

**APPROVED MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
HAMILTON COUNTY RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** July 21, 2021

**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Hamilton County Environmental Services  
250 William Howard Taft Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

**PRESENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative, Chair  
Bob Gedert, Public Member, Vice Chair  
Karen Hurley, General Interest Member  
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative  
Raj Rajagopal, Township Representative  
Larry Riddle, Rumpke  
Lily Ritch, Student Representative

**Staff**

Michelle Balz, Solid Waste Manager  
Gage Bradford, Community Specialist  
Mary Copenbaker, Business Outreach Coordinator  
Brad Johnson, Director  
Ali Khodadad, Operations Manager  
Mike Kramer, Assistant Director  
Joy Landry, Communications Specialist  
Tom Mohr, Digital/Communications Manager  
Cher Mohring, Community Outreach Coordinator  
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk

**Others in Attendance**

Nee Fong Chin, Prosecutor's Office  
Craig Davidson, Hamilton County Public Health  
Carrie Davis, Child Advocacy for Jobs & Equity  
Katie Evans, Best Way Disposal  
Erin Fay, Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub  
Oliver Kroner, Cincinnati Office of Environment and Sustainability  
Gina Marsh, Chief of Staff for Commissioner Driehaus  
Amanda Testerman, Cincinnati Office of Environment and Sustainability

**ABSENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Denise Driehaus, County Commissioner  
Greg Kesterman, Hamilton County Public Health Representative

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. DiPuccio called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm.

**2. CLERK'S REPORT**

**A. Approval of Minutes – May 19, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting**

Mr. DiPuccio asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions. Hearing none, Mr. DiPuccio entertained a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Ms. Magness moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Gedert seconded. All in favor and the minutes were approved.

**B. Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS**

Ms. Balz stated that revenue increased slightly comparing May 2021 to May 2020. Overall, there is a 6,900 ton increase and \$29,000 increase over 2020.

Ms. Balz stated that in-district tonnage has decreased 13,000 over 2020, out-of-state tonnage has decreased over 2020 by 2,600 tons, and out-of-district tonnage has increased by about 23,000 tons over 2020. Overall, not a huge shift percentagewise over 2020.

Mr. Gedert asked how in-district tonnage was trending over the years. Ms. Balz stated that from the top of her head, it has gone down over the years. Ms. Balz stated she could verify this by creating a spreadsheet for the Committee.

Mr. Gedert asked how the District's success was measured and asked if it was through the diversion rate. Ms. Balz stated that the diversion rate is one method but staff also, depending on the program, tries to come up with other measurements; whether it be tons, how many people were reached, how many compost bins were sold, etc.

**4. POLICY COMMITTEE ITEMS**

**A. 2022 Budget Recommendation**

Ms. Balz stated that the District must submit the budget to the County Commissioners for official approval. The 2022 budget is very similar to the 2021 and it is presented in the same way past budgets have been presented.

Ms. Balz highlighted a few of the differences:

The 2022 proposed budget amount of approximately \$3.8 million is similar to the 2021 budget. Key differences include:

- **\$46,147.10 increase in Department staffing.** Funds pay for the solid waste portion of an additional full-time Department of Environmental Services Accountant and Social Media Intern as well as an increase in medical benefit costs.
- **\$35,000 for Solid Waste vehicle.** The District needs a larger capacity vehicle and will not purchase in 2021 due to nationwide vehicle shortage.
- **\$25,700 for office improvements.** Funds pay for the solid waste portion of the Department of Environmental Services reception area remodel, installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and office furniture.

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- **\$100,000 decrease for Plan Update consultants.** Solid Waste Plan Update consultant costs will come out of the 2021 budget, not 2022.
- **\$16,386 increase for Yard Trimmings Drop-Off.** Staff anticipates costs for this program will increase in 2022.
- **\$15,000 decrease in awareness.** Staff anticipates costs for awards ceremony and a wasted food event will be less than budgeted for in 2021.
- **\$10,000 increase in Let's Stop Waste.** Staff anticipates launching a larger promotion campaign directed toward commercial businesses and institutions.
- **\$50,000 increase in Waste Reduction Innovation Grant.** This increase boosts the amount of funds available for the Waste Reduction Innovation Grant or makes available funds for another grant program.

Ms. Balz stated that that with their being a significant carry-over balance, we would like to incorporate discussions on how to use these funds into the Plan Update discussions over the next year.

Ms. Balz summarized the rest of the budget packet.

A brief question/answer ensued.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that the 2022 budget will be proposed to the Board of County Commissioners and asked for a motion. Ms. Hurley moved; Mr. Gedert seconded. All in favor and the motion was approved.

**5. INFORMATONAL ITEMS**

**A. Recognition of Lily Ritch**

Mr. DiPuccio stated that this was Ms. Ritch's, who was the Student Representative, last meeting and held up a framed certificate to show her. Mr. DiPuccio stated that the Committee really appreciated her input as she always got the Committee thinking in a little different way.

Mr. DiPuccio thanked Ms. Ritch and wished her well in her future endeavors. Ms. Ritch thanked the Committee and stated that it has been such a dream. It's brought her and her peers at school and her environmental class closer and she was grateful for the experience. Ms. Ritch thanked the Committee.

**B. Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub**

Ms. Fay introduced herself and gave a brief presentation about the Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub; history, location, what they accept, funding, etc.

**C. Cincinnati Biochar Project**

Mr. Kroner introduced himself and gave a presentation about doing a bio-char project in the City of Cincinnati.

**D. Child Advocacy for Rights and Equity Presentation**

Ms. Davis introduced herself and gave a presentation regarding her opposition that the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management Plan does not include a siting strategy and to stop the Bond Road Rumpke Expansion. Ms. Davis also asked that the Committee pass a motion to have the Director appoint an ad hoc committee to propose possible rules for the Board of County Commissioners that may improve the quality of life and the environment and give residents a voice.

**E. Hamilton County Solid Waste Plan Update**

Ms. Balz stated that staff is in the process of entering into a contract with a consultant for a few sections of the Plan Update. Ms. Balz stated that staff is reviewing the proposal for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant and working on a few sections as stated in the Manager's Memo.

**F. Waste Reduction Innovation Grant Overview**

Ms. Balz stated that one grant has been approved since the last meeting as included as Attachment D.

**G. 2019 Organics Diversion Grant Final Wrap-Up**

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment E was the final wrap up of the 2019 Organics Diversion Grant and Ms. Mohring did a great job in the write up.

**H. Environmental Enforcement Program**

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment F showed activity through June, 2021.

**6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Magness asked that Bio-Char be a future agenda item since the City will be requesting funds for this program. A brief discussion ensued regarding grant money/seed money for operations.

**7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Policy Committee Member comments.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**9. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

The next Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste Policy Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021. The meeting will be a hybrid of in person for Committee members/staff and Zoom for others wishing to attend virtually. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. at 250 William Howard Taft Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219. Meeting information will be sent at a later date.

**10. ADJOURNMENT (Target Time – 3:00 p.m.)**

Mr. DiPuccio asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Magness moved; Mr. Gedert seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.