



Pinellas Partners in Recycling Meeting Notes for Nov. 08, 2023

Virtual Meeting

Overview and Attendance

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

There were 40 members in attendance that included: Ashley Wyland, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Bill Pickrum, City of Dunedin; Ben Cegelski, City of Oldsmar; Brian Ulbricht, Pinellas County IMCA Fellow; Catherine Eichner, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Chris Perry, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Danny Gallagher, Hillsborough County; Deanna Doss, City of Gulfport; Devyn Amara, Tampa Bay Rays; Diane Daniel, Vacation Donations; Ed Farmer, Waste Pro; Emily LeMay, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Evan Novell, COO Solid Waste; Jasmine Scott, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Jennifer Angelo, Indian Shores; Jennifer Ciaravella, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Julianne Perez, City of Largo; Kaitlyn Roy, City of St. Pete Beach; Karen Moore, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Kelly Dobbin, Clearwater Environmental Advisory Board Member; Kelsey Grentzer, Pinellas County Communications; Kimberlyn Poe, Tampa Bay Rays; Lael Giebel, KnowBe4; Lauren Wolf, Pinellas County Sustainability & Resiliency; Madison Avery, Coca-Cola Beverages Florida; Marissa Segundo, Transformations PR; Mary Oquendo, Manatee County; Nick Gerakios, City of Tarpon Springs; Nick Le, City of Lakeland; Pat DePlasco, Keep Pinellas Beautiful; Paul Sacco, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Randy Rudd, Kessler Consulting, Inc.; Robert Mills, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Savannah Bennett, City of Clearwater; Shauwn Clark, City of Largo; Stephanie Watson, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Suzanne Boroff, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Tim Bowers, Waste Management; Wei-Ting Lui, CDM Smith; and Wilfred Homes, City of Belleair.

Emily LeMay recorded the notes.

Call to Order

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

Review of September 20, 2023 PPR Meeting Notes

No objections to notes as written.

Introductions

New members introduced included:

Nick Le, City of Lakeland; Kelly Dobbin, Clearwater Environmental Advisory Board and Clearwater resident, Kaitlyn Roy, St. Pete Beach; Jennifer Angelo, Indian Shores Public Information Officer; and Brian Ulbricht, Pinellas County ICMA Fellow.

Welcome, everyone!



Presentation

Emily LeMay, Pinellas County Solid Waste previewed Solid Waste's new Virtual Tour. The Virtual Tour will be linked on the County's website and in the 2024 Recycle Guide. It's a great option for those who are unable to tour in person. Link will be provided to meeting attendees once it's on the Pinellas County website.

Updates

State Updates

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

Karen Moore

- Partnered with [Florida Recycling Partnership](#) for an America Recycles Day event on November 15 at USF. Three counties who met 75% recycling goal are getting awards and will have panel discussion on it. Lunch provided.
- Recycle Florida Today's free webinar on multifamily recycling programs in Florida was on 11/7. [Recording can be watched on demand.](#)

Regional Updates

Pinellas County

Emily LeMay

- The [2023 Commercial Recycling Awareness Survey](#) is now available online. HCP Associates, Inc. surveyed 418 businesses via telephonic survey. Survey results are statistically significant and can be compared to 2019 and 2021 surveys. Saw an increase in recycling participation (70% recycle something) up from 53% in 2021. 66% of respondents said that a concern for the environment was their main motivator to recycle.
- Working with NewGen Strategies and Solutions, LLC to locate and survey large food waste generators in the county. Want to learn what challenges and opportunities there are for possibly segregating food waste in the future. This ties into the Solid Waste Master Plan's goal of reducing food waste in garbage. About 11% of the waste Solid Waste manages is food waste.
- Still working on details for the Recyclable Materials Composition Study. Price per sample likely going to be like the 2020 survey. Will request municipal participation once sample price and scope are finalized.
- 2024 Recycle Guide is nearing completion. Currently being translated to Spanish. This is the first edition of the Recycle Guide that will be offered in a language other than English. Guides will be placed in the Tampa Bay Times and delivered to Pinellas County Solid Waste in January. Municipalities and regional partners can receive Recycle Guides to hand out.

Ashley Wyland

- Solid Waste sometimes hears customers say that they think their recyclables are being mixed with garbage. To help educate about what to do if customers believe this to be true, Solid Waste is working on adding content to the website similar to [Recycle Right NY](#) has created.



- Downloadable documents that can be printed and used as signage are available on the website's [Recycle Guide page](#).
- Recycle Across America (RAA) labels are available for municipalities. Solid Waste has covered the licensing fees and has a printing contract. The labels are optional, but a great way to help standardize recycling throughout the county. Instructions were sent out for how to order labels using Solid Waste's pricing.
- We created an online survey for residents of unincorporated Pinellas County to find out what they are paying for garbage and recycling collection services. The survey is being posted on Nextdoor and targeting unincorporated residents.
- If you're interested in presenting to PPR or want to recommend another organization to present, you can complete the application on the [PPR website](#).

Jasmine Scott

- The Fiscal Year 2023 Municipal Recycling Grant report was sent to all municipalities. As of today, 23 of 24 municipalities have submitted intent to participate forms for Fiscal Year 2024. Once all forms are received, reimbursement request packets will be sent to participating municipalities. Reminder: you are able to use the MRG grant funds for the RAA labels or the recyclable materials composition study.
- The Where Does It Go? (WDIG) Search Tool's usage has been in decline. Solid Waste is working on a promotion plan. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) may be a reason why less people are finding the WDIG Search Tool because the County changed website hosts in 2022. When new websites are created, their links are broken and not able to be found on search engines right away.

Stephanie Watson

- Solid Waste is no longer the "Department of Solid Waste." Other County departments do not use "Department of." We are now "Pinellas County Solid Waste" or "Solid Waste."
- Working on revising Request for Proposals for Countywide Recyclable Materials Processing and Marketing.

Pinellas County Municipal Updates

City of Clearwater

Savannah Bennett

- City is relaunching backyard [composting program](#). 102 of 150 compost bins have been registered for. To receive a free bin, resident must complete online composting workshop. The composting workshop is available to anyone, but only City of Clearwater residents are eligible for the free bin. Pat DePlasco, Keep Pinellas Beautiful noted that they have a composting education program as well.



Community Updates (Keep Pinellas Beautiful, Goodwill)

Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB)

Pat DePlasco

- Participating in the [International Coastal Cleanup](#). Also partnering with Ocean Allies, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater, and the City of Clearwater on additional cleanups to help develop relationships in the community.
- All KPB events are available [online](#). Events worth noting:
 - December 3 – Pedal Pub fundraiser in St. Petersburg. Attendees get a tour of art installations in the area.
 - December 9 – Kids Can event at Fort De Soto Park. Elementary school kids can volunteer in a safe environment. Kids also go through different stations and learn about things like watersheds and recycling.
 - December 15 – Holiday Celebration/Open House 8 am to 11 am at the KPB office, 5090 66th St N, St. Petersburg, FL 33709. All are welcome.
- The entire Keep Pinellas Beautiful Team went to the Keep America Beautiful/Keep Florida Beautiful Conference in St. Augustine. KPB won the Programs Award, which is the top award that can be won.
- If municipalities are interested in partnering, there is a City Membership Program.

Work Group Updates

Contract Work Group

- Jasmine Scott shared that the Contract Work Group will continue to exist and work will be done through a combination of meetings and email. Work group is looking for municipal members that have experience contracting for recycling processing and marketing to join.

Contamination Work Group

- Ashley Wyland is working with Pinellas County Communications to conduct interception interviews in public. The battery ads will be shared with interviewees and they will be asked questions to help the work group decide what ads are the most effective. The ads are also being translated to Spanish. The next meeting is December 4.

Low Waste Event Guide Work Group

- Emily LeMay introduced Brian Ulbricht, Pinellas County ICMA fellow who is currently assigned to Solid Waste and assisting with the Low Waste Event Guide. The guide is in draft form and the next meeting is November 30 at 10 am.

Open Discussion

Glass Recycling

- Pat DePlasco asked if recycled glass be used for beaches. Stephanie Watson suggested checking with the municipality who owns the beach. She also mentioned that glass recycling is important because we're running out of the type of sand that's used in construction. Beach sand is not the same; the sand has to be mined.
 - [CNBC article on the sand shortage](#)
 - [CBC article on sand being depleted at alarming rate](#)
- Marissa Segundo shared [Glass Half Full](#) and an article she recently wrote on [glass recycling best practices for WasteAdvantage Magazine](#).
- County recommended touring the Strategic Materials, Inc. glass recycling facility in Sarasota. The glass bottles and jars that SMI processes are turned into new glass bottles and jars. They also sell the glass to be produced into sandblast abrasives and insulation.
- Susanne Boroff noted that MRF glass is often used as landfill cover as it qualifies as "recycling" according to FDEP (for purposes of county annual solid waste management reporting).
- Ashley Wyland reminded everyone that glass bottles and jars are accepted in the [countywide recycling drop-off centers](#).

Holiday Recycling Outreach

- Ben Cegelski mentioned that the City of Oldsmar is working on an educational video focused on solid waste and recycling
- Danny Gallagher shared Hillsborough County's [Pumpkins with a Purpose](#) webpage on reducing waste over Halloween
- Julianne Perez shared [City of Largo's holiday website](#)
- Pinellas County's [Holiday and Gift Giving Guide](#) has been updated to include tips on reducing pumpkin waste (borrowed idea from Hillsborough County)

Ticketing Software

- Emily LeMay shared that Eventbrite has added fees for all events with over 25 tickets and asked the group if they knew of alternative programs. Solid Waste uses Eventbrite for tours of the Solid Waste Disposal Complex. Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB) uses Eventbrite to share their events. KPB noted that they decided to purchase the paid subscription.

Announcements

- Savannah Bennett, PPR Chair announced that the group will work on developing a mission and vision statement in 2024. The current [Policies and Procedures](#) only outline objectives.



- PPR is currently accepting applications for the following voting membership positions:
 - Non-Governmental Advocacy Organization Related to Recycling and the Environment
 - Private Sector Recycling Processing Representative
 - Private Sector Recycling Collection Representative.
- If you are interested in applying for one of these positions, please complete [this application](#).

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 am. Next meeting is scheduled for January 10 via Zoom. Calendar appointments for 2024 meetings will be sent. An Election of Officers and the three Voting Membership seats listed above will be held at the January meeting.