

MINUTES
April 23, 2024
5:00 PM
Sonny West Conference Center, Howard Office Building
700 President Ronald Reagan Way, Nashville, TN 37210

The meeting of the Davidson County Solid Waste Regional Board was held on April 23, 2024, at 5 PM in the Howard Office Building, Sonny West Conference Center, 700 President Ronald Reagan Way, Nashville, TN 37210. The meeting information was posted on the Board's website and the Metro Government calendar.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Damita Beck-Taylor and roll call was taken. The following members were present: Robert Diehl, John Harvey, Patrick Greiner, and Emily Stutzman.

The Chair welcomed the members and the public to the meeting and briefly described the agenda. The Chair then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 30, 2023, meeting. A motion was made by Patrick Greiner and seconded by Emily Stutzman. The motion was passed unanimously.

The new Board Members were introduced. John Harvey joined to represent Berry Hill and has been involved locally there for the past few years. Patrick Grenier, an environmental justice professor at Vanderbilt University, was appointed last year but this was his first meeting.

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County's legal team representative, Tara Ladd, gave an update regarding WM's Southern Services expansion request litigation. The court sided with the Board that the expansion goes against Metro's Zero Waste Master Plan. The appeal time has passed for the case, so the case is closed.

The Board then heard an update of Metro Waste Services (MWS) by Jenn Harrman, Zero Waste Program Manager. Harrman provided a quick overview of Annual Progress Report (APR) for the board members and how it is reviewed annually. Clay Hand, Environmental Engineer provided an overview of the landfill report and recycling report. This report was followed by a presentation from Harrman on Zero Waste Initiatives which included a brief overview of the Food Scraps Pickup Pilot that launched in October of 2023 and roughly 52 tons of food waste have been collected since then. Other zero waste updates include the success of every other week recycling, the construction and demolition recycling bill that was deferred last session, and education and outreach numbers have grown.

Following the presentation, the Board was able to ask questions and make comments. First, board member Diehl asked if Metro plans to work on HB1021. Harrman responded that it is a state law and Metro is not directly working on it but have noted it in the annual progress report questionnaire provided to TDEC. Then, Chair Beck-Taylor asked why construction and demolition (C&D) tonnage is not listed in the report. Harrman clarified the question was regarding why the state does not include C&D in the diversion requirement. Sharon Smith, Special Projects Manager, stated that the state requirement is for Municipal Solid Waste only, but we track C&D as well. Chair Beck-Taylor asked if there is a consequence for not meeting the state's diversion requirement. Smith stated that the state is very forgiving and at worst, we probably would not be able to apply for state grants. However, they have multiple ways of calculating diversion and we would likely meet the requirement. Regarding the pilot, Chair Beck-Taylor asked what happens when the funds are expired and what's the plan to maintain the

pilot. Harrman replied that they have received a grant from TDEC for organics management and has proposed an investment request made to Metro Council to maintain consistent funding through the end fiscal year '25 and feasibility study. Additionally, board member Stutzman asked the terms of capacity for processing organics with the pilot. Harrman responded that Compost Company is the only facility, and they have room for expansion and part of the upcoming feasibility study is to look at how they can meet the demand of a full-scale collection program. Board member Greiner asked if there is a sense of how disruptive plastic bags are to the recycling process in terms of HB1021. Harrman stated if WM had the equipment to sort it, it would be helpful for operations, but it is a significant investment; glass would provide a larger benefit.

The Chair then opened the floor for public comment. Gary Cohen, a sustainable packaging specialist representing the Tennessee Waste Reduction & Recycling Act (TWRRRA), stated how Tennessee needs better funding for recycling and how the TWRRRA transfers the cost of recycling from the taxpayers to the producers. John Vanderhurst, representing the Recycling Advocates of Middle Tennessee, stated how Tennessee's recycling rates have remained stagnant while trash has increased.

The Chair asked for a motion to accept and approve the 2023 Annual Progress Report. Board member Diehl made a motion to approve the report, board member Stutzman seconded, and passed with no objection.

Harrman then reviewed the Zero Waste Master Plan 2024 updates which included first, adding C&D recycling and diversion research, and including policy development; second, adding Food Scrap Pickup Pilot data, analysis, and a feasibility study; third, adding a section on environmental justice addressing how strategies will be evaluated and implemented to prevent disproportionately adverse impacts on BIPOC, low income, and other underserved communities. Chair Beck-Taylor asked how the success of these will be evaluated. Harrman stated that C&D will be evaluated on reporting permitting programs for impact diversion, the Food Scraps Pickup Pilot will be evaluated on the feasibility study to show metrics and recommends that the board discusses and comes up with ideas on how to evaluate environmental justice. Board member Stutzman suggested that a holistic review of the Zero Waste Master Plan through an environmental justice lens might be beneficial. Harrman noted that the board can decide what language and recommendations look like for adding environmental justice to the Zero Waste Master Plan.

The Chair then opened the floor for public comment. Jeffrey Ezell from the Compost Company noted that there is commercial interest to compost and adding brush collection would help with their processing. Vanderhurst stated that creating more jobs in recycling can help disadvantaged people. Cohen noted that packaging producers funding composting could be added to the extended producer responsibility (EPR).

The Chair made motion to approve items 1 and 2 of the Zero Waste Master Plan updates and bring the board back to discuss item 3 with a more wholistic lens. Board member Diehl seconded the motion and it passed with no objection.

With no further business, the Chair made motion to adjourn the meeting, board member Diehl seconded the motion and it passed with no objection.