APPROVED MINUTES OF A
HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
In person & Zoom

DATE: November 20, 2024

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Hamilton County Environmental Services
250 William Howard Taft Road, 1st Floor
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Virtual meeting recording can be viewed here.

PRESENT:

Policy Committee Members
Denise Driehaus, County Commissioner, Chair
Mallory Geresy, Generator Representative
Greg Kesterman, Hamilton County Public Health Commissioner
Domonique Peebles, General Interest Member
Matt Wahlert, Township Representative

Staff
Michelle Balz, Hamilton County ReSource
Mary Cropenbaker, Hamilton County ReSource
Julie Donna, Hamilton County Environmental Services
Ashley Dove, Hamilton County Environmental Services
Christin Horsman, Hamilton County ReSource
Brad Johnson, Hamilton County Environmental Services
Jack Mangan, Hamilton County ReSource
Bryan Peak, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office
Sam Plante, Hamilton County ReSource

Others in Attendance
Dean Ferrier, Rumpke
Ulah Foley, County Commissioner's Office
Nee Fong Chin, Chief Assisting Prosecuting Attorney
Maisy Green, Hamilton County BOCC
Howard Miller, City of Cincinnati
Kevin Tighe, Hamilton County BOCC

Virtual
Michelle Ackenhausen
Bruce Berno
Emma Campbell, Hamilton County ReSource
Craig Davidson, Assistant Health Commissioner, Hamilton County Public Health
Carrie Davis, Director of Greater Community Groups Foundation
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health
Joe Jay, Secretary to the Public

Marie Kocoshis, Sierra Club
Cher Mohring, Hamilton County ReSource
Elise Roalef, Hamilton County ReSource
Tony Staubach, Hamilton County ReSource
Matt Tietsort
Lisa Wynn
Molly Yeager, Rumpke

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Sue Magness, City of Cincinnati Representative
Colleen McSwiggin, Public Member

1. INTRODUCTION
Ms. Driehaus called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. MINUTES – Attachment A
Approval of the minutes from August 14, 2024. Ms. Driehaus entertained a motion to approve the August 14, 2024 minutes. On motion of Mr. Wahlert, seconded by Mr. Kesterman, the minutes were approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS
First public comment made by Carrie Davis, Director of Greater Community Groups Foundation.

Second public comment from Marie Kocoshis, member of the Sierra Club.

4. RESOURCE REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS – Attachment B
Ms. Balz provided an overview of Attachment B and provided updates on current revenue receipts and comparisons with the prior year.

5. POLICY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. US EPA SWIFR grant application

Ms. Balz provided information for the Policy Committee regarding the US EPA SWIFR grant application. Ms. Balz stated that this grant would be based on the Organics Feasibility Study recommendations. Ms. Balz noted that one of the ideas for implementing this grant would be a model municipal community compost program.

Ms. Balz noted that the staff intend to use the findings of the Organics Processing Feasibility Study to apply for equipment needed to outfit one of the three medium-scale composting sites that will be operated with a public partnership. Ms. Balz also shared that the Hamilton County Engineers have stated they would house this equipment if grant money was awarded and able to purchase. She noted that no match funds are required for this grant application and that the City of Cincinnati is also applying.

Ms. Balz noted that this large grant deadline is December 20th. She answered all questions from the Policy Committee about this grant application.

Ms. Driehaus entertained a motion to approve the US EPA SWIFR grant application. On motion from Mr.

Wahlert, seconded from Mr. Peebles, the motion to apply for the US EPA SWIFR grant for up to $5 million dollars passed.

b. Ohio EPA Market Development Grant for Go Zero

Ms. Balz introduced information for the Ohio EPA Market Development grant and that the private sector could not apply for this grant outright. Ms. Balz introduced Ms. Mary Cropenbaker, Assistant Solid Waste Manager, to present information regarding this grant. Ms. Cropenbaker noted that this grant would be for Go Zero organics hauler. Go Zero, Ms. Cropenbaker noted, is an organics hauler collecting food scraps in Hamilton County and the grant would fund purchasing equipment to start a Class IV yard trimmings composting site. This site is in conjunction with an urban farm in the Spring Grove Village neighborhood of Cincinnati. Ms. Balz also noted that no Hamilton County funds will be used to match this grant.

Ms. Driehaus entertained a motion to approve the Ohio EPA Market Development Grant application. On motion from Mr. Kesterman, seconded by Mr. Peebles, the motion to apply on behalf of Go Zero for the Ohio EPA Market Development Grant passed.

c. 2025 Meeting Dates

Ms. Balz outlined for the Policy Committee the 2025 meeting dates for the Hamilton County Solid Waste Policy Committee. The 2025 proposed dates are: February 19, May 21, August 20, and November 19. All meetings are held at 3 p.m.

Ms. Driehaus entertained a motion to approve the 2025 meeting dates. On motion from Mr. Peebles, seconded by Ms. Geresy, the motion to approve the 2025 meeting dates passed.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

a. City of Cincinnati Zero Waste Programming Update

Mr. Howard Miller introduced himself and introduced the zero waste goals and strategies. Mr. Miller gave updates for the Policy Committee regarding the Green Cincinnati Zero Waste focus plan. The first Zero Waste goal is to increase waste diversion by 10% by 2028. This would increase access to recycling and improve neighborhood business district recycling infrastructure.

Mr. Miller continued his presentation by also stating another goal of the Zero Waste plan is organics diversion. The specific goal is to divert 50% of yard trimmings and food waste from going to the landfill by 2028. There are multiple strategies for organics diversion regarding facilities. Mr. Miller also noted that regarding organics diversion, it will improve current yard trimmings collection program and improve multi-scale composting infrastructure.

Mr. Miller also outlined the current city Zero Waste programming including residential curbside recycling and drop-off locations. Other programs in the Zero Waste program include commercial waste franchise program, city operations, and interior bin offerings.

Mr. Miller provided several statistics regarding curbside recycling participation trends from 2020-2024. He gave other statistics regarding resident curbside annual average tonnage data from 2018-2022.

Mr. Miller noted several observations and challenges of the Cincinnati Recycling Program. The first observation is city-wide recycling participation has plateaued with residents at about 60%. The challenge is to improve the large multi-family participation needed to get to the next level. Another observation is that organics make up approximately 31% of Cincinnati's residential waste.

Mr. Miller also outlined current grant opportunities including two grant applications that were already submitted in 2024 and two that were approved to be submitted. He noted that for the US EPA SWIFR Grant, recycling cart fleet replacement would replace 80,000 carts.

Mr. Miller answered all questions from the Policy Committee.

b. Organics Feasibility Study Update

Ms. Balz gave an update regarding the organics feasibility study. The team in charge of the study is still looking for a potential site after the initial site search of publicly owned sites/brownfields. She noted that the team is continuing to look for other leads and will conduct a secondary search for potential sites for the study.

Ms. Balz noted that the organics feasibility study team's other step is regarding public engagement and following up with more options for sites. Also to find what models exist for public private partnership with decentralized community composting experts.

Ms. Balz answered a question from Ms. Driehaus regarding potential sites. Ms. Balz noted that there are three sites that need around six to eight acres for these future compost sites. She also clarified what those compost sites would look like and the phases of building.

c. Southwest Ohio Pollution Prevention Internship Update

Ms. Balz provided details to the Policy Committee regarding the Southwest Ohio Pollution Prevention Internship. She introduced Ms. Christin Horsman. Ms. Horsman began her presentation by noting that this internship program is a collaboration between Hamilton, Butler, Adams, and Clermont Counties' solid waste districts. This program pairs businesses with college students to work on sustainability projects with a waste reduction focus. This program eliminated the barriers to entry that help hire, train, and pay for the interns and is a 12-week project.

Ms. Horsman provided pictures of the training workshop and final presentations. The first project for this internship program was focused on comparing the carbon footprint of altafiber's old equipment and the new equipment they give to customers. Ms. Horsman provided several of the group's projects and results.

Ms. Horsman concluded her presentation by noting that they are currently accepting applications for 2025 host companies.

d. Waste Reduction Innovation Grant Update – Attachment C

Ms. Balz provided details for a waste reduction innovation grant given to St. Francis Seraph Catholic Church, School, and Ministries. This grant was under $15,000 and was approved. The grant funds will be used to purchase recycling bins and educational posters for the church, school, and ministries at St. Anthony Center.

7. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

The next scheduled Policy Committee meeting will be a meeting on **Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219**. Zoom will also be available for persons other than the Policy Committee, who would like to attend virtually.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Driehaus entertained a motion to adjourn. On motion of Mr. Wahlert seconded by Mr. Kesterman, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.