

**APPROVED MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
HAMILTON COUNTY Solid Waste
POLICY COMMITTEE
In person & Zoom**

DATE: September 15, 2021

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Hamilton County Environmental Services
250 William Howard Taft Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

PRESENT: **Policy Committee Members**

Pierce Bruner, Student Representative
Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative, Chair
Denise Driehaus, County Commissioner
Karen Hurley, General Interest Member
Greg Kesterman, Hamilton County Public Health Representative
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative
Larry Riddle, Rumpke

Staff

Michelle Balz, Solid Waste Manager
Gage Bradford, Community Specialist
Brad Johnson, Director
Ali Khodadad, Operations Manager
Mike Kramer, Assistant Director
Tom Mohr, Digital/Communications Manager
Cher Mohring, Community Outreach Coordinator
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk

Others in Attendance

Nee Fong Chin, Prosecutor's Office
Oria Daugherty, P2 Student
Craig Davidson, Hamilton County Public Health
Carrie Davis, Child Advocacy for Jobs & Equity
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health
Dean Ferrier, Rumpke
Matt Hittle, Ohio EPA
Gina Marsh, Chief of Staff for Commissioner Driehaus
Rob Nicolls
Bryan Peak, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office
Amy Townsend-Small, University of Cincinnati
Molly Yeager, Rumpke

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**

Bob Gedert, Public Member, Vice Chair
Raj Rajagopal, Township Representative

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. DiPuccio called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm.

Policy Committee Meeting

September 15, 2021

Page 2

2. POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Mr. DiPuccio moved that Ms. Driehaus serve as Chair on the Policy Committee; Ms. Hurley seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

3. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – July 21, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting

Ms. Driehaus asked if there were any corrections or additions. Hearing none, Ms. Driehaus asked for a motion to approve. Ms. Magness moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Hurley seconded. All in favor and the minutes were approved.

B. Additions to the Agenda

Mr. DiPuccio congratulated Ms. Mohring on her SWANA Award and stated that it is not given every year, so it is very well deserved.

4. R3SOURCE REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS

Ms. Balz stated that the trend in out-of-district continues which, for the year, is a 2.5% increase in tonnage and an almost four percent increase in revenue over 2020. Ms. Hurley asked how staff felt about out-of-district waste being a larger piece than in-district. Ms. Balz stated that staff focuses on Hamilton County waste reduction however, partnerships are formed with surrounding counties and have examples.

Ms. Magness asked if there was information available on which counties were sending their waste to Hamilton County. Ms. Balz stated she would send something to the Committee.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Pollution Prevention (P2) In tern Program Update

Ms. Daugherty gave a presentation on what she worked on during her 12-week P2 internship at Rhinegeist Brewery. A brief question and answer session ensued.

B. Biochar Project Greenhouse Gas Impact Presentation

Ms. Townshend-Small gave a brief presentation about greenhouse gas impacts and how biochar can reduce this. A brief question and answer session ensued.

POLICY COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. Siting Strategy, Designation Authority, and Rule-Making Authority

Ms. Balz gave a brief presentation and discussed the difference in Siting Strategy, Designation Authority and Rule-Making Authority. Ms. Balz stated that Rule Making Authority has been given to the Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. Driehaus mentioned that the idea of forming a subcommittee was being kicked around to look into what rules we are capable of putting in place and if we are capable of putting rules in place relative to some of the concerns that were raised. The Committee can decide as a group whether or not we want to do that. Ms. Magness asked if a motion should be made to set up a subcommittee. Ms. Driehaus stated that we should have a discussion about it and discuss whether we collectively think that is a good idea but thinks that there is enough interest in this that she personally feels like that is a good way to start to get us into a space where we have an understanding of what our authority is and then, once we determine that, how we want to move forward related to the rules. The Board of County Commissioners, who are not the experts and generally, rely on the expert departments within the County to advise like the Health Department. Ms.

Policy Committee Meeting

September 15, 2021

Page 3

Driehaus stated that her expectation is that if this group were to come forward with some rules that we would like to see adopted, and that would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and taken into consideration. The first step is establishing the subcommittee to do some digging in so we can get a real understanding of this. Ms. Driehaus stated that this would be her recommendation but would be curious what everyone else thinks.

Ms. Hurley stated that she first thinks the Committee should decide if rules are necessary and then what those rules might be.

Ms. Balz stated that the Prosecutor's office says that three Policy Committee members can serve on this subcommittee. A discussion ensued regarding the subcommittee.

Mr. DiPuccio suggested officially forming a subcommittee. Ms. Driehaus asked for a motion. Ms. Hurley moved, and Mr. DiPuccio seconded.

Mr. Riddle questioned forming a subcommittee and what could come out of it when there are already statutory guidelines staff must follow. Mr. Riddle further stated the ORC has provided regulations for siting criteria and how solid waste districts operate. Until everyone is understanding what ORC 343.01 says, it seems like the cart is being placed in front of the horse. Mr. Riddle stated that the Committee has already been told by staff that we do not have the authority to establish rules and regulations except for the ones she had on the board. This Committee has no authority to establish regulations that are established by the ORC.

Mr. Riddle stated that he didn't think the Committee was in a position to establish a subcommittee; we cannot overrule the regulations so he is unsure when the Committee doesn't have the authority to establish rules that dictate what solid waste industry will do other than have a discussion.

Mr. Kesterman stated that he understands that he cannot participate on the subcommittee but would like a member to two from his staff to sit on the subcommittee so they can be part of the process.

Mr. Kesterman stated that he has read all of Ms. Davis' emails and there is clearly a reason why we would want to know our authority and what those bounds are.

Mr. Kesterman stated that at some point, the Committee is going to have to ask for a legal opinion from the Hamilton County Prosecutor. Mr. Kesterman stated that in addition to forming a subcommittee, the Committee authorize that the subcommittee to have the ability to make a request to the Prosecutor's Office and limit to the scope of the subcommittee so the Policy Committee can get answers and know what the Prosecutor feels about our authority.

Ms. Driehaus stated that she did not think that specific members of the subcommittee should be discussed and included in the motion; just Ms. Hurley's original motion and a second of that a subcommittee will be established adding to that to see what our authority is.

Ms. Driehaus asked that all members in favor of the motion say aye; All members voted aye and there were no members opposed to the motion and the motion was approved.

Ms. Driehaus stated that the Committee will request that Ms. Balz pull that subcommittee together incorporating the comments from the Policy Committee.

B. Creation of a New Grant Program for 2022

Ms. Balz stated that \$150,000 has been budgeted for 2022 for a grant program. Currently, the Waste Reduction Innovation Grant has a budget of \$100,000. Applications for this grant program have slowed down for this grant program.

Ms. Balz stated that past discussions with the Policy Committee as well as organizations reaching out to Ms. Mohring has shown an interest in a larger grant program.

Ms. Balz stated that currently, the Waste Reduction Innovation Grant is a continuously open application grant and is up to \$10,000. Technically, this grant is non-competitive; the grant awards are based on the merit of that applications are reviewed once a month.

Ms. Balz stated that in addition to the Waste Reduction Grant, staff is proposing a new competitive grant program that would be larger projects; in the range of \$10,000 to \$30,000 which would be a one-time grant. If the Committee approves this new grant, staff could begin getting the application together and start accepting applications in the fourth quarter of this year with the applications being due in the first quarter of 2022.

Ms. Balz stated once these grants were awarded, staff would then know how much money is left for the Waste Reduction Innovation Grant and gave examples of how all the money may not be awarded for the new grant program.

Ms. Balz stated that this would open up more potential for applicants to have larger projects to reduce waste.

Ms. Driehaus asked for a motion to create the new grant program. Ms. Magness moved to create a larger grant program. Mr. Kesterman seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

6. INFORMATONAL ITEMS

A. Hamilton County Solid Waste Plan Update

Ms. Balz stated that staff is working on quite a few sections of analyses which are the first sections. Staff contracted with Economic Environmental Solutions International (EESI) which is operated by Karen Luken who used to be the Solid Waste Manager.

Ms. Balz stated that recently, staff received the contract with Rice Education Consulting who will be our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consultant (RedCon). They are a local DEI company, but they work all over the country.

Ms. Balz stated that there will be a kick-off meeting next week.

B. Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off

R3Source will be having the Household Hazardous Products one-day drop-off event on Saturday, October 23, 2021 from 8 am – 1 pm in Madisonville. Residents will be required to register due to only 1,800 being able to drop-off.

The Committee asked if there was a flyer. Mr. Mohr stated that there was not a flyer but would be. Ms. Driehaus asked to send the flyer to the Committee.

A brief discussion ensued on alternatives to this program and the program in general.

C. Second Quarter Performance Measures

Ms. Balz discussed the highlights from the second quarter performance measures such as having two pollution prevention interns this summer; Rhinegeist and the Cincinnati Art Museum, even with covid restrictions, staff have been able to reach over 4,000 (35 facilities) people with our Let's Stop Waste Program, there were over 100,000 visitors to our website, 170 school programs with the vast majority being our educational contractors; they have been able to reach over 3,000 and a lot of these have been virtual.

A brief question/answer ensued.

Mr. Kesterman stated that staff did a good job on the website and rebranding. Ms. Balz gave kudos to Mr. Mohr.

Ms. Hurley asked about the composting working group from Beyond 34. Ms. Balz stated she would look into it.

D. Environmental Enforcement Program

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment D showed activities since January of cases investigated and a map of where the complaints were in the county.

Mr. Peak discussed a new process for mapping complaints using CAGIS that will be able to provide much more information about the complaint.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Magness asked that Bio-Char be a future agenda item since the City will be requesting funds for this program. A brief discussion ensued regarding grant money/seed money for operations.

Mr. Riddle handed out information about Bond Road.

8. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Hurley requested Composting workgroup presentation.

A brief discussion ensued over Bond Road.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Davis discussed an email that was sent to the Committee last night that refutes everything Ms. Balz stated that is from the judges and has been upheld seventeen times since 2018.

Ms. Davis thanked the Committee for bringing up the issue of a subcommittee.

10. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

The next Hamilton County R3Source Policy Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021. The meeting will be a hybrid of in person for Committee members/staff and Zoom for others wishing to attend virtually. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. at 250 William Howard Taft Road, 1st Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219. Meeting information will be sent at a later date.

11. ADJOURNMENT (Target Time – 3:00 p.m.)

Policy Committee Meeting

September 15, 2021

Page 6

Ms. Driehaus asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kesterman moved; Ms. Magness seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.