

**Newton Sustainable Materials Management Commission (SMMC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, July 22, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Zoom Online Meeting**

**Members in attendance:** Sunwoo Kahng, Chair, Marian Rambelle, Vice Chair, Carl Valente, Secretary, John Lewis (joined the meeting at 7:15 p.m.), Steve Ferrey (joined the meeting at 7:39 p.m.), Meryl Kessler, Karen Slote, Miles Smith.

**Members absent:** Robin Maltz, Seth Parker, Jim McGonagle, Commissioner, DPW, Ex-Officio.

**Other participants:** Alison Leary, City Council, Waneta Trabert, Director, DPW Sustainable Materials Management Division, Julia Malakie, City Council (joined the meeting at 8:30 p.m.).

**Approval of May 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

On the motion by Miles Smith, seconded by Meryl Kessler, the Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021 were approved 7-0 on a roll call vote. Sunwoo Kahng, Marian Rambelle, Carl Valente, John Lewis, Meryl Kessler, Karen Slote, and Miles Smith voting yes.

**Approval of June 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

On the motion by Miles Smith, seconded by Karen Slote, the Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2021, as amended by Mr. Smith, were approved 7-0 on a roll call vote. Sunwoo Kahng, Marian Rambelle, Carl Valente, John Lewis, Meryl Kessler, Karen Slote, and Miles Smith voting yes.

**Yard Waste Collection Development and other SMMD Updates:**

Ms. Trabert reported that yard waste collection by Waste Management has been largely on schedule for the past week, after a number of weeks of delayed collection. The Mayor's Office and Legal Department have requested a meeting with Waste Management, scheduled for July 27. The City is looking for assurances that there will be sufficient Waste Management collection vehicles and staff for the yard waste collection program, particularly for the fall leaf collection period. The City is considering other options if Waste Management cannot meet its collection requirements including:

- Having the City rent collection vehicles and collect yard waste with City staff;
- Finding another contractor for the yard waste program.

Ms. Kahng asked for an update on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation being considered by the State Legislature. Ms. Trabert reported that no formal action has been taken by the legislative committee that held a hearing on this proposed legislation. Ms. Trabert also offered a number of comments on the likely outcome of this proposed legislation.

Ms. Kahng asked for an update on the Helpsy textile collection program. Ms. Trabert reported that this program is for clothing and clothing accessories, whether they can be reused or not. Residents will request pick up of their textiles via the Helpsy website. Initially, Helpsy will accept

40 pick-up appointments per week. The City will receive a payment based on the amount of textiles collected. The School Department is also planning on being a collection point for Helpsy. The City's program is expected to be publicly announced by early August.

Mr. Smith reported on the SMMD curbside program to add recycling stickers to residential recycling containers and to 'survey' the container contents as part of this process. As a volunteer in this program, he found the container survey aspect more challenging due to the early collection times of Waste Management. Ms. Trabert believes, however, that a representative survey sample of containers should be sufficient for her purpose.

Mr. Valente asked about how spending decisions for the anticipated Recycling Dividends Grant program award of \$68,000 will be decided. Ms. Trabert commented that in past years, the SMMD and Commission of DPW identified worthy projects for these grant funds.

### **Planning for SMMC Report**

Ms. Kahng reported that Mr. Parker is still editing the report. She asked if others would be willing to assist Mr. Parker prior to the next meeting to help expedite the process. Ms. Kahng, Ms. Leary (nonmember), and Mr. Lewis volunteered to assist Mr. Parker. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission that this work will be strictly limited to editing the three subcommittee draft reports and that no substantive discussions or deliberations would take place. As such, the editing process was not seen to be within the definition of a public meeting.

The Commission had a full discussion regarding potential conclusions/recommendations for the SMMC report. There was general consensus on the following being included in the report:

- That the City should adopt, as either a goal or aspiration, a 70 percent reduction in solid waste by 2050 (from 2018 levels);
- The report should include specific solid waste reduction targets for the coming five-year period, that will advance the progress to the 2050 waste reduction goal;
- That the solid waste reduction 2050 goal and shorter-term targets should be consistent with the soon-to-be-released MassDEP 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan;
- That the report's recommendations should address what should be done to reduce solid waste rather than how this should be accomplished. The MassDEP study that Ms. Trabert and the SMMD are currently undertaking, for completion likely in June 2022, will have more specifics regarding the implementation of solid waste reduction strategies;
- That the report should recommend some form of modification to the City's current hybrid Pay-As-You-Go or SMART program; and
- That the report should recommend some form of a universal organics curbside collection program. (Ms. Trabert and Mr. Ferrey may be able to send to the Commission members a link to additional information about organics composting alternatives.)

The Commission also discussed whether the report should reference the need for additional SMMD staff to help in the implementation of any recommendations adopted by the Mayor/City Council.

Ms. Kahng will try to get to the Commission members a draft of the edited report by August 13.

**Public Comments and Announcements:**

There were no public comments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

**Next meeting:** The next meeting of the SMMC is scheduled for Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 7 p.m.

***Documents provided/discussed at meeting:***

1. *May 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes.*
2. *June 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes.*
3. *July 2021 SMMD Update. Dated July 16, 2021. Provided to the SMMC by Waneta Trabert, SMMD Director, in advance of the meeting.*