

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

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 6, 2021

Time: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

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, Elizabeth Parker, Dakota Tangredi , Rachel VanWoert

Guests: Mari Anne Gest, Church at the Park

Absent: Kevin Hines, Gretchen Bennett

OPEN MEETING

Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. and conducted roll-call.

APPROVE MINUTES

Julie Jackson moved to approve the February 1, 2021 meeting minutes. Matt Marler seconds the motion. With no questions or comments, a voice vote was unanimous – motion passes.

UNSHeltered Waste Management Updates

Ryan gave an update from the City of Salem. The city has documents to vet nonprofits that want to participate in the program to take waste to Covanta free of charge. Church at the Park and other nonprofits have provided the documents and are waiting for results. The City of Salem and Public Works are busy with the daily operations at Wallace Marine and Cascade parks.

Matt shared that Covanta would be receiving the first load the next morning and that coordination was going on between the city and the scale house. There has been a shaky start to the process.

Ryan mentioned, as a side note, that it looks like the city's waste processing facility south of the airport is getting a self-contained compactor. The city is seeking an amendment or change in current DEQ permit which will allow for compaction and moving of general solid waste.

Ryan asked Gretchen (outside of the meeting) what they look for when bringing on a new non-profit organization. The city does not have to try to find non-profits as these organizations are already in the community working on the issues of the unsheltered. If these non-profits were not already in place, the city would be looking for organizations that have experience with camps and are aware of personal property vs waste or litter. Having that awareness is important.

Elizabeth emailed the April 7, 2021 meeting notes, but they are not official minutes as there was no quorum.

Ryan asked how we take what we are doing now and build it in to a broader program.

Kaileigh is very interested in this from the perspective of the City of Keizer. Brian May had a meeting with the Environmental Services staff at Marion County (MC) and they are looking into this as well. He is hoping that Gretchen will have a playbook that both Keizer and Marion County can use. Marion County wants to be able to provide information and get an understanding of the scope of the volume of the waste. Kaileigh wanted to know specific data but that would be hard to pin down at this point in process.

The city has been highlighting cleanups at Wallace Marine and Cascade on Facebook but wants to be sure that resources are going through the appropriate channels and not causing further waste problems. There was discussion regarding the possible negative vibes regarding the homeless on social media.

Discussion on what information could be provided to help formalize a playbook. Ryan said that they could probably help with templates (standard operating procedures, legal documents) that other cities could tailor to their needs. Engaging the correct non-profits but how to know what the 'correct' non-profit might be. Mari Anne, from Church at the Park, suggested training that the cities and small towns may not have available.

The City of Salem is cancelling its 'cash for trash' program and Mari Anne is applying for grants to keep it active as it makes a difference. Her group is asking the unsheltered what kind of non-monetary stuff they might want (sleeping bags, food). Her group is talking about bringing a truck to haul garbage.

It was suggested to Mari Anne that she reach out to Gretchen with the City of Salem. Dakota shared a couple of groups called 'Ground Score Association' (Barbara Webber) and they work with a group called 'Trash for Peace' in Portland. They might be a valuable resource for Mari Anne.

Ryan reframed that the city will provide (for the playbook) documents; scope of tonnage (the true nature of it), and lessons learned (Ryan will reach out to Gretchen about what was good and what could have done better). Hopefully Mari Anne and her organization will be able to contribute to the playbook.

Brian May offered to help coordinate with Gretchen to write the playbook/handbook but that it would take some time. It will take awhile before it can be finalized as we are still learning from the process. He thought he might ask Dakota about how the waste stream works, which would help with understanding.

Rachel would love for people to think outside the box and to contact organizations like EarthWise or businesses and let them know what is needed. She would be grateful for suggestions from the group. Kaileigh said that it would be great to be able to work in conjunction with the city and be able to leverage the help. Rachel responded that there is a conundrum for businesses who are trying to maintain their business while maintaining their humanity.

Judy suggested that there is an organization called 'Service Integration' that welcomes any business which wants to provide things (not clothing). The group is funded by the schools and hospital.

Julie said that Brian May mentioned doing waste audits and she thought it would be a good idea to include some documentation in the playbook about environmental and safety concerns regarding safe handling of the waste while dispelling any misconceptions. Ryan said that was a great point about understanding what the composition of the waste was beforehand and that he had not heard of anything that might be considered hazardous materials having been sorted so far. He also wondered if the materials were being triaged before it got sent to Covanta.

Kaileigh suggested that documentation be added to the playbook to help cities, counties, organizations on how to navigate jurisdictional boundaries or organizations.

Ryan agreed that there are some organizations that are less forthcoming with help and that perhaps they can benefit from seeing a playbook and may realize that the cost of helping will not be as expensive/cumbersome as they thought. There was comment that we are being very clear that this program is centered on Marion County and going to Covanta. It is not intended for larger organizations like the Oregon Department of Transportation. Brian M agreed our scope and magnitude is only for Marion County and that there ODOT has the unsheltered on their properties and need to handle them. He suggests caution when having conversations with the State.

There was discussion regarding how the city and Marion County have to deal with the RVs. The city deals with abandoned RVs; Marion County deals with the dumping of waste from the black valves as the RVs are being forced by code enforcement to move from one spot to another. He has had conversations with state corrections and possibly setting up a business model to have their people work on deconstructing the RVs. There might be funding.

Mari Anne added that her organization finds and allows parking and that they help pay for sanitation dumping. They currently have 50 spots but need more safe parking spots.

Ryan suggested that Gretchen, MC and he could get together to begin writing the playbook but that MC would do the actual writing. Brian said that MC has a couple of people who he might be able to talk into doing it. Ryan will reach out to Gretchen.

Kaileigh asked exactly which department does all of this fall under within the City of Salem. Ryan said that Gretchen works for the City Manager's office. Public Works does the actual clean up. Code enforcement has an aspect. Ryan mentioned that every time there is a clean-up in regards to the city, that it is a major effort. The city has a contractor come out to do the manual lifting. There is a lot

of coordination and planning for a single clean up between the contractors, the security, the police presence and a manager has to be there. All of this is for one cleanup operation.

Brian said that the goal is for us to work towards a preventative operation vs a cleanup operation. Ryan mentioned that there is federal funding to help the 100 hardest to house every year and get them into housing. It is a housing rental assistance program. A big piece of this is communication is the PIO group.

Ryan said that it takes a key or high level sponsor to say that this is important. It needs the backing of the city manager to be successful.

With no further questions or comments, Ryan adjourned the meeting at 6:18pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, July 1, 2021