City of Hamilton

MINUTES: Waste Reduction Task Force
Wednesday, November 21, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, 555 Bay Street North, Hamilton

Present: Mary Lou Dickson  David Hart Dyke  Laurie Nielsen
Jim Sweetman  Betty Hay Lambeck  Peter Hutton
Angela Pastorius  Dan Rodrigues  Rose Killey
Tom Thompson  Anton Volcansek

Regrets: Karin Maja Larsen  Brooke Ryan  Michael Caruso

Also Present: Anne Winning, Supervisor of Policy and Planning, Waste Management Division
Craig Murdoch, Manager of Waste Disposal, Waste Management Division
Emil Prpic, Supervisor of Waste Processing, Waste Management Division
Adrienne Press, Policy Analyst, Waste Management Division
Barry Lovegrove, Public
Mark Stanski, Public
Gord Cameron, Public
Ron Joice, Public
Magdalena Szkarlat, Public
Heather Wilson, Public
Grant Ranalli, Public

1. Approval of the Minutes from the October 17th, 2007 Meeting

The Task Force received a copy of the minutes from the October 17th, 2007 meeting.

A change was requested to Item 9 paragraph 6 - “Corrections Canada staff” was replaced by “inmates”.

The minutes were approved as amended.

(Moved by Dan Rodrigues, seconded by Jim Sweetman)

2. Administrative Items

The deadline for submitting applications for new appointments is November 30th. Adrienne will scan the applications and email them to the New Member Appointment sub-committee after the deadline.

3. Standing Agenda Items

a) Sub-Committee Updates

Business & Government

Three (3) Task Force members attended the “Living the Environment Conference” for high school students that took place at Mohawk College. Laurie and Mary Lou had a display on reducing packaging and would like to find another home for the display. They are looking into exhibiting at Eastgate Mall or a busy City arena.

Out of six (6) letters sent out with regard to excessive packaging, a response letter was received from Planters Peanuts stating that the purchasers will seek out environmentally sensitive packaging alternatives.

Multi-Residential, Institutional & Commercial Waste

No new comments from the sub-committee.
Staff informed Task Force members that to date the green cart has been rolled-out to eighty-four (84) multi-res buildings (approximately 2 to 3 buildings per day). Follow up with the first twenty-four (24) buildings on the program has been taking place and fourteen (14) buildings are actively using the green cart. The carts are 50% full or more with little contamination. Community Outreach is planning further communications to multi-residential buildings. Next year Waste Management will be hiring two (2) additional staff to assist in this project.

An inquiry was made as to how many multi-res buildings there are in total. Staff advised that there are a total of 1,100 buildings to roll-out.

**Education & Communication Sub-Committee**

A member contacted Craig Noble regarding Public School Board initiatives. Saltfleet School has composting and a green house and would like to have education members tour the facility. Bishop Tonnos School has an environmental program.

**b) Glanbrook Landfill Coordinating Committee (GLCC)**

There has not been a meeting since the last WRTF meeting. The next GLCC meeting is on Monday November 26th. A replacement GLC representative (for Mike Caruso) will need to be appointed in January.

**c) Steering Committee Update**

The Task Force delegate to the Steering Committee gave an update form the last meeting and circulated an email with highlights of the meeting. Significant discussion focused on recycling in non-staffed parks. A suggestion was made that staff investigate expanding the three (3) stream public space contract. At the last Clean City Liaison Committee meeting, Ramona Dechert from the City’s Operations and Maintenance department and Raffaella Morello from Waste Management made a presentation regarding recycling in parks and on the street (litter containers). It is in the City’s budget to purchase a new vehicle to do two (2) stream pickup.

4. **Transfer Station/Community Recycling Centre Review**

This item was deferred to be discussed after Item 5. The motion to amend the agenda was moved by Dan Rodrigues and seconded by Anton Volcansek.

Craig Murdoch made a presentation on the Transfer Station/Community Recycling Centre Review.

Waste Management staff is undergoing a systems review as the Transfer Station/Community Recycling Centres contracts end in 2009. Craig introduced Emil Prpic who is the leading the RFP team. Any input from the Task Force will be considered and possibly incorporated into the RFP.

Task Force members inquired about the lack of signage on Upper Ottawa north of Rymal. Staff explained that it is difficult to put a large sign in that area as there are many residential and commercial buildings. Staff is working with the Roads Division on obtaining smaller signs for that location.

Craig Murdoch provided an overview of the reuse store, site plan of the MCRC and flow of traffic.

A Task Force member commented that there is still a problem with signage at the Mountain CRC as it is unclear what lane is for garbage and what lane is for recycling especially when cars are backed up.

A Task Force member commented that at the Mountain CRC there is a gap after the reuse store that allows cars to jump the cue when the line up is backed up. Staff will ensure that Hotz Environmental puts up cones to prevent this. Staff advised that 95% of the time there are no line ups at the MCRC and these only occur in the spring and when the division holds special events.

Due to time constraints, staff asked the Task Force to email any suggestions/comments to Adrienne. Staff are interested in suggestions of the types of commercial recyclables that could be easily diverted, i.e. tires. They are also interested in weaknesses at the CRCs (i.e. signage). Suggestions can be addressed in the RFP or be made a requirement of the RFP. Part of the CRC/Transfer Station review is to audit the bins and tipping floor to identify possible diversion opportunities. A consultant has been retained to perform the waste audit. Staff is looking at increasing advertising at the CRCs through mobile signs, newspaper ads, etc. A survey is being conducted on all three (3) CRCs.
A Task Force member asked if bicycles are allowed through the CRCs. Staff explained that due to safety issues bicycles are not permitted, but an operator will take items from residents at the gate and dispose of them properly.

A Task Force member strongly protested that misleading information which had appeared in the 2006 CRC brochure had been repeated in the latest version (Oct. 2007). She said that not "all plastics (#1, 2, 5, 6) are recyclable in Hamilton" and that the brochure does not make clear that painted wood or wood with nails or screws is not accepted in the recycling bins at the CRCs. She explained that these inaccuracies/omissions had been pointed out to staff but had not been remedied. She said that offers from the Task Force to examine galleys of various publications have consistently been rebuffed and suggested that staff should take advantage of the proffered wisdom of group members.

5. Other Business

Staff provided an update on the one (1) bag limit. On Monday November 19th, a staff report (PW07151) went to Public Works Committee. After great discussion and debate the report was approved by a vote of five (5) for and four (4) against.

The amended recommendations are as follows:

- Solid Waste Management Master Plan Recommendation 3 be revised to reflect 65% diversion target for 2010
- Multi-residential diversion program accelerated in 2008 and completed in 2009
- One (1) container limit/household/week effective March 31, 2008 along with grace periods, a transition to enforcement and special considerations. Curbside enforcement of the limit will start March 31, 2009.
- Two (2) temporary Customer Service Co-ordinator positions will continue to be maintained as temporary positions.
- By-law enforcement enhanced with the addition of 0.5 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) effective April 1, 2008 (pending approval - referred to the 2008 budget process).
- Acceptable compostable bags introduced into the program effective March 31, 2008.
- Staff continues to explore options to reduce waste and increase diversion in 2009 and 2010.
- Multiple approaches are required to reach 65% diversion. The proposed combination of changes is expected to increase diversion by 15% from 40% to 55% by 2009.
- Additional recommendation to remove the 2008 Capital Budget request for the implementation of a user pay system.

Staff indicated that this is a very contentious issue. Beth Goodger wants to relay a message for the Task Force to lobby Councillors. Task Force support is appreciated. This issue will be going to Council on November 28th.

A Task Force member inquired as to how we plan to identify who is exempted at the street level. Staff replied that we are looking into different methods such as giving exempted homes special coloured tags. Staff has spoken with the Operations and Maintenance Division and they do not feel illegal dumping will be a problem. Generally people who dump are small commercial operations i.e. roofers/jobbers looking for a way to offset costs. Dumping will have to be enforced by by-law enforcement. The Clean City Liaison Committee has illegal dumping on the agenda for the December meeting.

Waste Management Staff are to consult with the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee to assess the amount of illegal dumping in rural areas and any difficulty farmers may have complying with the one (1) container limit.

Staff informed Task Force members that the critical issue is enforcement. Some residents won’t conform unless someone with a badge tells them to. A Task Force member inquired if there are delegates allowed at the November 28th Council meeting and staff responded no. Anything Task Force members or staff would like to discuss at Council will have to be introduced by Councillors Powers and Pearson.
A Task Force member discussed Tim Horton’s and how they did a study on three (3) stream containers. A waste audit was performed before and after litter bins were removed at thirty-one (31) stores. The audit illustrated that litter was reduced after containers were removed.

Task Force members will put together a Motion supporting the one (1) bag limit. The Hamilton Spectator is accepting comments from the public on their blog or letters to editor (letters@spec.ca).

6. Public Discussion

A public member asked if Waste Management staff has ever considered hiring co-op students. Staff responded that we do currently utilize students.

An inquiry was made if staff sells computers to a company in Stoney Creek. Staff responded that we don’t, the computers are shredded.

A comment was made that the re-use store $5 sale was not advertised enough. Staff replied that since the store is run by Community Living Hamilton the City does not take care of the advertising but the City does assist in advertising for larger events.

A public member commented that the re-use store is disorganized, dirty and cluttered and the aisles are too narrow for safe passage of people using walkers.

Someone inquired if old computers are donated to children in need. The City stated that they recycle old computers but encourage reuse through the staff at the Contact Centre and on the website.

One of the public member’s present at the meeting is a teacher and is involved with SERE and is applying for a position on the Waste Reduction Task Force committee.

An inquiry was made into what happens with used batteries. The City sends rechargeable batteries to the RBRC while disposable batteries are either recycled or secured land fill space by Hotz Environmental. A public member stated that he put the idea forward to Emil Prpic and Councillors McHattie and Bratina that bins for disposing batteries should be located in grocery stores. This is done in PEI and is a convenient for residents as everyone visits a grocery store. The City would be responsible for supplying and picking up the contents from the bin. If the City wants to reach 65% diversion, they should look at recycling batteries.

A comment was made that the cost for garbage at the Transfer Station should be raised to encourage residents to recycle.

All six (6) of the public members in attendance are in support of the one (1) bag limit.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2007 at 7 p.m. in Room 203 at the Hamilton Convention Centre located at 1 Summers Lane.

Moved by Tom Thompson and seconded by Anton Volcansek that the meeting be adjourned.

Copies to: All present
Regrets
SWMMP Waste Reduction Task Force Binder Distribution List
Scott Stewart, General Manager, Public Works Department
Glanbrook Landfill Coordinating Committee c/o Craig Murdoch, Waste Management Division
City Clerks Division, c/o Ida Bediou, Lisa Barroso