

MINUTES

COUNCIL ON RECYCLING
APRIL 29, 2008
CASCADE ASSET MANAGEMENT
6701 MANUFACTURER'S DR
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Council Members Present: Dennis Dancker, Greg David, Rick Meyers, Neil Peters-Michaud, John Reindl; Charlotte Zieve

Council Members Absent: Jeff Fielkow

Also attending: Rick Eilertson, City of Fitchburg

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair John Reindl at 9:05 AM.

Introductions and Announcements: The three new members introduced themselves. Dennis Dancker is the Director of Public Works for the Village of Marshall. He is interested in recycling and solid waste issues in general. Greg David is the owner of Prairie Dock Farm and has been on the Jefferson County Board for four terms. He is particularly interested in systems thinking and the Natural Step process. He also serves on the boards of several not-for-profit organizations. Rick Meyers is the Recycling Manager for the City of Milwaukee. He is particularly interested in extended producer responsibility, wood scrap, construction and demolition debris and public education and outreach programs. He is also on the boards of Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful and the Wisconsin BeSMART Coalition.

The current members gave a brief introduction. John Reindl just retired as the Dane County recycling manager. He will serve out his current term on the Council and but he will not seek reappointment in 2010. Neil Peters-Michaud is one of the founders and the CEO of Cascade Asset Management. He is on the board of Danenet, which helps get computers to non-profit organizations. He is also treasurer of the International Association of Electronics Recyclers. They are engaged in efforts to build responsible recycling in third-world countries. Charlotte Zieve was a lecturer at the UW Institute for Environmental Studies. She was instrumental in establishing the Schlitz Audubon Society headquarters. She is currently active in the Ag-bag recycling project. She said we are too timid when it comes to advocating for the environment.

Reindl relayed several news articles involving recycling, including a UW professor who consulted on a \$83M recycled carpet buy, that several companies were discontinuing the sale of products with bisphenol A in them, that several communities were either outlawing plastic shopping bags or requiring that companies that use them recycle them and that the paper industry hit a record 56% recycling rate. The industry recovered a record 54M tons. They are hoping for 60% by 2012. He said that polls show that Americans are sensitized to climate change. Now is the best time for action on that issue.

Minutes: Charlotte Zieve moved, Neil Peters-Michaud seconded approval of the minutes from November 14, 2007. The motion carried.

Elections: Zieve moved and David seconded the nomination of Reindl for Chair. There were no other nominations and Reindl was elected Chair

Meyers moved and David seconded the nomination of Peters-Michaud for Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations and Peters-Michaud was elected Vice-Chair

David moved and Peters-Michaud seconded the nomination of Zieve for Secretary. There were no other nominations and Zieve was elected Secretary

Public Comment: Rick Eilertson, City of Fitchburg, asked if the DNR had or was planning on printing the “Tenant’s Guide to Recycling” in Spanish. Dan Fields, DNR, said he would look into it.

Reports:

DNR: Fields said the DNR was interviewing for the Recycling Educator position and hoped to have the position filled by the new fiscal year.

Fields said the DNR was continuing work on issues such as electronics, open burning and pharmaceuticals.

Fields said that the DNR will spend more time calculating the positive effect recycling has on greenhouse gas emissions.

Governor’s Task Force on Waste Materials Recovery and Disposal: Reindl said that the Task Force (TF) had finished and delivered their recommendations but several members were keeping in contact to promote the recommendations. He said the recommendations broke down into four main areas.

- A) Environmental, economic and social costs: Professor Rich Bishop did an analysis. From that the TF delivered four recommendations. His analysis is an appendix to the report.
- B) Producer responsibility: The recommendation required some form of producer responsibility for e-scrap. The TF also recommended that producer responsibility be used for other materials.
- C) Promote effective reuse, recycling and recovery. Recommendations included a composition study every five years and changing the aids formula to per capita. The DNR has also created an organic stability rule that states that landfills must be inert after forty years. The landfill operators can do this by any method they choose.
- D) Promote economic and environmental stability: The recommendations included eliminating the household exemption, setting up unused pharmaceutical collection systems, open burning regulations and procurement of recycling compatible adhesives

Reindl said there has been movement on several issues, such as open burning and electronics, but no real progress. He said that some issues, like producer responsibility, are new and difficult for people to grasp initially. The Council has been a forum for many of these issues. Reindl said that as individuals and groups, we don’t have to wait for legislation. We can make many of these changes now. Peters-Michaud said we should look at the whole range of actions. We should take a holistic approach to these issues. The Council can help find ways to follow through on the progress that has been made.

Priority issues:

Ag Plastics: Zieve said that she is working on a pilot project to collect Ag-bags. She has had three meetings in her area. A pilot project has been proposed. It is for the large farms (500+ cows) to see if it is commercially viable. Currently the farmers are burning or burying the plastic. There is tremendous interest from the farm community. The biggest issue is how to collect the material. They are trying roll-offs for the big farms and drop centers for the smaller farms. She has had great cooperation from Mike Ballweg, DATCP. She said she will contact Kate Cooper, DNR, for her assistance as well. Reindl suggested that there may be Ag and ADD grants that can help run the pilot. He also said he would talk to Frank Ericson, SC Johnson, about becoming involved.

Electronics: Peters-Michaud said that there is a broad coalition of support for producer responsibility. WMC has given their conditional support. BSI has endorsed the legislation even with the language on prison labor. The Merchants Federation also supports the bill. Apple Computer opposes the bill. They want printers counted as an obligation and want schools included in the collection side. There is a lot of information on Sen. Miller’s home page

(http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen16/news/Issues/Electronics_Recycling.asp). Peters-Michaud said the momentum is there.

Peters-Michaud said that on Feb 19, 2009, the analog signals will end. You will need a converter box unless you have bought a TV in the last two years or you have cable or satellite. The converters will be anywhere from \$40-\$100. You can ask for a coupon from the federal government that is good for a \$40 credit towards purchase. Peters-Michaud said he would forward information about the coupons to the members. It is expected that 20% of all users will be affected.

Meyers said Milwaukee had an e-waste collection event and collected 4 ½ semis of material in four hours. Twenty-one percent were TVs. Reindl said there is a drop off in Madison for electronics. There has been a greater percentage of TVs collected in the last few months. Part of that is because there is a national ad campaign about the switchover. Peters-Michaud said he will continue to work with Sen. Miller to push for legislation.

Peters-Michaud said that Minnesota has producer responsibility. The system is based on weight. Each company must hit their target or pay a fine. The law has tripled his business in Minnesota.

Peters-Michaud said that the responsible recycler or "R2" standards are being developed by EPA. They are testing the standards now and should be able to set up an accreditation program by the end of this year. There are other standards and individual groups do have accreditation programs but EPA's will probably be the accepted model. EPA's EPEAT standards are in place for the State of Wisconsin. The vendors must meet the silver or gold standards to be considered.

Peters-Michaud said that EPA has rules for exports. Whole products are OK. Refurbished products are OK but questions have been raised about meeting the standards or tests for the importing country. There have also been questions raised about the rules for broken glass. He said that Bob Toricelli, EPA, has an excellent presentation on this subject and Peters-Michaud will send members a link to the presentation.

Mercury Containing Products: Reindl said the Council has sent a list of recommendations to the legislature. He said the Senate voted on a bill banning some mercury products but it was not acted upon in the Assembly. Reindl said that legislators were surprised when he testified that products release twice as much mercury into the environment as power plants.

Paper: Reindl said that stickies remain a major issue. He said that he is continuing to work with state procurement staff to set up state standards for recycling compatible adhesives (RCAs). This is a t\$2 billion problem, for the paper industry. The problem trickles down to the municipalities. The paper companies can't pay as much because they have more costs because of the stickies. Reindl said he is talking the Madison newspapers and the Wisconsin Newspaper Association about stickies in general and their use of stickies on the front pages in particular. He has sent this message out to some environmental e-mail lists and they have written to the papers. Zieve said it should be simple to switch. The costs are comparable. There is a cost to switching over initially. She said each of us could take action by sending back the labels we get in the mail and asking the groups to switch or they won't get a donation. Reindl said the best hope was to create demand for RCAs. Fields said he would e-mail the members the Council's Fact Sheet on RCAs.

Clean Sweep: Reindl said the Clean Sweep program received more funding in the budget.

Priority Discussion: Reindl said members should come to the next meeting ready to discuss priorities. Meyers said that the pharmaceutical issue was not a priority for him. David said that the Natural Step process was a priority for him. Reindl suggested that the Council invite David to talk about Natural Step, a member of Sen. Miller's staff come to talk about electronics and Joe Van Rossum, SHWEC, to talk about wood scrap and composting for the next meeting. Members suggested the Council consider Joanie Burns, DNR, to talk about pharmaceuticals and Rich Bishop to talk about environmental economics as possible future speakers.

Other Business: The next meeting will be in Watertown- Jefferson County, at 9:00 AM, on Tuesday, June 17.

Adjournment: Zieve moved and Peters-Michaud seconded. The Council adjourned at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted by Daniel B. Fields, Department of Natural Resources.