



Pinellas Partners in Recycling Meeting Notes for May 15, 2024

Virtual Meeting

Overview and Attendance

The Pinellas Partners in Recycling (PPR) meeting was held virtually at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Members present were: Alex Marks, Veransa; Alita Kane, The Recycling Partnership; Amanda Ergler, City of Pinellas Park; Andy Henjes, City of Largo; Angela Pietras, City of Pinellas Park; Ashley Wyland, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Ben Cegelski, City of Oldsmar; Bill Pickrum, City of Dunedin; Cassie Cordova, City of Clearwater; Catherine Eichner, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Daric Huntt, Waste Pro; Dave Vaughn, Veransa; Diane Daniel, Vacation Donations; Emily LeMay, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Jack Crooks, Veransa; Jasmine Scott, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Jennifer Angelo, Indian Shores; Judy Kujawa, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Julianne Perez, City of Largo; Kaitlyn Roy, City of St. Pete Beach; Kattrina Miller, City of Clearwater; Kervin St. Aimie, City of Clearwater; Kiana Sladicki, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Kyle Riefler, City of Belleair Beach; Marissa Segundo, Transformations PR; Mary Oquendo, Manatee County; Nick Gerakios, City of Tarpon Springs; Pat DePlasco, Keep Pinellas Beautiful; Paul Sacco, Pinellas County Solid Waste; Penny Klipple, City of Treasure Island; Randy Rudd, Kessler Consulting, Inc.; Rodney Due, City of Seminole; Roger Johansson, Veransa; Savannah Bunch, City of Dunedin; Shawn Shimko, City of South Pasadena; Stephanie Watson, Hillsborough County; Tim Bowers, Waste Management; Tyler Ward, Recycling Services of Florida; Vicki Fordyce, City of St. Petersburg; Wei-Ting Lui, CDM Smith; and Wilfred Homes, City of Belleair.

Emily LeMay, Pinellas County Solid Waste recorded the notes.

Call to Order

Daric Huntt, PPR Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Review of March 6, 2024 PPR Meeting Notes

No objections to notes as written.

Introductions

New members that introduced themselves included: Vicki Fordyce, City of St. Petersburg; Kervin St. Aimie, City of Clearwater; and Savannah Bunch, City of Dunedin. Welcome, all!

Special Election for Chair

A quorum of the Voting Membership was reached. Vicki Fordyce, City of St. Petersburg was self-nominated for the Chair position. There were no other candidates. The Voting Membership unanimously voted to elect Vicki Fordyce via oral vote. Congratulations, Vicki, and thank you for taking on this role.

Presentation

Alex Marks, Director of Operations & Agriculture at [Veransa](#)

Veransa is a Florida compost manufacturer that produces an OMRI listed and US Composting Council STA approved compost for a wide range of markets from agriculture to athletic fields, golf, landscape and horticulture. Veransa believes in closing the green loop through green waste collection and processing via its municipal partnerships and turning that into 10,000 tons a month of finished high-quality compost. This presentation will seek to briefly share who Veransa is, how they partner with the community, and how they are raising the bar for quality organics in Florida.

Alex's contact information: 440-822-5784 (cell) / Alex.marks@veransa.com

[A recording of the presentation is available on the PPR SharePoint site.](#)

Updates

State Updates

State representatives were not present.

Regional Updates

Pinellas County

- Emily LeMay shared that 13 municipalities participated in a recyclable materials composition study this past spring. The County also supplied 3 samples from recycling drop-off centers and beach park recycling programs. The report is not yet final, however, bags and bagged recyclables went down compared to the 2020 study that 18 municipalities participated in. Emily also shared that the Solid Waste department is hiring a [Solid Waste Program Assistant](#). The position closes on 5/29.
- Ashley Wyland shared that a new transfer area was created to help reduce wait times at the Solid Waste Disposal Complex (SWDC) It will open on June 1 and will primarily be used by tip-trailers. Tip trailers take the longest to unload and deliver the least amount of waste, so this will reduce time for others at the SWDC. The material delivered to the transfer area will be trucked to the Waste-to-Energy Facility for processing.
- Jasmine Scott shared that the tour classroom redesign is complete (see photo below). Jasmine reminded municipalities to send their fiscal year 2024 reimbursement requests for the municipal recycling reimbursement grant (MRG) program to recycle@pinellas.gov by 9/15. The 2024 Residential Recycling Awareness Survey report is expected at the end of this month. Stay tuned for findings.



Hillsborough County

- Stephanie Watson shared that the County is working on a Master Plan. They are currently interviewing for a Recycling Coordinator and will be hiring for a Recycling & Waste Reduction Specialist this summer. There is a Request for Proposals for residential recycling collection and processing. Danny Gallagher was awarded [Waste360's 40 under 40 award at Waste Expo](#).

Pinellas County Municipal Updates

City of Clearwater

- Kervin St. Aimie shared that the City is looking to hire a new outreach specialist and that an Assistant Director was hired. The City recently completed a composition study and found that their contamination rate increased since their last study. The biggest contaminant they had was bagged recyclables. They are hoping to fill the outreach position soon to help educate about no bags in recycling.

City of Dunedin

- Natalie Gass introduced Welcome Savannah Bunch, the City's new Environmental Specialist. Welcome, Savannah! The Hurricane Expo is on May 21. Natalie and Savannah Bunch will be in attendance to talk about preparedness and correct disposal following hurricanes. There is a rain barrel workshop on June 22. Savannah is working on a composting program for residents living in apartments and condos that do not have backyards and are not eligible for the backyard compost program.

City of St. Petersburg

- Vicki Fordyce shared a written update that the City is hosting "Touch a Truck" events where a recycling truck goes out to schools or recreation centers and allows children to interact with the truck and learn about recycling. Louie Neary and Troy Davis, the City's new Recycle Manager, has taken over the City's residential composting program. Participating residents attend a short presentation on how to use the compost bin. The City handed out 60 new compost bins in the last 2 months. The City attended the annual Green Thumb Festival and handed out educational materials.

Community Updates

Keep Pinellas Beautiful

- Pat DePlasco shared impressive metrics from April (Earth Month): 98 educational presentations, 12 outreach events, 4,000+ individuals educated, 150+ community improvement projects, over 3,000 volunteers, 19,000 lbs. of litter removed from the environment, and much more. Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB) now has 9 full-time staff and 1 part-time staff. If municipalities are interested in cleanups following July 4, contact KPB now. There are usually 10-20 different sites (neighborhoods, beaches, parks, etc.) where July 4 cleanup is targeted. KPB is leading the June 8 World Oceans Day event at the Rumfish Resort in St. Pete Beach where 40+ environmental vendors will be in attendance (including Pinellas County Solid Waste). KPB is hosting 2 environmental high school leadership workshops during the weeks of June 10 and July 8. Pat also shared that there will be a large event at Tropicana Field on September 14 in collaboration with the Jane Goodall Foundation. Various activities (planting projects, cleanups, and perhaps an oyster project) will take place on September 15.

Work Group Updates

Contract Work Group

- Jasmine Scott shared that the group will be seeking a new chair when the time comes to update the Contract Guidance Document. Jasmine maintains a database of the Pinellas County municipal recycling collection, processing, and marketing contracts that alerts her when they are up for renewal.

Contamination Work Group

- Ashley Wyland shared that two battery ads in English and Spanish were released in April. The work group is tracking data to see how they're doing.

Low Waste Event Guide

- Emily LeMay shared that the next meeting date has not yet been determined. Pinellas County Communications has reviewed the guide draft and Jasmine Scott has edited it with their feedback in mind to reduce text and make the guide more readable. The team will review the edits and the final draft will be sent to Communications to design the guide.

Open Discussion

There were no topics brought up for discussion.

Announcements

- Marissa Segundo shared that [the Glass Recycling Foundation](#) often has grant money available.
- Recycle Florida Today members and guests are invited to attend a free [webinar](#) featuring Danny Gallagher from Hillsborough County on Wednesday, May 29 at 3:30 p.m. Attendees will learn about Hillsborough County's innovation and leadership to advance sustainable materials management through policy, infrastructure, and collaboration achievements and award-winning programs.
- Please [join the EPA from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. EDT for a virtual meeting](#) on June 20 designed to share information from states, Tribes, municipal governments, associations, and industry representatives on effective public outreach and education efforts that promote the proper management of used small-format consumer batteries and battery-containing electric products.
- June 26, 2024 at 10:00 am – Tour of Veransa's Seffner facility. Carpool is available from Pinellas County Solid Waste. More details to follow.

Adjournment

Next meeting is July 24, 2024 via Zoom at 9:30 a.m.