

Washington State Department of Ecology, Recycling Steering Committee (RSC)**Meeting Summary****Date:** November 28, 2018**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**Location:** Washington State Department of Commerce, 2001 6th Ave., Ste. 2600, Seattle, WA 98121**Welcome & Introductions:**

Annie Kilburg started the meeting by welcoming the group and reviewing meeting logistics and materials. After a round of introductions, Annie reviewed the decision made at the last meeting, including definitions of short-, mid-, and long-term timeframes, and she reminded the group of their goal to come to consensus on the Charter Document by the end of the meeting today or identify further revisions to be made before the next meeting in December. She reviewed the meeting agenda and asked for any additions or questions regarding the agenda.

Charter and Problem Statement Development:

Annie provided the group with updates on the Charter. Dave Claugus gave a short presentation to the group on who was part of the subgroup that worked on developing and refining the Problem Statement and identifying the biggest potential issues that could have immediate actions. He described the work that this subgroup carried out on these sections between meetings of the full group and provided a review of the recommendations developed to include in the Problem Statement. It was noted that the Problem Statement has had many revisions since the October meeting and is more robust than in the original Charter document.

Annie asked the group whether the Problem Statement resonated and asked the group to comment on anything that needed to be added, revised, or removed. Simone Barley-Greenfield (Triangle Associates) live-edited the document during the subsequent discussion.

Review and Confirm Charter Goals and Objectives:

Alli Kingfisher (Ecology) provided the group with a reminder of how the goals and objectives section of the Charter document were developed and revised since the last meeting in October. Annie asked the group whether the goals and objectives outlined in the Charter document resonated and asked the group to comment on anything that needed to be added, revised, or removed. The group discussed recommended additions, revisions, and removals while Simone Barley-Greenfield (Triangle Associates) live-edited the document. There discussion around adding a fourth objective related to public awareness of recycling in general and narrowing the third objective to focus solely on the economic issues related to the real cost of recycling.

Discuss and Decide on Other Charter Elements:

Annie provided the group with a high-level overview of the remaining sections of the Charter document. She walked the group through each remaining header of the Charter document and provided each member with the opportunity to voice any major issues with the text / language in each section. The group voiced no major issues.

Strategize Actions to Address Short-, Mid-, and Long-term Problems:

Based on the discussion earlier in the meeting regarding Charter Problem Statement, Annie asked members to choose one of the three issues listed in the Problem Statement document based on their interest. The group broke into three smaller groups to discuss one of the following topics: (1) Contamination; (2) Lack of Markets; and (3) the issues related to the cost of recycling. Each group was asked to discuss the issue, identify immediate actions to move the issue forward, and identify who is best to take actions on, and what resources are needed. Each group then provided a brief report-out to the group full group regarding the discussion themes and any immediate actions identified.

The notes from each break out group's discussion are as follows:

Contamination Breakout Group Notes:

- Why discuss contamination?
 - o Addressing contamination will address other issues with recycling
 - o Contamination is something we can impact
 - o Legislative bills will impact contamination
 - o Addressing contamination has national implications
 - o Contamination = TIME & MONEY
- Immediate actions to address contamination
 - o SW Regulatory Oversight
 - o Starting point: Must address the reality that consumers are confused
 - o Simplify the list of what can be recycled
 - Educate the public on the key materials
 - o Standardize list of mixed recycling
 - o Ban items (ex: plastic bags)
 - o Compostability labeling
 - o Social marketing
 - o Tech and Cameras of Trucks
 - o Multi-Stream
 - o Tagging Carts
 - o Compostable Only (where applicable)
 - Food service-ware
 - Scope?
- ID Mediasheds → (Regional Messages)
 - o Caution: do not limit progress
 - o Communication in Chain (and producers)
 - Reports have been written
 - o Training for City/Governor/other staff
 - o Prioritize and reward Quality of Quantity
 - Look at goals and measurements
 - o ID what materials should be mixed?
 - o Incentivize quality at curbside
 - o Procurement
 - o Producer Responsibility for packaging

- Amazon – flexible mailers
- Pressure on producers to use recycled / recyclable materials
- Alternative collection for some materials (drop off)
- Educate on list and standardize the list
- What is recyclable statewide?
 - Give producers time to adapt
- Get rid of recycling symbol with closed loop arrows
- Improve recycling labeling
- Reward / Penalize for priority materials (ex: paper)
- What does the public understand?

Access to Markets Breakout Group Notes:

- Chemical vs Mechanical
 - Chemical is the future
 - Moving away from Material
- Immediate Actions
 - Recycled content requirements
 - Enviro credits
- What really opens new markets?
- Separate economics of recycling from investing in new tech for new markets
 - Discuss this via major material types
 - Flexible packaging
 - Polyethylene
- Visibility in what the new technologies are and what the new markets are
 - All need to be done by materials

Recycling doesn't pay for itself Breakout Group Notes:

- Market demand for clean materials
- Mixed recycling leads to mess
- We don't recycle just to save money
- Need a reason for why we recycle
 - Preservation of virgin resources
 - Creation of circular economy
- Incentives are not aligned
- Light weighting better for GHG
- Recommendation
 - Look at cost per ton in British Columbia
 - Outreach to public
 - Why recycling is costly
 - Why recycling is important
 - We need to remind people we are required to recycle as well as the benefits

Once each group had finished discussion their chosen topic, the full group reconvened and provided a five-minute report-out on their discussion.

Notes from Report Outs:

Contaminants - Dylan

- Standardized list
 - o Create a list for co-mingled bin
 - o Consumers / producers education
- Prioritize quality over quantity – weight-based goals are in place now
 - o Need a carrot
- Outreach / education / social marketing – critical need to communicate to the public
 - o Focus groups
 - o RFP out now
 - o Improving labeling
 - Resident ID codes
 - o Educate consumers
 - Define contamination – what is a contaminant
 - o Social marketing
- Producers of materials – can that be changed?
 - o Product bans
 - o Amazon
 - o Didn't have time to fully discuss as a group
- Target contaminants that are most problematic

Contaminants Questions

- Nina – lots of new work on coding? When is an ice cream just an ice cream container? New technology – unintended consequences of banning something that then limits progress
 - o Avoid lowest common denominator
 - o Didn't want to get into longer debate
- Paul – no one is owning these ideas or endorsing them – proposed – not agreed to by the group – these are just some of the ripest issues that bubbles to the top
 - o Five hours is nowhere near enough address this one issue

Lack of Markets -

- General discussion
- Immediate actions
 - o Not a lot of short-term solutions
 - o Encourage use of recyclables in durable materials production
 - o State procurement incentivizing new production
- Mid-long actions
 - o better understanding of what the future markets are going to be and the future technology
 - looked at by material type

- Breaking down to component parts about the future and thinking through each thing

Lack of Markets questions / comments

- Laurie – UW students are researching what is out there from a mechanical standpoint – what can be sent where
 - UW and Ecology haven't decided materials or even met with the students
- Nina – can we capitalize on emerging goals of large brands? Can WA invest in technology that brands can have long term contracts with? Push on brands that have voluntary goals?
 - Only durable – Heather – talk offline with Nina

Recycling isn't free –

A lot to unpack

- Actions
 - Education around cost of recycling – what can be recycled and why it cost so much
 - Public and elected officials
 - Mid-short actions
 - Conduct more studies around true cost of recycling – no consensus on how to do that
 - Innovative techniques to devise revenue models to pay for it
 - Increase fees on manufacturers
 - Retail fees
 - But is it fair – how transparent? Interesting discussion
 - We need to continue this discussion
 - Re-calibration – get people to recommit to recycling in the new landscape of recycling
 - Whole cost model has changed – this needs to be transmitted to elected officials
 - Needs investment to continue
- Talked about motivations for recycling
- Really interesting discussion that cannot be cleanly resolved in a 35 minute breakout session
- We really need to figure out what the costs are

Recycling isn't Free Questions

- What do you mean by transparency about recycling not being free?
 - How do we communicate things like product stewardship programs for things like electronics and other consumer products
 - Shows participation in the market

After each group's report out, Annie asked the full group think about prioritizing the issues to be discussed at the next meeting on December 18. The full group went around the room and identified their preferred focus topic for the next meeting and why. The group expressed a strong preference to discuss the issue of Contamination at the next meeting.

The group then discussed the work that would be necessary before the next meeting in December to address the topic of Contamination. The following Action Items were identified and decisions made.

- Action Item: a smaller subgroup of the larger steering committee will team to compile relevant information on contamination topics so that the group does not have to start from scratch at the meeting.
 - These materials will be distributed prior to the December 18 meeting and include:
 - Volunteers to compile these materials are:
 - Heather volunteered to write something
 - Nina volunteered to help Heather
 - Ecology staff will circulate the following documents
 - (BMPs from Southwest, one from Northwest, BMP from ecology, and brad's list if Ecology staff have it)
 - Ron (will read what Heather writes)
- Action Item: Alli K. will share Ecology RFP to the larger group to get input from the group on how to structure the contract to ensure everything is heading in the right direction.
- Action Item: Triangle and Ecology will work to draft an agenda for the December 18 meeting.
 - Volunteers to review and provide feedback on proposed agenda are:
 - Shannon M.
 - Dylan
- Action Item: Ecology will circulate relevant contamination documents prior to next meeting
- Decision – it was agreed that there was no need for speakers or subject matter experts at the next meeting and that the materials circulated by Ecology / developed by the subcommittee would be sufficient.
- Decision: it was also decided that the December 18 meeting would start at 9:00 PT rather than 10:30.

Summary and Next Steps:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday December 18th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in Sumner, WA.