



Responsible Recycling Task Force Meeting #6

September 19, 2018 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

WSRA, 635 Andover Park West, Suite 105, Tukwila WA

Members Present:

April	Atwood	Seattle University, SWAC Vice Chair
Stacey	Auer	City of Redmond
Tony	Donati	City of Kent
Mary	Evans	Waste Management
Susan	Fife-Ferris	SPU
Jeff	Gaisford	KCSWD
Mason	Giem	City of SeaTac
Sego	Jackson	SPU
Carla	Johnson	Republic Services
Phillippa	Kassover	City of Lake Forest Park, SWAC
John	MacGillivray	City of Kirkland
Ken	Marshall	KC, SWAC
Michelle	Metzler	Waste Management
Emily	Newcomer	City of Redmond
Cameron	Reed	City of Shoreline
Andy	Rheaume	Waste Management
Stephanie	Schwenger	City of Bellevue
Lisa	Sepanski	KCSWD
Penny	Sweet	Councilmember, MSWMAC Chair
Rob	Van Orsow	City of Federal Way
Hans	VanDusen	SPU
John	Walsh	KCSWD

Guest Speakers:

Representative Norma Smith, Washington House of Representatives, 10th Legislative District

Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington

Consultants:

Julie Colehour, Facilitator, C+C

Colette Marien, Meeting Coordinator and Notetaker, C+C



Agenda Item #1: Welcome & Introduction (*called to order by Julie Colehour at 10:04 am*)

Discussion:

- *Julie Colehour* introduces the days agenda, which will include presentations on three different pieces of legislation as well as a few house keeping items to approve recommendations from previous meetings. The full agenda includes:
 - Welcome & Introduction
 - Legislation for Recycling and Recycling Markets (Representative Norma Smith)
 - Plastic Packaging Stewardship (Sego Jackson)
 - Local and Statewide Reusable Bag Ordinances (Heather Trim)
 - Recommendations Review
 - Wrap Up & Next Steps
- *Julie Colehour* reminds the room of the Task Force goals, outcomes, and role:
 - **Short Term Goal:** To help identify near-, mid- and long-term actions in response to reduction in export markets for mixed recyclable materials due to China National Sword policies.
 - **Longer Term Goal:** To help establish commitment across the region to responsible recycling and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.
 - **Outcomes:** Prepare a report with actionable items and recommendations for future action by all; if possible, develop interim tools for communications and other topics that are more immediately available.
 - **Role of Task Force:** Not to make decisions, rather to learn about the problem, understand activities that are being implemented elsewhere and opportunities for change. They will provide guidance on next steps that will be brought back to county advisory committees and decision makers.
- *Julie Colehour* informs the room that there were a few non-substantive changes to the August 24 meeting minutes and that the minutes have been approved and sent out to the Task Force via email.
- *Julie Colehour* leads a discussion on the revised recommendation from the July 18 meeting (listed below):
 - *Local governments and their service providers should prioritize that sorting and processing take place domestically, in the United States and Canada, to ensure that the materials generated for use as feedstock in new products are clean and suitable for remanufacture. If there are no sorting and/or processing facilities located domestically, the next priority should be in countries that are members of the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) that have worker health and safety and environmental regulations comparable to those in the US and Canada.*
 - **Definitions:**
 - **Sorting:** taking mixed recyclable materials and separating them into specific commodities that can be sent to a processor. For the commingled recycling system, sorting takes place at a Materials Recovery Facility.
 - **Processing/Processor:** transforming a material into a new material or feedstock. For example, a paper bale is turned into pulp for sale to the paper manufacturer



or a plastic PET bale is turned into plastic pellets or flakes for sale to the plastic product manufacturers.

- **Domestic:** the United States or Canada.
- *Lisa Sepanski* notes that the revisions made to the recommendation were intended to provide greater nuance and detail in order to define the meaning of domestics and identify where prioritization would be.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* asks if Mexico is a member of the OECD, to which *Julie Colehour* replies that it is a part of the OECD.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* notes her understanding that there are facilities in Mexico where regional companies send materials and asks whether there is a reason that Mexico is not included in the definition of domestic. *Susan* asks if haulers and processors in the room can provide additional guidance on whether Mexico should be included in the definition of domestic.
- *Emily Newcomer* offers to obtain additional insight from the hauler perspective and circle back with the group.
- *Michelle Metzler* asks why the recommendation is limiting by location when the intent is simply to achieve adequate and environmental standards. *Michelle* suggests stating instead that materials can only go to facilities that meet certain specifications, rather than being within certain locations.
- *Sego Jackson* asks the room if sorting and processing is still being confused.
- *Hans VanDusen* notes that the recommendation is more focused on the mechanism which is sending materials to a specific country rather than the desired outcome of sending materials to locations where the materials are handled in a manner that protects human health and the environment. *Hans* comments that, rather than limiting by the mechanism, we should focus on the desired outcome.
- *Sego Jackson* asks how to describe and thereby improve the outcome, noting that the mechanism of country has been added in order to provide a layer of protection. *Sego* adds that Recycle BC verifies where materials go to ensure they are going to locations that have adequate worker health and safety standards.
- *Stephanie Schwenger* comments that, even though the recommendation is well intentioned, it would likely lead to higher fee or charges for recycling in order to make it feasible. *Stephanie* adds that, regardless of mechanism, if the outcome is to meet all health and safety standards, it will likely cost more.
- *Julie Colehour* asks to table the discussion and suggests we discuss it at the end of the meeting.

Agenda Item #2: Legislation for Recycling and Recycling Markets (*called to order by Julie Colehour at 10:15 am*)

Discussion:

- *Julie Colehour* introduces Representative Norma Smith, who will speak about the Engrossed 2nd Substitute HB 2914 ([E2SHB 2914](#)).
- *Representative Smith* begins by noting her appreciation for the opportunity to be at the meeting today and shares the following context for the bill and what motivates her and others who are working in the space:
 - Work with Representative Drew Hansen on derelict vessels that looked at costs for Washington taxpayers and secured 3.5 million dollars to pull up nets from Puget Sound.



- Solar work with Representative Morris and others that was done for several years before getting it passed this year. *Representative Smith's* portion of the bill was the take back recycling program. *Representative Smith* notes this as a great example of how to build bipartisan support around solar and be successful.
- *Representative Smith's* life work with [JCDREAM](#), whose mission it is to reduce use of rare earth minerals and other conflict materials in technology, adding that often times we put our blinders on and don't look at the consequences of our actions around the world—JCDREAM acknowledges this and works to stop mining for rare earth minerals for technology. *Representative Smith* notes that JCDREAM is holding their Annual Symposium on October 8 at WSU – Everett and would love for any Task Force members to attend. *Representative Smith* adds that we are all in this together and have the opportunity to demonstrate the need to own our consumption and figure out how to take personal responsibility as to not leave consequences of our consumption to the next generation.
- *Representative Smith* continues by sharing her weekly experience of sorting her recycling and taking it to a small transfer station near her home on Whidbey Island, an experience different from others who live in more urban areas of King County. *Representative Smith* notes that, since China Sword, she's heard from transfer stations that there has been frustration from residents that they can only take their 1 and 2 plastics. *Representative Smith* stresses that in order to tackle our own consumption and be responsible, we must look holistically and in urban area to be able to support the decisions made that may work locally but not in other small and less urban areas.
- *Representative Smith* notes that the bill, which was worked on last year before China Sword happened, did two things:
 - Arrange for public outreach and support by bringing together a group of people from the industry, including policy makers and the Department of Ecology, to help the public understand that dumping everything into the blue bin is a false narrative that is not working anymore. *Representative Smith* adds that most people want to do the right thing and we're now seeing the negative impact of having made recycling so easy.
 - Give commerce the job of arranging for an economic analysis of recycling in Washington State. The analysis would look to figure out road blocks to responsible recycling and seek to identify opportunities turn recycled materials into new products.
- *Representative Smith* notes that the bill, which is the only bill on China Sword, got through the house and both committees with overwhelming support. *Representative Smith* adds that around this time her mother in law passed away causing her to lose focus on the last day of review which she believes contributed to the bill not being passed. It was a disappointment, but *Representative Smith* comments that she's been told repeatedly to bring the concepts of the bill back and that is what she plans to do with the updated bill.
- *Representative Smith* informs the room that she will leave hard copies of the bill with the Task Force and would love feedback and/or suggestions from the Task Force for what else they'd like to see included.
- *Representative Smith* continues, commenting that it was fascinating to hear the discussion around the definition of domestic at the beginning of the meeting. *Representative Smith* suggests it might be helpful to look at how JCDREAM was constructed. She notes that they did not define where they would pursue earth abundance minerals, rather looked at whether they could be acquired in a responsible process and with reliable supply chains.



- *Representative Smith* adds that as we look at recycling rare earth minerals we need to look at whether it can be acquired in an environmentally responsible way that respects human life and dignity and acknowledges that our global neighbors and their children are as important as our own. *Representative Smith* again stresses that we cannot put on our blinders and pretend like nothing is happening.
- *Representative Smith* closes by sharing her excitement and belief that the bill can be improved and accomplished this January and that she looks forward to additional conversations with the RRTF.

Q&A:

- *Phillippa Kassover* comments that she was struck by *Stephanie Schwenger* comment about consumer rights and issues of costs and notes that in a previous RRTF meeting we had a conversation about what's happening in British Columbia with EPR. *Phillippa* asks whether a conversation about EPR is being had at the state level, noting that local governments want to do the right thing but also worry that they cannot afford it.
- *Representative Smith* replies that they've looked at a full producer responsibility model for solar and that to some degree there was producer responsibility on people who were knowingly selling vessels. *Representative Smith* adds that there is an openness to have a conversation about EPR and that the challenge is the disconnect between wanting the lowest cost possible and realizing that someone else, likely outside of the US, is paying for that low cost.
- *Representative Smith* reiterates that she would appreciate the Task Force's input on the bill and asks that the room try to review the bill through alternate perspectives. *Representative Smith* adds that she would like to have the bill prefilled so that additional negotiations are done before the session begins.
- *Andy Rheume* comments that he loved what *Representative Smith* said about people in other parts of the world who are suffering because we made a mistake. *Andy* adds that he knows that state doesn't have a lot of money to spend on this effort and suggests that the cities and counties could come to bear some of the cost. *Andy* asks if that is the plan right now.
- *Representative Smith* states that she tries to resist passing on costs to local entities and thinks it needs to be a statewide campaign. *Representative Smith* adds that they will leverage what few dollars they can to maximize abilities and that they'd like to hear from local entities on what does and doesn't work.
- *Andy Rheume* replies, sharing his opinion that if cities don't put in money they are not as engaged.
- *Ken Marshall* adds that many of the cities in the room have lobbyists that could help *Representative Smith* with the bill. *Ken* continues, asking if the bill will have a different number and whether *Representative Smith* could contact the county to get the bill out to advisory committees, so they can help with the process.
- *Representative Smith* confirms that the bill will have a different number and that it would be great if the bill were sent out to the advisory committees.
- *Julie Colehour* confirms that C+C will be the point of contact to get word out about the bill.
- *Phillippa Kassover* asks *Representative Smith* to make sure that the legislature knows that the bill is a priority for cities.
- *Representative Smith* replies, stating that it would be terrific for cities and counties to come and support the bill if they are willing to.
- *Lisa Sepanski* asks if *Representative Smith* has a name for the bill, so the county can put it on their legislative agendas.



- *Representative Smith* replies that the bill is called “An Act Relating to Washington’s economic development potential as a world leader in the responsible management of postconsumer materials.”
- *Lisa Sepanski* asks what the deadline is for the Task Force to submit comments.
- *Representative Smith* asks for comments by mid-November, stating that they will put together a stakeholder process at the end of November or Early December.
- *Representative Smith* wraps up by commenting that, as a state, it is in our DNA to do the right thing when it comes to recycling and that we have a chance to lead the nation in what it looks like to involve businesses and other groups in moving this type of bill forward.

Action Items:

- Send out copies of E2SHB 2914 to the Task Force for review and feedback.

Agenda Item #3: Plastic Packaging Stewardship (*called to order by Julie Colehour at 10:40 am*)

Discussion:

- *Julie Colehour* introduces the next speaker, *Sego Jackson*, who will present on Plastic Packaging Stewardship.

Sego Jackson’s Presentation:

- *Sego Jackson* begins by asking the room to imagine if:
 - Payments were made to municipalities, haulers and MRFs for collecting and sorting plastic packaging – and ratepayers are relieved of costs
 - There were a Plastic Recycling Facility, Secondary MRF, and chemical recycling facility of plastics in region
 - There were financing to have 3-7 plastics sorted and processed before export.
 - There was a robust drop-off collection program for bags and film and that they actually got recycled
- *Sego Jackson* continues, asking the room what if:
 - Plastic containers and bags had minimum post-consumer recycled content, creating market pull?
 - There were financial incentives for better design, and disincentives for bad design?
 - Funding was provided to prevent and clean-up plastic litter, beach litter, marine debris and contamination in compost?
 - All plastic packaging was effectively managed?
- *Sego Jackson* states that if we had all of these things we wouldn’t need to have many of the conversations that we’re currently having and that a team has been working on policy concepts to address these items with hopes that the policy will become a bill.
- Some of the imagined titles for the policy include:
 - The Responsible Management of Plastic Packaging Act of 2019
 - Introduction to draft policy concept for Washington State in the 2019 Legislative Session



- Plastic Packaging Stewardship: Fixing Recycling and Reducing Plastic Pollution
- *Sego Jackson* shares that the policy will look at whether we can have some kind of sustainable plastic management system in Washington where:
 - All plastic packaging is covered and financed by plastic packaging manufacturers
 - Existing services remain, and payments are made to municipalities, solid waste companies and material recovery facilities for services they provide
 - Ratepayers no longer pay the costs for handling plastic packaging
- Next, *Sego Jackson* explains why the policy is focused on plastic packaging specifically:
 - Because people are becoming sensitive to the environmental impacts of plastic
 - There is increased coverage in the media and public awareness of issues at the point of export, issues at the facilities and of certain plastics that are contaminating paper.
 - There is less and less packaging being made for recycling
 - Plastic packagers want their packaging recycled
- The Washington Refuse & Recycling Association (WRRRA) suggests that the following list of materials be included in commingled recycled programs:
 - Paper
 - Metal
 - 1 and 2 plastic bottles
- The WRRRA suggests that the following list of materials be excluded from commingled recycled programs:
 - 3-7 plastic items
 - Plastic bags and plastic film of all kinds
 - Flower pots
 - Paper milk and paper juice cartons
 - Aseptic packaging
 - Shredded paper
 - Glass
 - Hazardous and medical waste of any type
 - Diapers
 - Fabric (textiles) of any type
 - Wire, rope, chain, garden hoses and Christmas lights
 - Wood
 - Trash
- *Sego Jackson* comments that the list of items to exclude does not address clamshells and other problematic materials
- *Sego Jackson* speaks about why a stewardship approach to plastics is important when thinking through what a truly sustainable system would look like as both policy and legislation. Reasons include:
 - Existing stewardship programs in places like British Columbia have been expanding materials taken
 - Issues have not been created by and therefore cannot be solved by government, facilities and service providers



- Effective management requires more financial resources that could be provided by manufacturers
 - Stewardship programs can implement solutions that are otherwise unavailable
- *Sego Jackson* explains that a stewardship approach would look similar to the Recycle BC system in British Columbia where:
 - 1,200 packaging producers fund the program for all packaging
 - Producers pay a non-profit stewardship organization to implement the program
 - Local programs and services are utilized
 - The recovery rate increased from 50-53% to 77-80%
- *Sego Jackson* notes that the policy proposal in Washington is still under construction and will try to accomplish the following for plastic packaging:
 - Plastic packaging manufacturers are responsible for financing the recycling and proper management of plastic packaging that is sold into WA
 - Membership in non-profit stewardship organization is required of producers of plastic packaging
 - Packagers pay into the organization to cover their obligations
 - High “management” percentages required
- The policy obligates plastic packagers to:
 - Finance the responsible management of plastic packaging cradle-to-cradle/grave
 - Provide for wide-spread, convenient and equitable collection of their packaging
 - Ensure responsible management
 - Utilize existing service providers
 - Meet recycled content requirements
 - Finance a stewardship organization to act on their behalf to meet their obligations
- The stewardship organization would be a third-party non-profit organization whose members are made up of plastic packagers who:
 - Develops and implements plan/program
 - Serves as interface with Ecology and provides reports
 - Ecology reviews and approves plan and reports
 - Determines and reports amount of plastic packaging its members sell into state
 - Provides consumer-facing website
 - Provides resources for innovation to drive collection, such as deposit/return and buy-back mechanisms
 - Consults with advisory committee
 - Provides funding for:
 - Market development, MRF equipment upgrades.
 - Preventing and cleaning up plastic litter, aquatic litter and contamination in compost.
 - Provides sufficient funding for education and outreach, minimum of \$1 per capita per year.
 - Provides incentives for good design and disincentives for problematic design.



- *Sego Jackson* passes around the following examples of poor packaging design that would cost the manufacturers more to help drive change of the design:
 - A plastic bottle with a fused metal top
 - A piece of paper mail that is inside of a plastic case and that also contain a metal key
- *Sego Jackson* continues, noting that additional elements of the policy may include:
 - Covering all plastic packaging and multi-layer plastic pouch packaging (flexible packaging)
 - Exemptions for certain plastic packaging made of very high recycled content
 - Exemptions for small producers:
 - \$1 million in annual sales, or
 - Less than 1-ton plastic packaging in WA
- *Sego Jackson* speaks about the plastic packaging hierarchy which prioritizes recycling/waste prevention methods in the following order:
 - Prevention and Waste Reduction
 - Reuse
 - Mechanical Recycling
 - Chemical Recycling (taking certain packaging that is hard to separate and breaking it down through a chemical process into plastic monomers to that can be used to create other products)
 - Energy Recovery, Incineration or Landfill
- *Sego Jackson* explains that the plastic packaging hierarchy covers everything from waste prevention to disposal and envisions a system where the plastic packaging industry is paying for the disposal costs as well. The stewardship organization would determine the baseline of current practices, assign appropriate management methods based on packaging type and would consider the lifecycle of packaging to help it move progressively up the hierarchy.
- The capture rate goals of the hierarchy are as follows:
 - Goal of 80% capture rate for proper management within an assigned category
 - Overall goal of 100% capture rate
- *Sego Jackson* uses the plastic bottle to further explain the capture rate:
 - For plastic bottles designed for recycling, the minimum capture rate for recycling would be 80% with the other 20% needing to be captured through another legitimate management system. This would equal a 100% capture rate within the hierarchy.
- *Sego Jackson* explains the Recycled Content Requirements that the stewardship organization would uphold:
 - Minimum Requirement:
 - Rigid Plastic Containers – 25% post-consumer plastic.
 - Bags of most types, some other “film” packaging – 25% post-consumer plastic.
 - Solid waste collection containers – 10% post-consumer packaging plastic.
 - (exemption for existing contracts)
 - To help manufacturers who aren’t able to meet these requirements on their own, the stewardship organization would create a program to provide members with a recycled content trade mechanism allowing them to trade with others to get to the minimum requirement.



- The stewardship organization would also be responsible for reporting member compliance to Ecology which in turn would reduce Ecology's administrative costs.
- The policy also includes a requirement that solid waste must have 10% post-consumer content to create market pull for the durable packaging we create.
- *Sego Jackson* wraps up his presentation, stating that the policy is a comprehensive attempt to create a complete system that takes all plastic packaging.

Q&A:

- *Rob Van Orsow* asks for clarification on slide 10 where it states that payments are made to municipalities, solid waste collection companies and material recovery facilities for services they provide. *Rob* asks where the original dollar comes from that gets parsed out to all of these parties.
- *Sego Jackson* replies that the payments are made by the packaging producers to the stewardship organization. *Sego* adds that, rather than putting a two-cent charge on every plastic cup, for example, the cost would instead be broader, with every producer who sells plastic cups in Washington being required to make an overall payment to the organization.
- *Hans VanDusen* notes that it would shift from a ratepayer system to one where the consumer pays for recycling based on products purchased.
- *Sego Jackson* notes that this is a far more consistent way to finance the model and agrees that consumers and ratepayers are not the same thing.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* adds that manufacturers may decide to change their process in order to use more recycled content or make their packaging more easily recyclable and ultimately owe less to the stewardship organization. *Susan* adds that it therefore would not be dollars from the ratepayers that fund the program, rather that manufacturers shift dollars internally to pay for the stewardship program. Either way, it will be the stewardship organization and the manufacturers that make the decision on how to finance the program.
- *Stacey Auer* asks if *Sego Jackson* can provide any insight into the actuality of the policy becoming a reality.
- *Sego Jackson* replies that the draft policy currently offers a comprehensive approach to introducing the concept and that they are still working with staff and legislators to build the concept out. *Sego* adds that inclusion of the right legislative language is still needed in order to refine and deliver the concept in a more digestible way.
- *John Walsh* refers back to the question related to shifting costs to the consumer and asks if anyone has looked at how the policy will affect low income individuals and families.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* notes that *John's* question assumes that dollars from ratepayers are the same dollars paying for the program and comments that is not necessarily what has been found in many EPR systems.
- *John Walsh* replies that his question is whether or not an analysis has been done that can be pointed to if someone asks.
- *Sego Jackson* comments that, in early stages of other EPR systems, there was the perception that it will raise prices and that low-income individuals will be affected, which did not actually happen in



places like British Columbia. *Sego* adds that the current system puts a lot of unequitable costs on the community.

- *Penny Sweet* comments that it's a marvelous concept but stresses her concern that there needs to be some element of or representative from packaging on board who can help to move legislation forward.
- *Sego Jackson* notes that it could be difficult to get packagers on board since the policy could add costs they didn't have before, but adds that there are big brands who are starting to talk and think about planning for an EPR system.
- *Phillippa Kassover* shares her opinion that there may actually be an audience for this in the general public and provides the example of people who are making shopping decisions based on packaging. *Phillippa* adds that she is thrilled by the idea of the policy and also believes it is important to get in front of the groups and packagers who are already moving towards more recyclable packaging.
- *Sego Jackson* asks the room to feel free to share additional thoughts or ideas of what's missing in the policy and states his hope that a solid draft will be ready for people to look at in a couple of months.
- *Lisa Sepanski* comments on the equity piece, noting that one thing this type of policy would bring is the opportunity to recycle all plastics, especially in communities where they have stopped recycling 3-7 plastics. *Lisa* adds that there are many different ways this policy could translate to be advantageous to consumers, including the possibility that brands will start making cheaper, more simple packaging that actually brings product costs down for the consumer.
- *Heather Trim* shares that one additional emphasis to add to the policy is that it would bring jobs to Washington.
- *Sego Jackson* wraps up by noting that this is the first draft of the presentation and he is open to comments and feedback.

Agenda Item #4: Local and Statewide Reusable Bag Ordinances (*called to order by Julie Colehour at 11:13 am*)

- *Julie Colehour* introduces *Heather Trim*, Executive Director at Zero Waste Washington, who will present on Washington State's Reusable Bag Ordinances.

Heather Trim's Presentation:

- *Heather Trim* begins by informing the room that she's presented these slides as part of a plastics presentation to community groups around the state and at city councils.
- *Heather Trim* provides the following background on Zero Waste Washington:
 - Zero Waste Washington works to make trash obsolete through three strategies:
 - Passing laws
 - Conducting research
 - Piloting projects
 - Zero Waste Washington works on seven focus areas:



- Product stewardship
 - Excess packaging/product design
 - Reuse/repair
 - Recycling/compost
 - Innovation
 - Plastic pollution
- *Heather Trim* highlights the problem with plastic:
 - 30% of plastics worldwide is used for packaging
 - By 2025 there will be 1lb of plastic in our oceans for every 3lbs of fish
 - Plastics don't decompose
 - Microplastics are being found in every depth of the ocean, including 600 marine species, leading to concern about toxic plastic in the food chain
 - Plastic bags look like jelly fish, which sea turtles eat
 - A pilot whale that recently died on shore in Thailand was found to have 80 plastic bags in his stomach
 - A gray whale who died off the coast of Alki in Seattle in 2010 had numerous pieces of debris in its stomach, including bags, towels, surgical gloves, sweat pants, etc.
 - Next, *Heather Trim*, shares the impacts that plastic bags are having on communities:
 - More plastic and other litter along roadways and in public spaces
 - Plastic contamination in commercial compost
 - Plastic bags are wrapping around the rollers at material recovery facilities which clogs up operations and creates safety issues for workers
 - Plastics are blocking green infrastructure that's being created to reduce flow impacts on salmon habitat in creeks and rivers
 - *Heather Trim* states that, in terms of addressing China Sword, Zero Waste Washington strongly opposes eliminating all 3-7 plastics from collection, noting that we've worked too hard to get consumers comfortable putting their yogurt cups in the recycling bin. We can't go back, but rather need to figure out how to move forward and come up with ways to continue collecting and recycling. That said, plastic bags are a big enough contaminant in bales that it gives greater importance to removing them from the bale.
 - *Heather Trim* provides an overview on the varying reasons for and forms of reusable bag ordinances across the globe:
 - In Africa the plastic bag is sometimes called the national flower due to the number of them that can be seen in trees and shrubs
 - In Bangladesh, plastic bags pose an issue for infrastructure as they have caused flooding
 - In the United States:
 - In California and Hawaii they are mostly banned
 - In Washington there are 23 local ordinances that have passed, including seven in King County
 - Lake Forest Park passed a ban last week
 - In general lots of interest in many additional communities



- *Heather Trim* notes that they would like to have a statewide bag ordinance and are working on that now. A statewide law would offer more certainty for grocery stores.
- The key features of bag ordinances include:
 - No thin plastic carry-home bags
 - 5 or 10 cents fee on carry home bags, which includes paper bags with one eighty-barrel capacity or larger and reusable plastic bags thicker than 2.25mils
 - Stores would keep the 5 or 10 cent fee to help offset their own costs
 - Exemptions for anyone who is on food assistance program
 - Exemptions for produce bags, newspaper bags, dry cleaning bags, and bags sold in large quantities intended as trash can liners
 - Green and brown tinted plastic bags that are not compostable banned to minimize consumer confusion and contamination in the organics stream
 - Zero Waste Washington is advocating to councils to conduct minimal enforcement so the behavior change can happen over time in the same way that recycling and compost has.
- *Heather Trim* notes that it's hard to know what the potential impacts could be of the ban at this time and shares images of the Maui Landfill before and after the Maui bag ban. It's visible in the images that the chain-link fences that once caught hundreds of bags from floating away now have no visible bags in sight.
- *Heather Trim* wraps up by sharing the statistic that the average American uses 500 plastic grocery bags every year.

Q&A:

- *John MacGillivray* suggests that the 2.25mils plastic bag exemption be looked at more closely and possibly not considered reusable, rather that reusable bags should be defined as washable. *John* notes his concern that we've just replaced thin plastic bags with thicker ones.
- *Phillippa Kassover* comments that Lake Forest Park didn't just ban plastic bags but also straws, take out containers, lids and cutlery.
- *Heather Trim* comments that there are seven local ordinances that are addressing single-use plastic food service ware other than bags. Lake Forest Park has put out a great ordinance that not only bans these materials but says that the replacements for the materials must be compostable.
- *Phillippa Kassover* confirms that Lake Forest Park residents are also in support of the ordinance.
- *Stacey Auer* asks how close the legislature is to banning bags and asks if cities that are considering starting the process of banning bags should continue or should wait.
- *Heather Trim* replies that they'd like more cities to put bans in place in the meantime as it will help tip the ban at a statewide level.
- *Phillippa Kassover* asks what difference it has made since Kroger announced banning plastic bags in their stores.
- *Heather Trim* replies that Kroger is the second largest grocery retailer in the country behind Walmart and that their recent announcement to phase out plastic bags at all stores in the United States will bring a huge benefit.



Agenda Item #5: Recommendations Review (*called to order by Julie Colehour at 11:37 am*)

Discussion:

- *Julie Colehour* informs the room that we will close the days agenda by discussing recommendations from past meetings, beginning with the July 18th recommendation.
- *Julie Colehour* recaps the discussion from earlier in the meeting:
 - *Emily Newcomer* will provide additional insight into whether Mexico should be included in the definition of domestic
- *Julie Colehour* asks the room if the recommendation should be reordered more towards the outcome with assurance that there is some level of measurability behind the desired outcome.
- *Mason Giem* agrees
- *Lisa Sepanski* asks the room what other outcomes they envision for domestic processing in addition to transportation, greenhouse gases, environmental equity, etc., and refers back to *Representative Smith's* example of how the JCDREAM association structured their goals.
- *Hans VanDusen* notes that the outcome is in the last phrase of the current recommendation and that at this point there is some inclination that one way to get there is through prioritizing domestic sorting.
- *Julie Colehour* comments that the assumption is that domestic sorting will lead to health and safety regulations similar to those in the US.
- *Hans VanDusen* replies that the big challenge then is in paper processing and notes that prioritizing is a verb that has a lot to it as long as it's used realistically.
- *Sego Jackson* notes that the intent of the recommendation was to say that recycled paper needs to be made here in the US or in Canada.
- *Lisa Sepanski* adds that the priority would be on identifying a domestic sorting and processing facility and, if that's not possible, to send to an OECD country as the second priority. *Lisa* adds that we could separate the sorting equation from the processing equation but that the idea behind the recommendation is to take a hard look at the entire process and make sure that material flows are being documented and sent to places that have the same environmental and safety standards as we have in the US.
- *Hans VanDusen* notes that the way *Lisa Sepanski* phrased her comment, with the supply chain as the desired outcome and prioritization as the easiest way to achieve that, worked well. *Hans* also asks if the word affordable or some other financial word should be included.
- *Michelle Metzler* asks if the center portion of the recommendation could be removed.
- *Phillippa Kassover* argues against removing the center portion, noting that it's important to keep the idea of the circular economy in the recommendation.
- *Jeff Gaisford* comments on the idea of recycling not being free, noting that it has never been free. *Jeff* adds that tracking where our garbage goes is expensive too but we track that and ultimately would like to also know where our recycling goes as well.
- *Julie Colehour* comments that, if it's going to cost more, the Responsible Recycling framework says we need to figure out a way to pay for it.



- *Lisa Sepanski* comments that when the costs to recycle materials properly are all included - such as compliance with regulations to protect human health and the environment - some jurisdictions may decide that it is too expensive and may choose to dispose of the materials instead.
- *Julie Colehour* wraps up the discussion, stating that the RRTF planning team will revise the recommendation to lead with the outcome, incorporate prioritization second, and figure out how best to address Mexico.
- Next, *Julie Colehour* leads the discussion on the August 24th recommendation by sharing the following two possible recommendations:
 - Recycle BC's province wide, coordinated program is worth studying in further detail, specifically to understand how a statewide, systems approach might be applicable to our operating environment here in the Northwest.
 - Engaging producers in recycling solutions is recommended in order to achieve a system of sustainable and responsible recycling
- *Phillippa Kassover* comments that in the second part of *Representative Smith's* bill it talks about having the Department of Commerce do an analysis and asks if we could be more specific in the first recommendation in that it's worth asking the Department of Commerce to study Recycle BC in greater detail.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* comments that she likes the statement but agrees that we are not directing a particular body to do the study and suggests that we advocate for a particular body and potentially advocate for including this in *Representative Smith's* bill.
- *Jeff Gaisford* comments that maybe it's a short-term solution and that we could see how this could be incorporated into the bill and try to put resources together ourselves otherwise.
- *Penny Sweet* suggests that we try to include the study of Recycle BC into the Department of Commerce's analysis.
- *Hans VanDusen* comments that it is likely that everyone in the room supports EPR, but that the recommendation is not specifically calling out the need to do product stewardship, just to study it. *Hans* asks *Sego* if he feels there is a need to study the BC system.
- *Sego Jackson* replies that the challenge is that we never get far enough to do a comprehensive look at how a system like Recycle BC would work in Washington and asks *Hans* if he is asking how much studying really has to be done before an EPR system is put in place.
- *Hans VanDusen* affirms that was his question.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* comments that some of what the study would address is the concerns and that looking at the system broadly could be a way to get the scientific data points needed to support an EPR system.
- *Julie Colehour* states that we could make two recommendations, one that recommends the study and looking into *Representative Smith's* bill to see if they would work together, and the other being that, in general, the RRTF agrees that a product stewardship approach is the right path forward.
- *Penny Sweet* comments that it could be a barrier to getting EPR through the legislature if we call it out so clearly in the recommendation.



- *Sego Jackson* replies that if the legislature isn't hearing from groups like the RRTF that a product stewardship approach is recommended then they'll never know.
- *Penny Sweet* replies, noting that her concern is alarming the whole business community into a political battle.
- *Julie Colehour* comments that we could word it differently.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* asks if the recommendation could acknowledge a multi-step process with the first step being *Sego's* policy.
- *Lisa Sepanski* replies that it could be framed with short-term, mid-term, long-term with the study looking at a deeper level of how a stewardship program would work with existing Washington infrastructure as the mid-term goal.
- *Jeff Gaisford* comments that the second recommendation could be about how to try and engage packagers and producers for support.
- *Lisa Sepanski* adds that it would be not only a study but a mechanism for engaging producers.
- *Penny Sweet* adds that there has to be some way to tell people that they can't make a mailer out of plastic, paper, and a key like the example *Sego Jackson* shared in his presentation.
- *Susan Fife-Ferris* states that there are a lot of people who are working behind the scenes on these issues and that they are working to raise awareness upstream. *Susan* adds that it's interesting to attend conferences with packaging designers because their criteria is much different than what we are discussing, and they focus on how to not break a product in shipping from point A to point B or the look and appeal of a product rather than the recyclability of the product.
- *Sego Jackson* adds that there are plenty of people who are working to change design and that what is needed is a universal requirement that creates a level playing field and that keeps government out of the equation as much as possible.
- *Phillippa Kassover* asks where the King County advisory councils will come into the conversation.
- *Jeff Gaisford* replies that all of the work and recommendations from the RRTF will be given to the advisory councils and they will advise on next steps.
- *Julie Colehour* wraps up by highlighting the meeting location and topic for the October 26th RRTF meeting and recaps the action items from the day.

Action items:

- Revise the July 18th recommendation and send back to the task force for approval
- Revise the August 24th recommendations and send back to the task force for review
- Send an idea of the September 19th recommendation to the task force for discussion at the next RRTF meeting on October 26th

