

MARION COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
Sub-Committee: Unsheltered Waste Management

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 7, 2021
Time: 4:00pm -5:30pm
Logistics: WebEx meeting with limited “in person” attendance due to COVID-19

PRESENT: **Members:** Julie Jackson, Ryan Zink, Matt Marler, Judy Skinner, Kevin Hines, Kaileigh Westermann-Lewis, Tim Rice, Brian Sund
Staff: Brian May, Rachel VanWoert, Elizabeth Parker
Guests: Gretchen Bennett, DJ Vincent

ABSENT:

OPEN MEETING

Ryan called meeting to order at 4:04pm. Welcome and introductions.

APPROVE MINUTES

Julie moved to approve December 14, 2020 meeting minutes. Brian seconds. Voice vote unanimous – motion passes.

Unsheltered Waste Management – Discussion Updates

In response to finding out the total amount of unsheltered waste we’re seeing, Ryan shared the following:
From two different clean ups in this area, ODOT picked up @ I-5/Market 150 cubic yards of trash.
In the months of November and December, Public Works hauled 400 cubic yards of trash from clean-ups at parks and under bridges.

Julie stated 150 cubic yards would work out to approximately five tons for thirty yards since this is un-compacted and tends to be looser materials. Matt asked for clarification for accumulation period. Ryan thinks we’re looking at about 100 yards per month. Gretchen stated ODOT will be coming every other week to Market & I-5 and episodic basis on other areas.

Ryan shared the following developments:

Great email from Brian Sund introducing possible options with Church of the Park and the proposal they’re putting together. Ryan identified two different types of needs. One is daily production of waste where there is no way of disposing – this could be addressed by regular pick up. The other need is once people leave one camp to another, there is accumulated and bulky waste left behind, such as shopping carts, couches, and sinks. We’re going to need to consider these two different strategies moving forward.

DJ Vincent shared that they’ve been working with City of Salem on a “cash-for-trash” program since the beginning of the pandemic and opening of Cascade Gateway Park. His group hasn’t had the capacity in the past to expand the areas or manage other sites. However, with the addition of volunteers, they’ve increased their capacity for work force development. The proposal is three-pronged; first, they would join the county of city in taking trash for cash program from single site to potentially five sites identified by county or city. Secondly, they would have folks driving trucks receiving employment clean common areas. Thirdly, there would be an on-call service for businesses or neighborhoods where camps have been abandoned. (approx. capacity of one dump truck full) They are looking for public or private partnerships to assist in the cost of staffing, finding a dump truck, etc. They plan to synchronize with county and/or city efforts with the pick-up and cleaning schedules.

Gretchen echoed Tim’s previous comments of engaging the people in parks to be involved in waste management issues. Workflow would be campers being prepared for pick up, non-profit staff would encourage campers to be ready for pick up, and then the pick-up of waste. There is cost to consider.

Kaileigh asked DJ if his group was based their project off a model – DJ stated there a lot of great models that empower the unsheltered, but during this pandemic, they knew there'd be a trash and sanitation challenge at Cascade Gateway Park. Thus, they pushed forward with offering an incentive for people to participate. Many people bring multiple bags of trash and get one incentive. Tried to imagine a program that would encourage the early-bird. Kaileigh asked if the plan moving forward would be to continue with the current incentive. She also shared that “Trash for Peace” contracts with the “Human-Impact Project” and “Ground Score” to employ unhoused people to work on clean-up projects. They're paid \$15 per hour for approximately four hours per week. Gretchen shared that communities in Salem do worry about contamination from trash into stormwater. Ryan stated this might be an opportunity to expand the city's “Stream-Clean Team.”

Chat notes – Judy shared that Teracycle pays for cigarette butts.

Brian M asked if the City of Salem has a financial part of Trash for Cash. Ryan stated yes – they've been funding with COVID relief funds through the summer, but it's not an ongoing source. Ryan stated that the City of Salem's public works department will go out and pick up dispersed trash, as needed. The City is limited in resources and there are continuing safety concerns from the bargaining units regarding trash pick-up. City of Salem staff are now prohibited from being involved with direct and immediate contact of trash pick-up.

Brian May shared that Marion County has been researching and considering the option of offering free disposal for this project. Covanta is willing to consider a free service or setting a threshold up to a certain amount. Brian is encouraged and thinks this could be very doable. There are big concerns about the safety of people who are transporting and handling waste. Due to unknown hazards and bio-hazards, this material needs to go to Covanta, not the transfer stations which ultimately are sorted at the MRFF. Julie spoke with Kevin Hines regarding haulers offering free pick-up. They're considering a haulers group that could co-op with rotating route so all haulers are involved with helping. They have more enthusiasm with picking up waste they could go straight to Covanta and not be handled. Julie and Kevin will need volumes and more information to solidify a plan. Ryan stated we need an idea of what their capacity of volume would be in this project. Hoping thresholds will match.

Kaileigh asked if there have been conversations about reaching out to the unsheltered population as to how this program could be sustainable and participated in. Ryan can't speak to outreach, but said another part of the conversation to keep in mind would be how to reduce the flow of material to the unsheltered. Instead of giving clothes- clean them, etc. She also suggested partnering with county of city to create and promote a program or event where they could host a “bulky waste” pick up day. Rachel suggested possibly bringing some of the EarthWISE businesses to help support or sponsor a program like this. Brian S asked if we should propose an initiative more programs to connect with the unsheltered and host a waste management event. Gretchen said this a great way to engage with campers in conversation and serve as points of contact. It's a valuable tool.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Julie moved to adjourn meeting; Brian seconded the motion. Voice vote unanimous– motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Elizabeth will send out doodle-poll to schedule next meeting shortly.

Next meeting: Thursday, February 11, 2021