



Pinellas Partners in Recycling Meeting Notes for Sept. 20, 2023

Virtual Meeting

Overview and Attendance

The Pinellas Partners in Recycling (PPR) meeting was held virtually at 9:30 am on Wednesday, September 20, 2023.

There were 42 members in attendance that included: Wei Liu, CDM Smith; Wilfred Homes, City of Belleair; Melody Yin, City of Clearwater; Savannah Bennett, City of Clearwater; Bill Pickrum, City of Dunedin; Deanna Doss, City of Gulfport; Julianne Perez, City of Largo; Ben Cegelski, City of Oldsmar; Amanda Ergler, City of Pinellas Park; Kyle Arrison, City of Pinellas Park; Colin Bartholomew, City of Safety Harbor; Shawn Shimko, City of South Pasadena; Andrew Butterfield, City of St. Pete Beach; Joe Vitale, City of St. Petersburg; Austin Smith, City of Tampa; Edgar Castro Tello, City of Tampa; Shelby Lewis, City of Tampa; Amy Siuda, Eckerd College; Chris Perry, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Jennifer Ciaravella, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Jabbar Graham, Goodwill Suncoast; Danny Gallagher, Hillsborough County; Randy Rudd, Kessler Consulting, Inc.; Eric Morales, Manatee County; Mary Oquendo, Manatee County; Jeanne Detweiler, Manatee County; Rachelle Dobbs, Pasco County; Kelsey Grentzer, Pinellas County Communications; Ashley Wyland, 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; Robert Mills, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Stephanie Watson, Pinellas County Dept. of Solid Waste; Devan Deal, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority; Nicole Dufva, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority; Reagan Fennessy, Tampa Bay Watch; Rick Radigan, Tampa Bay Watch; Marissa Segundo, Transformations PR; Diane Daniel, Vacation Donations; Tim Bowers, Waste Management; and Tracey Meehan, Waste Pro.

Emily LeMay recorded the notes.

Call to Order

Savannah Bennett, PPR Chair called the meeting to order at 9:31 am.

Review of July 12, 2023 PPR Meeting Notes

No objections to notes as written.

Introductions

New members introduced included: Austin Smith, City of Tampa; Kelsey Grentzer, Pinellas County Communications; Amy Siuda, Eckerd College; Devan Deal, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority; Eric Morales, Manatee County; Marissa Segundo, Transformations PR; and Rick Radigan, Tampa Bay Watch. Welcome, everyone!

Presentation

Captain Rick Radigan gave a presentation on Tampa Bay Watch's work related to litter prevention, waste reduction, and recycling. Tampa Bay Watch works to restore salt marshes by planting native grasses to reduce erosion. Protecting salt marshes helps prevent litter from entering the Tampa Bay by trapping it in the marshes where it is easier to recover for disposal. Tampa Bay Watch also collects used oyster shells from various restaurants to reuse them in creating oyster bags. Not only are the oyster shells saved from going to a landfill, they help to attract oysters, a shoreline stabilization organism that are great at filtering water. Oysters are very important to the health of waterways in the Tampa Bay area. Tampa Bay Watch also collects used fishing line at various locations throughout the Tampa Bay area for recycling.

Learn more and find volunteer opportunities at <https://tampabaywatch.org/>.

View presentation recording [here](#) on PPR SharePoint or email elemay@pinellas.gov.

Updates

State Updates

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

- Chris Perry shared that the FDEP will be looking at recycling-related legislation as we approach the legislative session.
- Chris noted that the state was awarded grant money from EPA's Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program. FDEP is working with the Hinkley Center to study capacity of Florida landfills. They will look at how storm debris and tourism affect disposal capacity.
- The 2020 75% recycling goal is still in place. The FDEP is looking at adding some sustainable materials management aspects to the state's waste calculations model tool that helps counties estimate waste composition data.

Regional Updates

Pinellas County

- Stephanie Watson updated the group on the status of Solid Waste ordinance revisions. There is a new [landing page on the County's website](#). Solid Waste Director Paul Sacco spoke at the Board of County Commissioners meeting on August 10 and was given direction to continue working on proposed revisions. The Board is interested in learning about the range of fees that private haulers charge citizens in unincorporated areas of the County.
- Solid Waste is meeting with processors/haulers to take input on revisions to the countywide recycling processing and marketing draft contract now that Board of County Commissioners has given direction to proceed with ordinance revisions and that a mandatory recycling may be required.
- Emily LeMay shared that the County will be conducting a recyclable materials composition study in October or November 2023. The scope is still being developed with vendors,



NewGen Strategies and Solutions and HDR. The first recyclable materials composition study was conducted in fall 2020 and 18 of 24 municipalities participated. The countywide recycling rate was about 19% in 2020. Emily encouraged participation in the study and will let municipalities know how much samples are expected to cost. You can use Municipal Recycling Reimbursement Grant money to cover the cost.

- NewGen Strategies and Solutions is also working on a food waste generators survey and database. About 10.9% of the total waste disposed at the Solid Waste Disposal Complex is food waste. The purpose of this work assignment is to assist with implementation efforts related to the following strategy included in the 30 year Solid Waste Master Plan: Preparation for possible implementation of a program for the collection and processing of nonedible food waste.
- The Solid Waste disposal fees and rates are increasing as of 10/1. More information can be found [online](#).
- Ashley Wyland noted that the Charity Free Disposal Allowance approvals are coming soon. Charities will be notified of their disposal allowances.
- Municipalities: please respond to the email from Ashley Wyland regarding updates to your website to be consistent with county programs if you have not already done so. Thank you to those who have made updates.
- Ashley previewed the Recycle Across America Labels and the newly painted and labeled county recycling drop-off containers. Municipalities can use the County's printing contract if they wish to use the labels. The labels will help with standardizing recycling messaging.
- Jasmine Scott gave an overview of the Municipal Recycling Grant program for Fiscal Year 2023. She provided examples of expenditures that qualified for reimbursement through the program.

City of Tampa

- Shelby Lewis shared that the City received approval for USDA grant funds for up to 100 residents and 5 community gardens to receive home biodigesters.
- The City was awarded funds through the EPA Trash Free Waters Grant. They will be using the money to conduct litter analyses and outreach campaigns about litter prevention.
- The City is looking at no longer allowing residents to place yard waste in plastic bags. They hope that one day collected yard waste will be sent for composting, so plastic bags would make that difficult.

Pinellas County Municipal Updates

City of Clearwater

- Savannah Bennett shared that Cassie Cordova is the City's new Sustainability Manager.
- The City entered into a recyclable materials processing contract with Waste Connections.



- A Shred Event is scheduled for Saturday, October 28 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Countryside Mall and is open to all residents (not businesses).
- The City is relaunching the home composting program and will be scheduling a compost bin pickup day in November 2023. Bins are only for City residents, but there is a free online composting course available to everyone.

City of Largo

- Julianne Perez shared that City leadership structure for Public Works will be changing. Director of Utilities (same Director for Public Works and Environmental Sciences) and 2 Assistant Directors for Public Works.
- The City is facing contamination issues at the Starkey Recycling Facility. Plan to post signage in English and Spanish at the facility. Looking at other materials to have in both English and Spanish.
- Discussions at Commission Meetings about cost/benefit of recycling. Commission requested metrics for later discussion. Stephanie Watson, Pinellas County Solid Waste offered the County's support.
- Julianne is attending the Urban Sustainability Directors Network Conference in New Orleans in October, there is an oyster tour activity. Julianne will share updates after the conference. If anyone else is attending and wants to carpool please Julianne know at jperez@largo.com. Would be traveling for Sunday-Wednesday (Oct. 22-25).

Community Updates (Keep Pinellas Beautiful, Goodwill)

None.

Work Group Updates

Contract Work Group

- Jasmine Scott shared that the annual meeting was on 9/18 and that notes were uploaded to SharePoint.

Contamination Work Group

- Ashley Wyland shared that the last meeting was held on 9/13 and the group is working on a communication plan. Ashley previewed the final battery contamination ads that will be used for interception interviews. Ads will likely be edited following feedback from the interviews.

Low Waste Event Guide Work Group

- Emily LeMay shared that the next meeting is 9/28, 2023 at 10:00 am. Sarasota County spoke to the group about their Sustainable Event Guide at the last meeting. The Low Waste Event Guide draft is being worked on.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 am. Next meeting is scheduled for November 8 via Zoom.