City of Hamilton

MINUTES: Waste Reduction Task Force
Wednesday, April 19th, 2006, 7:00 p.m.
Room 110, Hamilton City Hall

Present: Rena Marie Cornelius  David Hart Dyke  Dorienne Cushman
Mary Lou Dickson  Michael Caruso  Joel Begin
Linda Hughes  Peter Hutton  Ron Joice
Laurie Nielsen  Dana Woods

Regrets: Joanne Bortolotto  Angela Pastorius  Brooke Ryan

Also Present: Pat Parker, Manager of Solid Waste Planning, Waste Management, City of Hamilton
Adam Watson, Policy Analyst, Waste Management, City of Hamilton
Anne Winning, Supervisor of Policy & Planning, Waste Management, City of Hamilton
Christine Roarke, Jacques Whitford Limited
Donna Robinson, Public
Gord Cameron, Public

1. Approval of the Minutes from October 26th, 2005 & March 15th, 2006

The Task Force received a copy of the minutes from the March 15th, 2006 and October 26th, 2005 meetings.

A motion was made that the March 15th minutes be amended to read “A member suggested that a window display in Jackson Square be prepared to promote the Green Cart Program.” on page 3. The minutes were approved as amended. (Moved by Ron Joice, seconded by Mike Caruso). Motion carried.

The October 26th, 2005 meeting minutes approved. (Moved by Ron Joice, seconded by Dorienne Cushman). Motion carried.

2. Administrative Items

No administrative items were discussed.

3. Standing Committee Items

a) Sub-Committee Updates

The Chair requested Dana Woods, who was absent from the March 15th meeting, to sign up for one of the new subcommittees.

Education Sub-Committee

The Task Force was advised of the upcoming launch of the Newspaper in Education package on April 28th, 2006 (Earth Day). 150 education packages are to be distributed by the end of June to students ranging from Grades 3 to Grade 11. It was requested that the task force receive a copy of the package when it becomes available.

Glanbrook Landfill Coordinating Committee (GLCC)

There was no new business to report since the last meeting.
4. Solid Waste Management Master Plan Initiatives

a) Waste Diversion Facilities Update (CCF, MRF, CRC’s)

Staff provided an update on the construction of the Central Composting Facility. A question was raised as to where the organics that are currently being collected are being taken to. Staff indicated that until the CCF opens the City’s organics are being sent to All Treat Farms in Arthur. Staff also noted that in the first week of Green Cart collection 177 tonnes of organic waste was collected, with the majority being leaf & yard waste, and that there was very low contamination in the Green Carts.

The task force was interested in when a tour of the CCF will be possible for the task force. Staff indicated that presently, due to construction activities, tours are only available on Friday afternoons. Discussion took place on when a tour would be possible once the facility opens and if it was possible to have a future task force meeting there. Staff indicated that they will inquire as to when a tour or meeting is possible to be held there.

Staff provided an update on the MRF retrofit, indicating that the design works are continuing, but no progress to report since the past meeting. A question was raised about whether the project was on budget and on time. Staff indicated that the project is on track.

Staff provided an update on the operation and construction of the Community Recycling Centres. Discussion took place on the signage, traffic and safety at the Mountain CRC during the past weekend, which was particularly busy. Staff indicated that the signage around the site is being worked on; however there are some traffic issues which have to be considered along Rymal Road. Staff also indicated that operations at the site are being monitored, and modifications will be considered based on observations during this busy time of year. Task force members provided some suggestions on how to address some of the traffic concerns which were discussed.

The need for scrap metal debris to be swept away from the drop off areas was discussed and Staff indicated that they will pass this concern on to the operators of the Mountain CRC.

Discussion took place on whether the Mountain CRC will have the capacity to handle all of the traffic and waste being brought to the site. Staff indicated that once the other CRC’s are up and running it will take a lot of the load off of the Mountain CRC. Staff noted that the Dundas CRC is now open. A request was made for the task force to be notified on the official openings of the Dundas CRC and the CCF. The CRCs, like the transfer stations in the past, generally have Saturday morning line-ups.

b) Green Cart Program

Pat Parker, Manager of Solid Waste Planning, presented a progress report on the distribution phase of the Green Cart Program, including how distribution has progressed across the City.

A staff member gave a description of the feedback they have received from residents during the field calls they have been servicing.

It was requested that staff follow up on the delivery of seven Green Carts to 1277 Main St., which is a multi-residential high-rise building. Staff indicated they will follow up on this.

Discussion took place on the liner bags and the availability of the medium and smaller-sized bags at area stores. A concern was raised about the lack of promotion of stores in Waterdown which stock the liner bags. Staff indicated they will follow up on this.

There was an inquiry about the number of calls received related to the program, and how we are dealing with different types of calls from residents. Staff gave an overview of the number and types of calls received and how they’re being addressed.

A question was asked related to the replacement costs for Green Carts. Staff indicated that this isn’t an issue yet as the City is not replacing carts during distribution. After distribution staff will work something out with area retailers and the manufacturer for Green Carts to be available.
One task force member commented on staff juggling all the work related to the Green Cart program and offered congratulations on how well the division is doing in managing the many aspects of this program.

A question was asked about the presence of the serial numbers on the carts. Staff responded that all carts are being registered to each house and the City will have an electronic database of all carts in the City.

The level of participation observed in their area of the City was of concern to a member. Staff responded that outreach students will follow up after distribution is completed and contact non-participants to help increase participation.

c) WastePlan

Staff provided an update on WastePlan, indicating that they are proceeding with a study on stabilized landfill in next few months.

The question was raised as to when the proceedings from the workshop will be made available to participants. Staff indicated that the document will go to the Joint Working Group in May, and won’t be available until after that time.

Discussion took place on the recent changes to the bulk collection program and whether there were any changes in diversion which have been observed. Staff indicated that no changes have been observed, and it was indicated that bulk goods tonnages will be calculated. Discussion took place on the potential impacts of call-in bulk on the reuse of goods put out for collection, and ideas were put forth on the possibility of tracking bulk diversion and reuse. Staff indicated tracking this is not presently possible and only tonnages would be tracked. The idea of the task force drafting a motion to request funding to track bulk diversion was discussed.

Discussion took place on the collection of scrap metal pickup. Staff explained that scrap metal is done together with White Goods and tracked separately from bulk goods.

5. Waste Financing Strategy/Pay-As-You-Throw Presentation (PAYT)

Pat Parker gave a presentation of the PAYT study being undertaken and some of the results of this study to date.

It was suggested that the bag tag system be structured so that the tag price is escalating for each additional bag. Staff responded that they will take this suggestion back to their financial modelers. Members shared their previous experiences with the yellow bag system in Wellington County and with a full user pay system in another area, and noted that the full user pay had a much stronger effect on encouraging waste reduction and diversion.

A comment was received that a $1 tag cost is too low and not enough of an incentive and that a stronger incentive for diversion was needed.

Discussion took place on the impact of PAYT on low income homes and the fact that a larger proportion of low income residents live in multi-residential dwellings. Staff indicated that the bag tag system is not planned for multi-residential dwellings and a utility based system is better suited for this type of dwelling. A statement was made that any reduction in tax in apartments due to waste reduction would need to be passed back to the resident and not stay with the landlord in order for the system to work.

A comment was made that there are a lot of residents, approximately 60-70% in Hamilton, which don’t currently make ends meet and it will be tough to ask them to pay any extra for their bags.

A question was posed about whether similar systems are in place in other municipalities in the province. Staff responded that they are looking into other municipalities’ programs and the types of exemption rules which might be appropriate for Hamilton.
Discussion took place on container limits and the possible methods for tagging waste containers. A comment was made that for the PAYT program to be successful it is crucial to stress that the cost of waste management is redistributed, and that less waste means less cost and no reduction means same cost to the household.

6. AMO Proposal for a Provincial Integrated Waste Management Strategy

It was suggested that the Ministry of Environment had already responded to the paper, so no work was done on preparing a task force submission. Staff stated they did not believe that the Minister had already responded. Chair stated that the task force still needed to put together a submission on the report.

7. Staff Updates on Other Waste Issues

a) Budget

Staff stated that the budget was approved on April 12th, 2006. It was indicated that the staffing report related to the acquisition of customer service staff to support the Green Cart program was approved.

8. Other Business

The Chair brought forth the issue of the SWMMP Steering Committee request that outside members be considered in new member application process. It was requested that the recruitment subcommittee provide information on their decision-making process which could be provided to the SWMMP Steering Committee.

Discussion took place on the existing recruitment process contained in the WRTF terms of reference.

Discussion took place on the amount of time allotted for public discussion and input by members of the public at task force meetings.

9. Public Discussion

A member of the public inquired about the budget process and the staff that was approved. Staff explained that field/collections staff had previously been approved and it was the request for additional customer service staff that was initially denied and had now been approved.

An inquiry was made of the Outreach Student in attendance about his experiences in dealing with the public related to the Green Cart program. The student spoke about the input they’ve received, indicating that about 95% of comments they have received from residents has been positive.

A question was asked about when the results of the public opinion survey will be presented to the task force. Staff indicated that the results will be presented at the June meeting.

A comment was made that public attendees are encouraged to participate on the task force through one of the three subcommittees.

The progress made on the transfers provided to staff for the Hamilton/Waste Management t-shirts was raised. Staff indicated that they will follow up on this.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 17th, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at Hamilton City Hall, Room 110.

Moved by Doriene Cushman and seconded by Laurie Nielsen that the meeting be adjourned.