress at WWRA drop-off recycling sites that included an audit of the materials and a follow-up survey of residents at the sites. The survey identified materials being recycled, contaminants present, and where the person lives. Williams noted that 66% of the people who took the survey are not offered a curbside recycling program. Williams also noted that 92% of people surveyed are year-round residents, which supports the decision to send a mailer. The grant report will be shared with PIAC when it is completed.

Member Updates

Weinert shared that the second annual Trash Talk Tour was held on Sunday, September 18th. The event was widely promoted through Live Zero Waste and Washtenaw County Zero Waste Coalition. Around 250 people total attended some portion of the event. The event included the first public tour of the Ann Arbor MRF and a tour of the University of Michigan stadium that showed the cleanup that occurs after home games.

Subcommittee Updates

Stone shared that the Education Subcommittee did not meet last month.

Ohren noted that the metrics committee primarily discussed what Eggermont was going to be presenting in the next part of the agenda.

Solid Waste Ordinance Presentation and Discussion

Eggermont gave a presentation on the Solid Waste Ordinance. Eggermont started off by sharing that the main goal of the ordinance is to gather better metrics, rather than estimates that we currently rely on, to be able to determine progress on the county's Solid Waste Plan. Ohren suggested that the presentation place carbon emissions reductions as the primary goal. Eggermont noted that the current Solid Waste Plan does not explicitly mention carbon emissions but agrees that it should be at the forefront. Bukowski pointed out that one way to reduce carbon emissions would be to limit the overlap of haulers in one area. Eggermont responded that while that is a goal for the county, he doesn't believe it is not something that can be done legally, and is better suited to a carrot approach.

Williams asked how the percentage of material coming from Washtenaw County will be calculated if material is mixed from multiple counties and shared the example that 36% of WWRA material comes from outside of Washtenaw County. Eggermont indicated that they would apply that 36% to all WWRA materials collected to calculate how much is from Washtenaw County and would consider doing another audit every five years or so.

The group discussed the logistics of how this will impact transfer stations. This area needs to be worked out and will likely mirror the WWRA approach, if not be covered by the same language.

Eggermont indicated that the ordinance will include an education component. Every two years the authority or individual municipalities must send out a mailer. If the municipality doesn't cover it, such as in subscription-based communities, then the mailer will be the responsibility of the hauler.

Stone suggested changing the definition of yard waste to organics or compostables or adding food waste as a separate definition.

Eggermont will send out a cleaner copy of the ordinance with updates and PIAC can provide comments on that. PIAC will vote to approve the draft ordinance sometime in the new year.

Next Meeting

Eggermont shared that he will not be available for the November meeting and suggested the November meeting be moved to December 5. The committee vocalized support for the rescheduled date.

Next Steps

Eggermont will aim to send an updated draft copy of the solid waste ordinance to the group. Porta will take the necessary steps for posting the rescheduled meeting.

Public Comment

None

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m. moved by Ohren, seconded by Bukowski. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by Angela Porta

Minutes approved by Nancy Y. Stone 12/08/2022
Nancy Y. Stone, Secretary