

Plan Implementation Advisory Committee Minutes

7/24/2023 | 9:00AM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Bukowski, Mason, Simmons, Stone, Williams

Members Absent: Adams, Ohren, Seegert

BPW Liaison: Smith

Public Present:

Staff Present: Eggermont, Porta

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

Roll Call

Sean Adams is absent.

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

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

Joe Ohren is absent.

Dave Seegert is absent.

Chris Simmons is present attending remotely from the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, VA.

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

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

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

Public Comment

None

Approval of Agenda

Approval of agenda without amendment moved by Simmons, seconded by Williams. All in favor.

Approval of 5/22/2023 Minutes

Approval of minutes without amendment moved by Williams, seconded by Bukowski. All in favor.

Reports and Updates

County updates

Eggermont shared that two of the five County Clean-Up days have been held so far and the new registration system has been going well. The registration system has made the events more manageable for county staff and allows the county to better communicate with its contractors in advance of the event about what to expect. Williams asked if the volumes collected have remained the same. Eggermont responded that the volumes have not been reported yet, but the attendance will be lower due to registrants who do not show up to the event. The county will assess the no-show rate and modify the registration capacity accordingly to maximize attendance.

Eggermont provided an update that the Home Toxics Center anticipates moving to appointment-only soon. Eggermont explained that the change will help county staff work more safely and efficiently. In addition, better data about who uses the service will be collected. County staff are working on the details of that new system. Eggermont shared that the new Household Hazardous Waste Center at the Arbor Hills Landfill has a few more items to be completed and is expected to open in roughly one month.

Porta shared that the school recycling program RFP for the collaborative contract through WISD for all schools in the program to be under one contract for trash, cardboard, and carts for single-stream recycling is moving forward with Waste Management. The next step is to work with Waste Management and the schools to facilitate a smooth transition of services. Billing for services will now be between the schools

and the hauler, and the schools can be reimbursed for their single-stream recycling if they complete education minimum requirements. Eggermont added that the county is not subsidizing cardboard anymore, which will allow more funds to be allocated toward education and other waste reduction projects in the schools. The new contract has many protections and advantages built in for the schools that their previous waste contracts did not have, and the economies of scale resulted in large savings for the schools.

Eggermont shared that the Materials Management Planning (MMP) process is going to start sooner than originally expected. EGLE has stated they will call for the planning process to begin at the end of September. Bukowski asked if the county has anything in the current Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to measure greenhouse gas emissions reductions from food waste not going to landfills. Eggermont responded that the current SWMP does not, but it is something to consider as we look to make decisions in the upcoming MMP.

WRRMA

Eggermont shared that WRRMA is moving forward with a collaborative RFP for residential waste and recycling services with four communities that are very serious about participating. WRRMA is looking to put out the RFP by the beginning of 2024.

Drop-Off Station

Mason provided an update on the progress of the new Drop-Off Station (DOS) that will replace the existing DOS. The project team is the city of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Recycle Ann Arbor, and Resource Recycling Systems (RRS). RRS was hired to provide site design and engineering. Public engagement has been completed, which included public meetings, a stakeholder engagement presentation, and a public survey. The site concept design has been finalized and the city is currently working on a final plan to submit for approval through the Pittsfield Township Planning Commission process. The approval process is anticipated to be completed this fall, with construction starting in early 2024.

WWRA

Williams shared that WWRA hired a part-time education and outreach staff member who has started a question-and-answer forum on their website for residents and also designed a mailer to be sent out to all the businesses in Chelsea and Dexter Township to encourage them to start recycling services with WWRA. Williams noted that all safety equipment will be provided for the PIAC tour at WWRA in September. Bukowski asked how the recycling market is doing. Williams responded that prices are down 200% from 2022 for fiber and the rest are down as well but fiber is the most noticeable.

Washtenaw County Master Composter Certification Course

Simmons provided an update that the Washtenaw County Master Composter Certification class is scheduled for this fall. Simmons added that the class is anticipated to be very full due to pent-up demand after the class not being offered for several years. Stone will send the class announcement to the group and members can share it more widely if desired.

City of Ann Arbor

Mason shared that the annual student move-out program will be held from August 11 – 26 on S. Industrial. Mason noted that the city is looking to expand partnerships around the annual move-in/out for future years to increase recovery and the reuse of materials.

Mason shared that the city's compost site operator, WeCare Denali, is making a change to their acceptable compostable products, effective January 1, 2024. The site will no longer accept BPI-Certified Compostable products, which are lab-tested, and will now be accepting CMA-W-certified products, which are field-tested. The site will also only accept fiber products, which means no compostable plastics including bag liners. The city has started outreach geared to local food businesses that included two webinars and they are working with CTN to produce a version that will be available on the city's website. Additional guidelines on acceptable materials will be on the city's website. The city will be pushing out

information to the public over the next few months. Additionally, the city conducted its first audit of the compost stream a few weeks ago. The audit was volume-based rather than weight-based like a typical MRF audit. They are working on finalizing results and will plan to do audits seasonally for the next year.

Mason updated that the city has a new commercial refuse collection contract, which includes commercial compost collection as of July 1. Several businesses have already reached out that they are interested, and the city plans to ramp up outreach to get more businesses on board. Another change with the new commercial contract is that customers will now contact Waste Management directly for service needs rather than contacting the city's customer service.

Subcommittee Updates

Stone shared that the Education Subcommittee reviewed the Waste Knot program at the past meeting and the next meeting in August will focus on learning about upcoming fall activities from the group.

Policy, Planning, and Decision-Making Discussion (Continued)

Eggermont provided a recap from the March meeting discussion on Policy, Planning, and Decision-Making. The County's priorities are the MMP process and determining how this committee should engage and interact with the new process. Stone noted that PIAC is prescribed in the current SWMP and as the plan gets rewritten, the county should consider what the next steps are to formally suspend or expire this group.

Eggermont shared that another priority is the Solid Waste Ordinance that will help with hauler accountability, metrics, and funding. Eggermont noted he will be presenting to BOC about the ordinance along with MMP process.

Eggermont noted that another forthcoming priority could be the bag ban if the current ban on bag bans is repealed at the state level. Eggermont added that the county had passed a resolution to implement the bag tax in the past, which was preempted in the legislature. If the repeal occurs, the county's Materials Management Division will be tasked with implementing it.

Eggermont shared that he is working on a Nextcycle grant to help municipalities create hauling contracts and that Lyndon Township has expressed interest. Eggermont is looking to create a contract with a recycling consultant that can provide support to municipalities as they look to create their contract.

Eggermont noted that he will be looking into options for long-term funding for the new DOS since the city of Ann Arbor has taken that on for capital costs but doesn't have a long-term plan for operating costs.

New Business

None

Next Steps

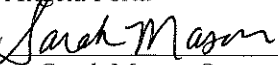
Eggermont is continuing to do preparatory work for the forthcoming MMP process. The next PIAC meeting is September 25th at Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority.

Public Comment

None

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m. moved by Bukowski, seconded by Mason.

Minutes prepared by Angela Porta

Minutes approved by 
Sarah Mason, Secretary