

BCTT Workgroup Facilitator's Initial Observations

I wanted to get this out before the meeting to model transparency. We have received criticism from some Workgroup members and some members of the public about the process. We appreciate the feedback. Here are some initial observations. Please do not consider my direct approach with a lack of respect.

- 1) As identified in the Assessment, the essential elements of a healthy civic relationship include:
 - a. Supported Values
 - b. Mutual Goals
 - c. An Effective Accountability Mechanism
 - d. Trust
 - e. Respect

The current solid waste situation is a classic “wicked problem” because each of the above elements are strained. The Board has asked everyone to work together and that is what we will do if we decide to explore the issues versus debate them. We have an opportunity for a fresh start, and the typical “Forming-Storming-Norming and Performing” process was expected. We are in the “storming” phase, but we will get through it because each of you care about the community.

- 2) I understand there are serious trust issues from the CUP process, etc. I have heard comments like “massive incompetence, or ... intentional obfuscation.” Please consider giving everyone a chance at a new beginning, especially while the process develops its rhythm. I know that’s a lot to ask, but without it, the process will be doomed, and that is not in the best interests of the community.
- 3) The process outlined in the Board-approved Charter is tried and true. It is a “bridge” process between past events and next steps. I do not suggest the process will fix this “wicked problem.” I simply suggest it is more likely to manage the dynamics in a way designed to increase the chances of success, which is consistent with one of the Charter’s guiding principles, “Make recommendations in the best interest of the Benton County community-at-large.”
- 4) With regard to the elements of the Charge, here are a few points for your consideration:
 - a) Charge A: “Common Understandings” The initial draft is something to push against. Everyone saw it at the same time. Staff drafted the information outlined in the Charter, as requested, and erred on the side of detail. It is a beginning – not an end. It was never meant to be a polished product because there simply was not enough time and doing so would take away from the goal of making it your product vs. the staff’s product. It will not be final until the last meeting. It will be improved with your input like that summarized in the homework document. The rest of the report will be written by the workgroup through the iterative process with the assistance of staff and my team. Ultimately, I will ensure the report fairly and accurately reflects the workgroup’s deliberations.
 - b) Charge B: “Clarifying existing criteria and information requirements for the land use review process for any proposed landfill expansion.” This does NOT include opining on

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the merits of Republic Services' expected Coffin Butte application, nor does it involve the actual writing of potential code language or recommendations that change the current steps in the existing CUP review process.

- c) Charge C: "Scope the necessary tasks to start a Long-Term Sustainable Materials Management Plan process," considers topics like contracting out, subjects to be covered, who needs to be at the table beyond those in the County, and a workplan outline with a timeline for completion, etc. It does NOT include completing the plan. It only includes a discussion of the preliminary scoping to start that planning process.
 - d) Charge D: "Provide input on additional topics raised in the [Assessment Report](#)." It involves the following:
 - i. Scope the necessary tasks to start planning for the reopening of the existing hauling agreement to be amended by July 1, 2024....
 - ii. Clarify the differences, with BOC feedback, between the roles, responsibilities, and protocols of SWAC and DSAC on these topics, and develop specific recommended review criteria for the evaluation of CUP applications.
 - iii. Create a future timeline for discussing any needed changes to the Benton County Code flowing from any WORKGROUP recommendations.
 - e) Charge E: "Consider creating a public-facing document and community education campaign on these topics." It is self-explanatory.
- 5) Yes, there was a glitch in the survey programming. I fixed it, apologized, and sent a new option. The survey asked to identify missing topics and questions, only. It was never designed to be the place where members provide all the information they want to provide. It intentionally said:
- After you submit this survey, please send an email with your supportive materials for each of your suggestions, identified by their Table of Contents reference (EX: I 4) to bentoncountytalkstrash@Co.Benton.OR.US and SamImperati@ICMresolutions.com. Your supporting email is due by noon on Monday, September 12th. Thank You!
- 6) Tenor and tone are important for community wellbeing and a collaborative outcome. The Charter provides Workgroup Commitments that apply to members, staff, and participants. They include:
- a) Explore the topics – not debate them
 - b) Disagree without being disagreeable
 - c) Each member agrees to work toward fair, practical, and durable recommendations that reflect the diverse interests of the entire WORKGROUP and the public
 - d) Strive vigorously for consensus and closure on issues
 - e) Self-regulate and help other members abide by these commitments.
- 7) It has been suggested to me that Republic is telling people the Board has already made a decision... an expansion is in the bag. Assumptions needed to be tested openly and respectfully. Members are free to ask Republic about that tomorrow.

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- 8) Similarly, members can ask if Republic is going to drop its next CUP during the Workgroup process, and whether it will give the Board time to consider and implement the Workgroup recommendations it accepts before the CUP is filed.
- 9) I recall Commissioner Wyse stating that the process should take the time it needs to get it right when the Commission approved the Charter. I will not be shy, nor will you, if we need to ask for more time. Frankly, we probably will.
- 10) While requested previously, starting 9/7/22, the workgroup email requirement will be required, so we have "one table" moving forward. Communications need to go to BentonCountyTalksTrash@Co.Benton.OR.US with a copy to me. Everyone deserves equal and transparent access to the process. This has been observed in the breach and I know not all the emails went there so the packet your received is not complete.
- 11) Meeting Public Comment Period:
 - a) Because it's the first meeting, Public Comment will be in the middle of the meeting (~4:30) after the context is set and the Workgroup members introduce themselves and state their hopes for the process.
 - b) In future meetings, Public Comment will most frequently be at the frontend. We will be encouraging folks to send their comments to the project email you copied above, so they can be bundled, put on the project website, and sent to the Workgroup in advance of the following meeting.
- 12) The survey was for members – not the public because:
 - a. It was largely about logistics.
 - b. The substantive input was summarized in the homework and will be discussed tomorrow.
 - c. The Workgroup is similar to representative democracy. The County is actively discussing public outreach activities, including a potential survey when the Workgroup draft recommendations are further along.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I am confident we will succeed if we view this process as an opportunity to chart a better future.

Sam
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