



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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# BENTON COUNTY

## Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC)

### May 25, 2022 Minutes

Members Present: Ken Eklund, John McEvoy, Marge Popp, Joel Geier, Chuck Gilbert & Mark Yeager. Staff Present: Daniel Redick & Greg Verret

Members Excused: Deborah Gile

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**Call to Order/Introductions.** Ken Eklund, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

#### **Approval of Minutes for April 27, 2022**

Mark noted a change in the minutes to reflect that "Mark nominated Ken to be promoted from the temporary chair". With that edit, Mark made a **MOTION** to approve the April 27, 2022 minutes. Seconded by Joel, the minutes were **APPROVED unanimously**.

#### **Community Member Comments**

None.

#### **Oregon Consensus Assessment**

Joel began the discussion by sharing what he knew about the role of Sam Imperati (Oregon Consensus) as three-fold, to collect feedback about the landfill, collection franchise and the holistic solid waste management.

Marge expressed concern that SWAC was not asked to weigh in on the establishment of the process of the assessment.

Ken expressed his concern that there has been a lack of information which easily leads to speculation. He emphasized that developing the factual basis should be part of the process. (For example, the remaining lifespan of the landfill, or what is the current operating plan of the landfill.)

Chuck made a recommendation for the Oregon Consensus to work with the Benton County GIS to connect with maps and data.

Sam Imperati from the Oregon Consensus joined the meeting. He is the facilitator working with the county and community members in reflection of the CUP. Sam described how he was hired, which was that Benton County requested that Oregon Consensus conduct a request for proposals for an independent facilitator; Sam submitted a proposal and was selected to start work on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Sam read the Planning Commission's decision to deny

the CUP application to expand the landfill along with the comments made by the public during the public hearing. Sam spoke with the Community Development Director, County Administrator and County Counsel. Sam also spoke with: Jeff Kleinman, attorney for the neighborhood group; Republic Service's attorney; SWAC member, Joel Geier. Sam explained that his job is to conduct an assessment about what process, if any, the participants might agree to for moving forward. They are looking for a consensus agreement about what process could be most helpful. Topics for conversation between the parties could include: What process could be used to determine what parts, if any, of a landfill expansion CUP the county could approve? Similarly, what process could be used for the collection franchise? Another topic would be holistic solid waste management with the potential for a regional dialogue.

In response to questions from SWAC members, Sam stated that the topic of limiting the amount of waste taken from other counties could be on the table, and that who is involved in the process can be decided by the participants.

Ken asked about representation at the discussion and surety of inclusiveness. Sam suggested that inclusiveness could be accomplished several ways, such as creating an advisory committee group of 15-30 representatives. (At any meeting, public comment would be allowed.) Sam would like to conduct a public survey that is widely distributed. He also suggested open houses. Most likely the decision on how to proceed with the subsequent process would come from the County Board of Commissioners. Sam re-iterated that what he is looking into is whether there is a consensus from interested parties about what would be a viable process.

To ensure inclusivity and that all interested groups would be heard, Sam will be asking SWAC members and others on who should be involved in the discussion.

### **Grant Initiative**

The Solid Waste Grant Initiative applicants were available at this meeting for questions and feedback from SWAC Members. The projects are as follows;

- Philomath High School – effort to reduce paper towel use the school and an educational campaign to promote hand dryers. The school requested funding for 6-9 hand dryers.
  - ARC of Benton County – request for funding to “upcycle” furniture which will be used in their clubhouse which serves people with developmental disabilities. A second request with this application is funding for a videographer. SWAC members asked about the requested funding on this item and the flexibility on the amount. Diane Scottaline (representative of ARC) stated that funds from other cash donations could be put towards the videographer.
  - McGuire Mechanism – request for funding to purchase scrap metals to repair and/or make equipment. An example of the process would be designing and implementing mechanization of small processes on small farms. Matching funds would be coming from the customers paying for the items.
  - Corvallis Sustainability Coalition – request for funding to create a reusable takeout container program. Matching funds and donations would be from additional grants from Republic Services. The reusable containers are durable and will be pelletized and reconstructed at the end of the products' useful life.
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- C Machines – request for funding to create and send out a survey for interest and participation in their workforce development program.
- Vina Moses – request for funding to create a space for collection and storage of reused bags as part of their thrift store operations.

### **Coalition with other SWACs**

Members discussed how best to approach other Solid Waste Advisory Councils in other counties around Oregon and the purpose of the potential conversations. Members noted that communication towards this endeavor should start with the respective counties' Board of Commissioners and hosting department. Marge suggested starting a conversation with the Benton County BOC to begin. Ken appointed Chuck, John and Joel to form a subcommittee that would look into what it would take to establish a regional group of SWACs and report back at the June meeting on their progress. A suggestion was made that if this regional committee is created, the initial focus should be working together on reducing waste and diversion strategies.

### **Agenda Items for June Meeting**

- SWAC Bylaws
- Progress towards a Regional SWAC Coalition
- Independent Audits for Coffin Butte Landfill

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

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