

West Linn Sustainability Advisory Board Meeting

WebEx Virtual Meeting

4/21/22, 6-7:30pm

Attendance **Board:** Terence Shumaker (absent), Kim Bria, Michael Carlson, Victoria Meier, Gregory Smith, Debbie Wong, Charity Hudnut (absent)
Council Liaison: Mary Baumgardner
Staff Liaison: Jerry Gabrielatos
Guests: Darren Wyss, City Manager; Jason Hudson, West Linn Refuse

Mission [From the Charter \(Mission\):](#) The Sustainability Advisory Board is committed to collaborating with government and residents to improve the quality of life in West Linn by advancing stewardship of our environmental, social, and economic resources that is equitable for all present and future generations.

Agenda Topic 2 – Review / Approve March Meeting Notes

Summary Approved March Meeting Notes

Discussion No discussion.

Agenda Topic 3 – Public Comment

- None

Agenda Topic 4 – Check-ins / Updates

- Kim Bria: Attended Northwest Environmental Business Council Forum where she learned more about the infrastructure funds coming. It will be challenging for agencies to spend it all. They discussed example of an electric school bus acting to balance the grid overnight (when not in use can feed energy back into power system). Helps manage loads for renewable energy.
- Jerry Gabrielatos: Will share later in his update.
- Victoria Meyer: Announced Sustainability Fair in LO on Sunday for Earth Day Celebration
- Michael Carlson: Happy to be able to do grocery runs on bike.
- Gregory Smith: Ate spinach, sorrel, chard, and asparagus picked just before dinner.
- Debbie Wong: Clearing out dandelions welcoming them to salads.
- Mary Baumgardner: Nothing to share.

Agenda Topic 5 – West Linn Refuse & Recycling Discussion

Summary Jason Hudson joined the meeting this evening to answer questions about the ins and outs of incorporating food waste in yard debris and the increased customer costs incurred by doing so. He estimates this to be approximately \$2.50 a month. He will meet with Jerry to develop a more precise cost analysis in the next month or two. Jason was not familiar with what is currently being done in Lake Oswego with regard to the optional nature of the program and the way that food waste is being separated from yard debris.

Discussion Jason: Adding food waste to yard debris makes disposal more complex. Nitrogen and carbon levels get thrown off and the material is harder to manage. The cost of disposal then goes up approximately by \$2.50 a month.
Kim: If people were to keep food waste out of their regular garbage, would this reduce the total amount of non-organic garbage that would otherwise be going to Arlington, thus

reducing cost for disposal.

Jason: METRO will be raising transportation rates by 7% a year for the next five years, so it seems unlikely that it would be possible to see much savings.

Debbie: Any chance that rates could come down if number of pick-ups are reduced because people are composting food waste?

Jason: Customers could switch to a smaller garbage can and lower rate.

Debbie: What support does his company provide for education to reduce the possibility of contamination of recycled products?

Jason: New state law is aimed at creating markets for recycled materials and is attempting to improve truth in labeling in plastic products. He believes that could reduce the amount of contamination related to mislabeled plastic packaging and products.

Mike: Is there any effort to expand the range of materials that can be recycled?

Jason: SB582 is applying the same standard regarding recycled goods statewide so this could potentially increase the materials that could be recycled in places like Pendleton, Hermiston, and elsewhere.

Greg: Are there any communities that separate food from yard debris?

Jason: Not that I know of.

Kim: If we should we do this, is there a way to have a broader conversation about what goes into garbage and the consequences for climate change?

Jason: Electricity produced from methane in eastern Oregon site. None of it released into atmosphere.

Greg: If we are interested in pursuing the possibility of including food waste in yard debris, do you have any suggestions about what we should do?

Jason: Go to City Council to take it up in a work session and see what they would like to do.

Debbie: What are the barriers to implementing something like this?

Jason: Primary barrier is cost. It will be important to know where the public is likely to come down on this.

Kim: If many people were to switch to once a month pick-up because of reduced trash thanks to placing food waste in yard debris cans, would this be a problem?

Jason: Reduced food waste would not make that much of a difference because its volume is not that great.

Victoria: Is there any way to encourage businesses to use only one kind of plastic for clamshells?

Jason: Clearer rules from the state regarding labeling of recyclable materials could help with this.

Debbie: Could people have the option to participate in curbside composting?

Jason: No. If West Linn were to decide to adopt curbside composting, it would be unilateral and citywide. People could not opt in or out.

Debbie: When they started the program in Lake Oswego, it was optional. They did separate out yard debris and food waste. Do you know anything about this? When food waste is kept separate, it can be used to produce methane; when yard debris is kept separate, it is used to create compost.

Jason: Not familiar with what LO is doing. Moving in this direction would require additional trucks and haulers.

Jerry will talk with Jason about developing cost analysis, something that could be done in a month or two.

Victoria: It would also be helpful to have some information about contamination as a result of mixing food waste and yard debris.

Jason: The primary problem with contamination is related to plastics.

Agenda Topic 6 – Old Time Fair Discussion

Summary	SAB members are in favor of once again having a booth at the Old Time Fair now scheduled for July 15-17 with an emphasis on activities that are potentially engaging. Kim will reserve a booth with Parks and Rec.
Discussion	Mary Baumgardner, who was very involved with the fair during the summer of 2021 said that they incorporated a variety of activities aimed at engaging people including some electric bikes and a transportation survey. They also had collected materials from places like the Clackamas County Soil and Conservation District and Backyard Habitat. People brainstormed possibilities for this year including the use of native plants to decorate the booth and the incorporation of an interactive game like corn hole, perhaps with a sustainability theme. We discussed the possibility of inviting in someone from PGE to discuss implementing photovoltaic systems and converting gas yard tools to electric, a master gardener, someone from Bosky Dell to talk about using native plants when landscaping, and students from the high school permaculture class. Mary will approach Geoff Bingham to see whether any of his students might be interested in participating to earn service learning credit. Victoria mentioned that the LO equivalent of the SAB will be doing something similar at an Earth Day fair this coming Sunday between 11-2. She will e-mail information about this event in case people are interested in attending. Mary mentioned that the tent she used last year belonged to the high school ultimate frisbee club. We will need to find our own tent, tables, and chairs for this summer's fair.

Agenda Topic 7 – Education Series Update

Summary	Education series presentations are taken care of through June. We need to identify someone to make a presentation for the July session on water conservation. We will continue using an on-line format through the fall and then see whether the pandemic has diminished enough to allow for in-person meetings.
Discussion	Kim will talk with Terry about whether he has been able to find someone to take care of July's presentation. We will not sponsor any sessions in August and September. Mike will do the October session. All of the presentations so far this year are posted on-line, but there apparently is no way to determine how many of these have been viewed.

Agenda Topic 8 – SAB 2022 Goals Update

Summary	Darren Wyss reported back on where things currently stand with regard to SAB 2022 goals as these related to the revision of the city's tree code and electric vehicle charging stations.
Discussion	<p>Changing the tree code would be a big project that would require a budget allocation and a few years to work through, especially if the intention is to adopt a proposal aimed at keeping 20% of the trees on a developable site. This would necessitate a city-wide inventory of trees on both developed and/or yet to be developed lots. In Tigard, all lots in the city were included. Based on the analysis the City Council would need to make a proposal about what trees to protect. Doing so would require changes in the CDC and municipal code. The possibility of changing the tree code was briefly brought up during the West Linn City Council's April work session, but it was not added to the planning docket and no resources were designated for such an effort.</p> <p>With regard to electric vehicle charging stations, if adopted in late May, new regulations associated with the state's Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities executive order will</p>

require the city to amend its CDCs to include the incorporation of conduit and electric lines to 20% of the spaces in any parking lot associated with newly constructed commercial, mixed use, or multi-family buildings. This will mean that thanks to impetus from the state, the city will be acting upon the SAB's proposal to include more charging stations in the city. This act, however, does not require the incorporation of wiring for charging stations into single-family homes nor government offices. In the case of the latter, creating more charging stations is largely a budgetary issue.

Darren concluded by reiterating what he said last month about resilient landscaping. Incorporating something like this in the CDC would not result in much change since there is no enforcement mechanism. He said that it makes more sense to collaborate with other government agencies that are currently doing this work as well as the Backyard Habitat organization in an effort to educate the public about the value of moving in this direction.

Agenda Topic 9 – Staff Liaison Update

Summary

1. Five City buildings have been certified as [Leaders in Sustainability](#) by Clackamas County. Four locations – city hall, the public library, the adult community center, and the police station – have achieved the highest certification level, Gold. The operations building earned Silver certification. We're putting out word about this tomorrow. Jerry thrilled about it, a great suggestion from the SAB.
2. Because of budget considerations, city has yet to refill the Emergency Management position (the person who held the role previously acted as a liaison to the SAB). Should they move forward with it, he will likely hire a management analyst with a background in sustainability and resilience. That would fit the organization better.
3. Jerry made contact with a NW Natural Government Relations role person requested city usage. In reviewing Milwaukie's Climate Action Plan, which referenced engagement with NW Natural to develop a strategy for becoming net zero from natural gas by 2040, requested that the City of West Linn have a similar conversation with the utility.
4. We are going to pilot the use of electric lawn equipment. Parks and Recreation Director had a conversation with staff in Lake Oswego, and Jerry spoke with someone from the City of Portland. The concerns we heard were limited battery life and reduced facility space because of the space absorbed by charging.
5. Jason Hudson of West Linn Refuse is scheduled to attend the SAB meeting tomorrow, as is Darren Wyss, our Planning Manager. Jerry will be present for most of the meeting, but may have to drop off at 7 to attend another meeting.

Discussion

Jerry answered questions Debbie Wong had asked him after reading his e-mail message:

-Will the management analyst be able to do feasibility studies on recommendations? I hope the role will facilitate a data driven/best practices approach to policies/programs. Yes, should we hire someone; capability to perform a feasibility study would be required. We use data to drive all decisions, and this role would be the same.

- Will NW Natural be able to break down usage to sources so that we can be strategic on targeting areas of highest usage? Yes, but this hasn't yet been confirmed.

-Regarding the meeting with WL Refuse, I'm assuming we're going to be talking about curbside composting. When is our franchise agreement up for renewal? Franchise will be up for renewal. Breaking the contract would require a 30-day notice.

Kim noted with regard to the certification of city buildings that this should be publicized in an effort to encourage more businesses to do something similar. Alex Mihm said that West Linn is the only city in the program where all buildings occupied by staff are included.

Agenda Topic 10 – Action Items for SAB members

Discussion Victoria: Will forward article about LO fair to everyone.
Kim: Will check with Terry about ED series schedule and whether anyone has been identified to make a presentation about water conservation in July.
Kim: Will reserve a booth for the Old Time Fair.
Mary: Will check with Geoff Bingham about high school student participation in booth at fair.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:20 pm.