

MARION COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SWMAC MEETING

May 26, 2020
5:30-7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting
Via Webex

PRESENT: **Members:** Judy Skinner, Will Posegate, Kaileigh Westermann-Lewis, Bonnie Sullivan, Brian Sund, Kurt Tackman, Julie Jackson, Tim Rice, Kevin Hines

Staff: Brian May, Stephanie Rosentrater, Commissioner Sam Brentano

Public: Carroll Johnston, Ryan Zink, Kyle Elwood, Tino Barreras

ABSENT: Joe Fowler, Keith Bondaug-Winn, Matt Marler

CONSENT

MOTION: Bonnie moved to approve the April 28, 2020 minutes.

DISCUSSION: None.

RESULTS: Will seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. Minutes approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Action):

PUBLIC INPUT: None.

AGENDA REVIEW: None.

Budget Subcommittee Report

Brian explained that the reason SWMAC has a budget subcommittee that reports to the Council twice per year regarding the budget comes from a time several years ago when Environmental Services (ES) was having financial issues. SWMAC wanted to be more in-tune with Environmental Services' financials because of this and thus the budget subcommittee was formed.

Brian first went over the year-over-year comparison for FY18-19 actual to FY19-20 projected (in January). Operating revenue is up \$2.2 million (8%). The majority of that is coming from electrical revenue (line 5). This is for insurance money that came in covering the unplanned outages from FY18-19 and revenue losses that the outages caused. Line 1 shows an increase in revenue from the transfer stations and Brown's Island combined. In reality, revenue is down at Brown's Island and up at the transfer stations. Shifts in the flow of garbage in Marion County have resulted in more revenue for the County from Covanta. Line 10 ("all other") shows a significant decrease due to a large piece of equipment sold in FY18-19, which drove up the revenue.

As far as expenses go, expenses for the transfer stations are high because the increased volume causes increased disposal costs. Ash disposal is high due to a CPI increase. Other contracted services covers many of the projects done or budgeted for, including engineering and preparation work for improvements at Brown's Island, a new contract and contractor for the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility, hiring a contractor to execute the milk dispenser program, and the GBB Facilities Analysis and Report. The ending fund balance is projected to increase.

Brian then moved on to FY19-20 projected (in January) to FY19-20 budget. Environmental Services is seeing a significant increase in volume at the transfer stations since the COVID outbreak started. Contract changes with Covanta have resulted in more revenue than budgeted for. Personnel expense projection is lower than budgeted, due to changes in administrative fee allocation and the fact that ES has open positions that we're trying to fill. By mistake, only Stormwater was only budgeted for half of the year, which accounts for the increase in stormwater expense. Capital outlay will end up much lower than expected because the Brown's Island conversion is no longer a project ES will be pursuing, based on the facilities analysis from GBB. Brian reminded everyone that the restricted reserve is required to be held per DEQ regulations for landfill closure costs. Lastly, Brian covered FY19-20 projections compared to FY20-21 budget. This shows a slight reduction in revenue due to the insurance payout in FY19-20. Public Works Services expense are up quite a bit due to a shift in personnel. The increased traffic at the HHW facility, results in higher disposal expenses. Capital outlay is budgeted for a significant increase due to planned land acquisition for a new transfer station. ES is projecting an ending fund balance decrease of 4%, even though it includes an over \$3 million increase in expenses for capital outlay.

Time was allowed for questions and answers.

Marion County Master Recycler Program Overview & Discussion

Brian and Stephanie gave an overview of the current Master Recycler class. Stephanie showed the group the most recent class schedule. Stephanie explained that a couple of years ago, the Master Recycler manual was replaced with the state-wide online Recycling 101. Students are to complete certain online modules before each class. There is also an additional handout that is specific to Marion County's solid waste system. Brian explained that a lot of work went into creating Recycling 101 and industry groups like ORRA and AOR were involved in the creation of it. Julie was involved in the creation of it and added that at the time it was created, it was great, but now time has gone on and without funding to update it, it's outdated and much less useful. Brian added that it's also focused mostly on recycling, which Environmental Services would like to shift away from, which is why they're seeking input from Council on the future of the class.

Stephanie reported that though ES hasn't historically collected demographic information, but they do ask whether or not students are retired and who their employer is. Stephanie showed a chart of results from the last 4 class (the only ones where this information was collected electronically). 35% reported being retired and many students worked in the government sector.

Kaileigh wanted to know if there was an attempt to coordinate class subjects and the modules. There is, but it sometimes goes astray.

Brian reported that the class has been put on hold for now, while ES talks about how they would like to restructure it. In the meantime, ES has been putting together short webinars on important topics that would be covered in a class, which seem to have been a big hit. They're free and available to all. Kaileigh pointed out that the online format might be the way of the future because it makes us able to hit such a wider audience.

Julie mentioned that the MC Master Recycler class recently stopped touring Coffin Butte, meaning that they don't see a landfill or the way that it works. She has considered doing a video tour of a landfill that can be shown to the Master Recyclers, since it's hard to get them down to Corvallis.

Kaileigh wanted to know if people who had taken or helped coordinate the class could speak to the demographics they saw. Recent students reported that there is not typically of racial diversity and at

least half if not more are over 50 years-old. The majority of people in the recent classes seem to be taking it because of the market changes and it seems they like to talk about the way things used to be. Tim & Will, who lead MR tours at their facilities, reported always seeing and hearing a lot of interest with good questions asked.

Kaileigh wanted to know what outreach was done to advertise for the class. Brian reported that since the market changes, there has been a lot of interest and we hardly have to advertise at all before the class is full. Prior to that, the class has been advertised on the website, in print, on social media (paid pushes), etc. Kaileigh wanted to know where students are reporting that they're hearing about the class. Brian said that he's worried that the message is not getting outside of ES's usual circle. Stephanie has noticed that there are certain businesses that send somebody to every class and that it's advertised to the EarthWISE businesses.

Kaileigh wanted to know what the final project and volunteer payback hours entail. For the final project, if a student is employed at an EarthWISE certified business, they report on what that business does to maintain the certification. Otherwise, students find a topic centered on waste reduction, recycling, or compost that interests them and report on that. There are not a lot of restrictions on it. To get the certificate that states a student has completed the class, they have to finish all of the modules in Recycling 101 and complete 30 hours of volunteer services. There aren't many requirements on the volunteer payback hours, except that activities are supposed to be focused on educating on what they learned in the class. Kurt suggested that students take a survey after the class to provide feedback and report on what they're doing to complete their hours.

Kaileigh wanted to know what the Council would like to see out of the class in the future. In regards to equity, Kaileigh has met with a group in the Metro region called Trash for Peace. They developed a great model for Metro aimed at reaching the Hispanic community. Something like this could help bring more diversity and equity to the Master Recyclers. It was suggested that the students expectations of the class are recorded during the first class for comparison at the end, to accompany the post-class survey and to let the instructors know if there's interest in a topic that isn't on the agenda. A "before and after" assessment of knowledge was also suggested, for the purpose of gauging how well the class is doing at teaching the subjects. Another idea presented was changing the final project to be a community give-back project rather than a presentation that could count towards payback hours but also get information out to the community. It would be great to offer payback opportunities tailored to different personality types and strengths. There's plenty of behind-the-scenes work that needs to be done as well as outreach and teaching. It's also important to really teach students about recycling markets so that they understand Counties, haulers, and processors are at the mercy of the market and not necessarily to blame when rules change. Changing the name of the program was briefly discussed – the Council does not want to change the name because it has a history and a large group of volunteers. It more needs rebranded than renamed.

It was brought up that the Master Recyclers are underutilized as volunteers. It would be good to come up with a program to keep them interacting with each other as time goes on – be it an annual event or something else. It was also mentioned that sometimes Master Recyclers are used for tasks that they easily burn out on, like standing at garbage/compost/recycling carts at events and telling people what can and can't go in each one. If they were encouraged to do more meaningful and diverse volunteer activities, it might strengthen the group of volunteers that the County has.

The structure each of each class was discussed. Currently it's an in-person, lecture-style class. Having in-person evening classes creates barriers for many, which causes the class to attract a less diverse group of students. The location is also an issue, as it's not reachable by bus and it doesn't attract people at the

far ends of Marion County. Kaileigh pointed out that just translating the class into another language likely won't be helpful. There is a cultural aspect that needs to be examined as well. An idea was presented that upon applying to take the class, maybe some could sign up for a teaching track that would gear them up to teach the class so that ES could offer the class more often and in different locations.

Brian stated that in the next meeting, the plan is to bring in coordinators of other Master Recycler programs to explain their programs, the challenges they see, etc. After that, the intent is that SWMAC will gather all of their ideas for the future of the class. In the meantime, it would be great if Council would look into other classes and programs both in and out of Oregon.

FUTURE TOPICS/EMERGING ISSUES/OTHER BUSINESS (Information/Discussion):

Announcements and Upcoming Events:

Bonnie took Bailey his certificate of appreciation from SWMAC finally last week. He was very appreciative. Bonnie thanked the Council for letting her present this to Bailey on behalf of SWMAC.

Staff Updates:

Brian apologized to Ryan and Kyle for not getting the Nominations Subcommittee together for interviews sooner. This is something that the Council and staff would prefer to do in-person, which has not been a reality due to COVID.

Brian also wanted to remind the Council to visit mcrecycles.net to see upcoming webinars put on by staff.

Motion to close the meeting: Will motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kurt seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.