

Waste Working Group Meeting #1

December 4th, 2020 | 1:00-3:30pm

Attendees:

- **(Chair)** Martin Brand, Chair, New York State DEC
- Dereth Glance, Executive Director, Onondaga Co Resource Recovery Agency
- Jane Atkinson Gajwani, Director of the Office of Energy and Resource Recovery, NYC DEP
- Michael Cahill, Esquire, Germano & Cahill, P.C.
- Dan Egan, Executive Director, Feeding New York State
- Paul Gilman, Sr. VP and Chief Sustainability Office, Covanta
- Resa Dimino, Senior Consultant, Resource Recycling Systems
- Steve Changaris, VP of Northeast Regional, National Waste & Recycling Association
- Lauren Toretta, President and Partner, Ch4 Biogas
- Tok Michelle Oyewole Ph.D., Policy & Communications Organizer, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
- Eric Goldstein, Senior Attorney and NYC Environmental Director, NRDC
- Bridget Vicenty, Founder, Inner City Green Team
- Allen Hershkowitz, Environmental Science Advisor to the NY Yankees and former Senior Scientist & Director of Solid Waste Program, Green Sports Alliance
- John Casella, Chairman and CEO, Casella Waste Systems

Not in Attendance

- Lindsey McMahon, Policy Coordinator, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets

Meeting Notes

*Please be aware that these notes mainly focus on the comments and questions from the panelist. Please refer to the event slides for more detailed information about the presentation's content.

General Comments before Meeting Kick-Off:

- How is out of state landfilling counted?
- We should be able to take credit for increased out of state manufacturing due to increased recycling.
- The Decision Support Tool should be considered.
- All emissions should be considered.
- Impact on munis should be considered. Munis must provide a service for health reasons.
- Subgroups may be useful.
- The interplay between agencies is not clear.
- Is the 12/15 deadline firm?
- Is there a Workplan template?

New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act:

- See slides for a recap on this section.

Dr. Sally Rowland (DEC Division of Materials Management) presents CLCPA Emissions Reduction Requirements:

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Q (Dan Egan): If 1990 is the baseline measure, where are we today?
 - A (Suzanne Hagell): The CLCPA directs DEC to issue a full annual inventory report (all years including current) next year. So, this is coming and will be seeking feedback.

General Advisory Panel Work Product: Martin Brand Presents:

- See slides for a recap on this section.

Focus on Waste Emissions: Presented by Molly Trembley (DEC):

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Q (Eric Goldstein): Will you be sharing the slides with the panel members?
 - A (Molly Trembley): Yes, we will, and it will be in the SharePoint folder and this meeting is being recorded.

Potential GHG Emission Sources – Waste Management in NYS: Presented by Dr. Sally Rowland:

- See slides for a recap on this section.

Questions or comments on what was just presented?

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Q (Michael Cahill): Do we have any idea who will be responsible for implementation?
 - A (Martin Brand): There will be a lot of effort on the side of municipalities and local government, but the State will play a large role as well. These things will not be implemented in a bubble. There will be a lot of regulatory support, behavioral changes
- Q (Michael Cahill): How will we work with exported waste? Do we want to encourage or discourage? Will we count this in our emissions:
 - A (Martin Brand): The exports will play a large role.
 - A (Sally Rowland): Spoke with the climate folks, if it leaves the state, it will count
 - A (Allen Hershkowitz): If apply the same compliance within state landfills
 - Comment - (Dereth Glance): We can use this for flow comminutes
 - Q (Ressa Domino): We want to take advantage of GHG reduction form recycling. This will happen predominantly out of state. Will this be considered as well
 - A (Martin Brand): Yes, I think so.
- Q (Paul Gilman): I am surprised that you are using the Warp model (EPA model). This was discussed in a previous panel. More advanced models, such as the support tool, were not readily available to the State. In between then, they have become web access, they take into account more than just GHG emission. Can you please consider using the more advanced tools?
 - A (Martin Brand): Yes, we will consider this.
- Q (Dan Egan): Can we define all of the acronyms
 - EPR is Extended Producer Responsibility
- Comment - (Martin Brand): We can develop sub-working groups to evaluate particular topics. If you are interested in that, we can do that:
 - A (Allen Hershkowitz): Yes, I was going to suggest that and think that is a good way to address some of the more specific topics/barriers.
- Q (Steve Changaris): There is some concern and interest to see how all of this is harmonized. There is an equal concern on, what is the various interactions and interplay between the various organizations working on this. Harmonization will be helpful for communities. Establishing Areas of responsibility is key.

- A (Martin Brand): Yes, this will be a large cooperative effort between the agencies. Our work group here even contains many members for various state agencies. There is a lot of collaboration going on. We are truthing ourselves as we go. We need to come up with practical options.
- Q (Dereth Glance): We have 9 days to come up with a plan. Is that deadline firm and is there a model for the workplan?
 - A (Martin Brand): Yes, we have put together some of this and will present that to you today. The deadline is firm. There is a template. This plan is not very detailed as it does not go into implications, policies or greater strategy. This is an outline of our thinking and high-level plans. The next meeting, we have will focus on finalizing this plan.

Panel Introductions:

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Brigitte Viencty: Inner City Green Team
 - She is part of Inner-City Green Team. Working on recycling and food scraps collection, and anerobic-digestion in Harlem.
- Dan Egan: Feeding New York State
 - The membership organized for the 10 feeding America foodbanks in New York. The foodbanks are based on waste. With 30% waste in the U.S., this team looks to intercept some of this waste to get it to folks in need.
 - Much of the food they distribute would otherwise go to a landfill.
- Tok Michelle Oyewole, PHD:
 - Workwith the NYC Environmental Justice team.
 - Working to lessen the burden of waste on LMI communities and communities with persons of color.
 - Interest in zero emission vehicles for organic waste transportation
 - Interested in increasing hyper local organics processing, reduced dependency on NYC budget
 - Interested in increased use of compost in urban farms
 - Ending solid waste impacts from transport, transfer facilities in EJ communities
 - Supporter of EPR, low emission vehicles (electric vehicles, electric bikes)
- Jane Atkinson Gajwani (NYC Dept. Of Environmental Protection) serve 9 million New Yorkers as they are a wastewater recovery system.
 - Happy to hear a focus on anerobic digestion. They have many on site.
 - Have been working towards net zero emissions for their facilities and have used some creative strategies to combine several techniques and technologies
 - 75 ADs at 14 WWTPs, good for volume and odor reduction in addition to energy
 - Interested in synthetic fertilizer GHG reduction with regard to organic waste
 - Interested in compost for carbon sequestration
 - Monitoring leaks is big, but the funding can be hard to come by
 - Found bio-gas not being listed as a renewable resource disappointing. We like to consider this moving forward.
 - Martin: Yes, this is something we are looking into
 - Agree there should be a joint session with the agriculture AP group. Especially with regard to wastewater. (Martin agrees and they are looking into this.)

- NOX emissions were not mentioned in the previous discussion and would like to pursue that. The historical methods to reduce have been found to be lacking and they would like to revisit this.
 - Martin: NOX was recently discussed
- Dereth Glance: Onondaga a flow community
 - They provide comprehensive residential recycling
 - They have a large composting program
 - They work with many different circular economy groups and non-profits like Salvation Army
 - Interested in looking into negative externalities
 - Would like a focus on Circular Economy
 - Curious when DEC regulations will be completed
- Steve Changaris: National Waste and Recycling Association
 - Work with the private waste management groups
 - Have access to many of the companies who have the information on how these facilities are run. He would like to use himself as a connector to these groups.
 - Environmental Justice is another area they have been working on
- Eric Goldstein: NRDC
 - Active program on waste issues since 1980
 - Emphasize:
 - Focus on eliminating methane emissions on landfills
 - Not sending biosolids to a landfill is a good start
 - Landfills are the 3rd largest methane emitter in the US
 - Support composting and recycling. Want all organic waste to go away from landfills, and reduce the waste
 - Many local initiatives we should support:
 - NYC is adopting a commercial waste zoning law
 - It makes a lot of sense to look at the upstream emission rather than just the emission on waste.
 - Would like recommendations to not only be neutral but benefit these communities
- Resa Domino: Resource Recycling Systems
 - Boutique consultants focusing on recycling on commercial and industrial side
 - Expertise in:
 - Plastics recycling
 - Policy and EPR
 - Beyond Waste plan from DEC is a good starting point.
 - Prioritizing diverting materials from disposal is critical.
 - EPR should be based on impact – carpets, textile, packaging
- Michael Cahill: Germano and Cahill, P.C.
 - Attorney in the waste business
 - Represented many municipalities in the State
 - Need to consider the garbage collection process. All of our decisions should not impede collection as this is incredibly important and a complex system.
 - We need alternative revenue sources for solid waste management
 - A subgroup here, he would like to work on that
 - Would like to explore in and out of state financial incentives

- Consider how LF tip fees support other municipal activities
- Too little is being paid for RNG energy
- Allen Hershkowitz: Green Sports Alliance
 - 1987-2016 was a senior scientist at NRDC and created and led the NRDC Solid Waste Program
 - Created Green Sports Alliance under NRDC: no longer the head, but he is the Environmental Advisor for the NY Yankees and participates on other advisory panels with sports
 - We are not dealing with waste; we are working with materials. All these materials have a most ecologically intelligent retirement.
 - Landfills should be all non-recyclable, non-organic material.
 - Exported waste should be under the same standards of in state landfill standards
 - Focus on procurement (pre-use) is a key place to look
 - Focus this advisory on materials management, not waste management
 - Would like to know if they are addressing agricultural residues
 - EPR is long overdue
 - Measurement is critical
 - Enormous opportunity in agriculture residues
- Paul Gilman: Convanta
 - This is a great opportunity for NYS to set an example for the country
 - We can learn from many of the process and policies that were employed in Europe
 - Look closely to other State's approaches and the impacts of them
- John W. Casella: Casella Waste Systems
 - Over 40 years on the NE waste recovery industry
 - Reduce their carbon footprint by 50% after making it a strategic focus.
 - Most significant part of business model is more efficient materials management
 - Materials management discussion and how to speed these discussions up is a key focus for him.
- Lauren Toretta: CH4 Biogas
 - President and CEO of CH4 Biogas (Biogas company)
 - Largest on farm waste management/biogas plant in the State
 - Many overlaps in composting, landfill and AD, and defining these interactions and alignments will be helpful.
 - Role for privatization to accomplish these goals is a good approach to pursue.

Martin Comments: if any of you have subject matter experts who you think can help with our work, please raise those suggestions to the panel and they can convene special groups on particular issues.

Sally Discusses the Administrative Processes:

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Q (Dereth Glance): do we have anyone from DOT yet?
 - A (Sally Rowland): No not yet.
- Q (Allen Hershkowitz): We need to look at the measuring methods and measurement protocols for all aspects of the solid waste management systems. If this does not exist, this should be our first recommendation.

- Comment - (Dereth Glance): Can John Cosella provide details on how they achieved 50% GHG reduction.
 - A (John Cosella): There are so many different programs that contribute to this. The major portion of the reductions were from landfills. Put in place tech. to add to the collection systems, temporary capping. This is not perfect of course. Large effort was in low emission landfill model. Another was shutting down one incineration facility.

Record and Information Sharing: Molly:

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Molly will send around the SharePoint for this AP
- The Cadmus Group will support both on facilitation and technical support
- Comment -Martin Brand: if you all have suggestion on how to share information more effectively or how best to use SharePoint, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Next Steps and General Comments:

- See slides for a recap on this section.
- Martin: Next week, the updated plan, based on comments and suggestions here, will be sent to you all next week prior to our next meeting.
- Martin: The climate justice working group has been established. A first presentation for this group will happen on the 15th. We will send this meeting information to you all and encourage all panel members to join. (1:00 PM)
- Martin: An invite to join a discussion on adaptation and resilience on December 8th will be sent to you shortly.
- Martin: Future meetings.
 - We will have one next week
 - It would be good to have another meeting before the end of the year
 - If you cannot make a meeting, this is ok
- Comment - (Dereth Glance): The adaption and resiliency comments reminded her of disaster scenarios, how to address the debris and contingency solid waste during these events.
- Q (Resa Domino): Can we get subgroups established next week, before the end of the year. This will make meetings like this easier to schedule.
 - A Martin: Yes, we will work on the plan next week, but also on the work groups. Please consider what work groups you would like to join. We would like a panel member to lead each of these groups. **(Add this to the agenda for next week's meeting)**
- Q (Lauren Toretta): When do you plan to send a draft of the plan?
 - A Martin: We will go through the notes and suggestions from today. We anticipate sending something out on Wednesday (12/9)
 - A Sally: We will put up a working document with more detailed descriptions. This will not be part of the plan but will have more details.
- Comment - (Allen Hershkowitz): Let's all send potential work group names in advance of the meeting. Allen will reach out to Martin to discuss that.