



Pinellas Partners in Recycling Meeting Notes for July 12, 2023

Virtual Meeting

Overview and Attendance

The Pinellas Partners in Recycling (PPR) meeting was held virtually at 9:30 am on Wednesday, July 12, 2023.

Members present were Wei Liu, CDM Smith; Savannah Bennett, City of Clearwater; Michelle Marshall, City of Clearwater; Deanna Doss, City of Gulfport; Julianne Perez, City of Largo; Colin Bartholomew, City of Safety Harbor; Patti Ludington, City of Safety Harbor; Shawn Shimko, City of South Pasadena; Jack Crooks, City of St. Petersburg; Joe Vitale, City of St. Petersburg; Edgar Castro Tello, City of Tampa; Madison Avery, Coca-Cola Beverages Florida; Chris Perry, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection; Jennifer Ciaravella, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection; Suzanne Boroff, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection; Jabbar Buggs-Graham, Goodwill Suncoast; Danny Gallagher, Hillsborough County; Lael Giebel, KnowBe4; Mary Oquendo, Manatee County; Erich Peeler, NuCycle Energy; Jake Westman, NuCycle Energy; Ashley Wyland, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Catherine Eichner, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Emily LeMay, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Jasmine Scott, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Paul Sacco, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Stephanie Watson, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Nicole Dufva, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority; John DiNardi, Solar Sanitation; Nick Gerakios, Tarpon Springs; Wilfred Homes, Town of Belleair; Diane Daniel, Vacation Donations; Ian Boyle, Waste Connections; Tim Bowers, Waste Management; and Ed Farmer, Waste Pro.

Emily LeMay recorded the notes.

Call to Order

Savannah Bennett, PPR Chair called the meeting to order at 9:32 am.

Review of May 4, 2023 PPR Meeting Notes

No objections to notes as written.

Introductions

New members introduced included: Michelle Marshall, City of Clearwater; Diane Daniel, Vacation Donations; Colin Bartholomew, City of Safety Harbor; John DiNardi, Solar Sanitation, and Wei Liu, CDM Smith. Welcome, all!

Updates

State Updates

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

- Chris Perry shared that the [2022 Solid Waste Management Report](#) for state of Florida has been completed. Including renewable recycling credits, the statewide recycling rate is 48%. The traditional statewide recycling rate is 41%. Palm Beach County achieved 80% recycling rate,



earning them top recycler of the year. The top 10 had an average recycling rate of 67%. Pinellas County's recycling rate for 2022 is 67% (6th in rank). Total waste generated increased by 792,000 tons or about 1.6% over 2021. More waste was landfilled than recycled in 2022.

Regional Updates

Pinellas County

- Emily LeMay shared that the County is working with a consultant (NewGen Strategies & Solutions, LLC) to locate and survey commercial food waste generators in the County. This will help gauge whether there is interest in a potential commercial food waste separation/collection program as recommended by the [Solid Waste Master Plan](#). The County will also be working with NewGen to conduct a countywide recyclable materials composition study in the fall and will share details with municipalities to participate. This study will generate a countywide contamination rate and serve as an update to the [2020 study](#).
- Emily LeMay shared that a Communication Plan for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Disposal Fee increase of 6.8% is underway. In 2022, the Board of County Commissioners approved Resolution 22-48, which increases the rate for disposal of municipal solid waste, commercial waste, and yard waste to \$51.00 per ton effective October 1, 2023. Additional fee increases will be considered as part of the FY24 budget.
- Stephanie Watson shared that the County has been advertising and holding public input meetings for [proposed changes to the Solid Waste ordinance](#). The information gathered at these meetings will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners in August alongside the information that was gathered by surveying and meeting with the County's private haulers and municipal partners. The public input meetings have garnered a lot of media attention:
 - [Tampa Bay Times – Pinellas seeks input for mandatory recycling, facing solid waste strain](#)
 - [Fox 13 Tampa Bay – Pinellas County landfills may hit capacity in a few years as more people move to area](#)
 - [10 Tampa Bay – Pinellas County wants your input on recycling changes](#)
 - [ABC Action News – Pinellas County waste facilities face capacity issues with population growth](#)
 - [WUSF – Pinellas says mandatory recycling could keep its solid waste facility from reaching capacity](#)
 - [Telemundo 49 – Buscan opinión de residentes sobre gestión de desechos en Pinellas](#)
- Ashley Wyland shared that the [Household Hazardous Waste \(HHW\) Center's](#) operational hours have changed effective June 1, 2023. The hours are now 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday and the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. On the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month, Household Chemical Collection (HCC) Events are held at 29582 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater. This is an increase the amount of HCC events. An [online calendar](#) (for the HHW Center and HCC events) is available.

- Ashley Wyland previewed website changes. The website traffic to the [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) usage has been in decline since the County moved to a new WordPress website in October 2022. Ashley showed the many places that the Search Tool is featured on the website with the hopes that it increases use. Ashley also showed that the Solid Waste Disposal Complex Personal Protective Equipment requirements are now featured on the website in multiple places to make the information more accessible and intuitive to locate.
- Ashley Wyland will be reaching out to municipalities and their PIOs regarding recommended changes to municipal websites to align with recent Department of Solid Waste program changes. Ashley reviewed municipal websites and found outdated information, so this will help bring municipal website information in line with current County information.
- Jasmine Scott shared that the reimbursement requests for the Fiscal Year 2023 Municipal Recycling Reimbursement Grant (MRG) are due September 15. Stephanie Watson added that there will potentially be changes to the eligibility criteria. Stephanie is meeting with the [Technical Management Committee \(TMC\)](#) on July 26 to discuss proposed changes. The goal is to revise the MRG to help standardize public education for mixed recycling collection programs in Pinellas County. 24 municipal recycling programs have different rules and is often an area of confusion for residents.

City of Tampa

- Edgar Castro Tello shared that they recorded some videos in partnership with Zoo Tampa for Plastic Free July (not published yet).
- The City of Tampa is participating in Plastic Free July [EcoChallenge](#).

Pinellas County Municipal Updates

City of Largo

- Julianne Perez shared that the City is working on expanding their contract with Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB). The contract expansion adds additional services to their existing contract, and it will now cover cleanups (agree to minimum number that the City will be the coordinator for), education (will provide the City sustainability outreach staff), and videos (will create Spanish and English conversation about recycling). Julianne noted that other larger municipalities participate in this type of contract with KPB and asks for feedback on what to focus on or what may work well. Email Julianne at jperez@largo.com.
- The City has appointed Shelby Beauchemin as Interim Public Works Director and is working hiring a new City Manager. Currently also hiring for a Solid Waste Manager.
- Holding a work session on Tuesday, August 8 at 4:00 pm for a Sustainability and Resilience Action Plan update. Session will be recorded. City's Sustainability Coordinator will present on energy roadmap.

Community Updates (Keep Pinellas Beautiful, Goodwill)

None.

Work Group Updates

Contract Work Group

- Jasmine Scott reviewed the new contract database in SharePoint that is managed by the Department of Solid Waste. It was an action item in the Work Group Charter for the team to maintain. It's available to everyone, but you'll need to request it by emailing recycle@pinellas.gov. The next Contract Work Group meeting Monday, 9/18/23 from 10:00am to 11:00am.
- Stephanie Watson added that the County's Department of Solid Waste is here there to support municipalities at board meetings to advocate for recycling programs.

Contamination Work Group

- Ashley Wyland shared that the survey for interception interviews has been completed. The next Contamination Work Group meeting is July 27 at 11:15am. Ads are in progress with the County's Communications/designer for the rechargeable battery ad campaign.

Low Waste Event Guide Work Group

- Emily LeMay shared that the next meeting is August 3at 10 a.m. and that the group is currently meeting monthly. Moving forward, meetings will be themed; for example, the next meeting will bring in speakers to share about their own Low Waste or Zero Waste Event Guide drafting process. The Charter is on the [PPR website](#). The Work Group is building out a Table of Contents for the Low Waste Event Guide and will target sections to work on as a group.

Open Discussion

Food Waste

Diane Daniel prompted the group about how to connect edible food waste to hunger and compostable food waste. Edgar Castro Tello recommended Diane speak to Cameron Macleish with 360 Eats.

Stephanie Watson shared the [Network to End Hunger's website](#). Diane's email is vacationdonations@gmail.com.

Announcements

- PPR still needs Vice Chair. Vice Chair supports by taking notes during meetings and attending a pre-PPR planning meeting. Will know what to expect for each meeting. If interested, email elemay@pinellas.gov or savannah.bennett@myclearwater.com.
- Emily LeMay is speaking on a panel with Joseph England from City of Orlando and Connie Lea from Brevard County at the [Resource Recycling Conference](#), August 14-16 in Orlando. Session is called "How Regional Partnerships Can Bolster Resident Education." Will be sharing about PPR, Work Groups, Tampa Bay Recycles, and Reduce Your Use Tampa Bay campaigns.
- Danny Gallagher is presenting on Hillsborough County's Donation & Waste Diversion Program at the [SWANA Florida conference](#), July 23-25 in Daytona Beach, FL.
- Stephanie Watson shared that SWANA SOAR's 2024 Call for Proposals is now accepting submissions through September 1. Please feel free to share the link with anyone you think might



want to speak about the industry's hot topics at next year's SOAR. If you have a proposal you would like to submit, even better! <https://swana.swoogo.com/soar2024>

- SWANA is assessing the value of recycling certification across the US and Canada for **INDIVIDUALS** who work in the solid waste industry. They are NOT looking at the certification or accreditation of solid waste facilities, just individuals. [Please help SWANA by completing this short \(under 10-minute\) survey.](#)

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 am. Next meeting is scheduled for September 20 via Zoom.