

Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

(Draft) Minutes: February 28, 2023 (Teams)

Attending: Ralph Harder (recorder)

Sharon Benoit

Ben Lounsbury

Silver Moore-Leamon

Tim MacLeod

Excused: Camille Parrish

Guest: Denis D'Auteuil, Director of Public Works, City of Auburn

Staff: Derek Boulanger - SWG liaison, City of Auburn

Jonathan LaBonte - Transportation Systems Analyst, City of Auburn

Agenda Items:

1. SNRB

2/23/23 meeting cancelled. Work still in progress preparing for March 28 Planning Board public hearing on proposed zoning changes in Agriculture and Resource Protection Zone.

2. EV Charging Stations, municipal fleet transition to EV

Given the cancelled SNRB there was no discussion of placeholder funding for possible grant matching in the City's Capital Improvement budget.

Jonathan reported an additional source of funding for EV charging being considered that would not require city matching funds. Up to \$75,000 could be available through the federal Inflation Reduction Act.

3. Community Resilience Partnership

Work groups were asked to review the list of proposed projects for this grant program. Next step in the process is for work groups to review the city self-evaluation document and give feedback prior to public hearing.

4. Recycling/Composting/Solid Waste Contract.

Denis D'Auteuil, APW Director, provided some current data on the city's composting and curbside recycling efforts.

The Composting program is a pilot food scrapping drop-off program. There are two locations: Public Works Garage (PWG) and South Main Street fire station (SMS). From July-November 2022 there were: 29 collections at PWG, 3652 pounds; 31 collections at SMS, 3875 pounds. Denis will focus on increasing community awareness of this program in an effort to increase participation. There was discussion of curbside pick-up of food waste/recycling in other communities where the expense of municipal trash processing has been reduced by diverting food scraps and recyclable material from the waste stream.

With respect to Auburn's recycling program, participation (approximately 20% of households) and total recycling tonnage (now including diverted food scraps, approximately 7% of total solid waste tonnage) has remained consistently low over the past decade compared to communities with high performing programs. Denis plans to work on increasing community awareness of the recycling program particularly how-to education around what can be recycled and what cannot. He does not have current data on recycling contamination or rejection rates from our current contractor.

SWG would like involvement in current solid waste program review as part of ongoing contract and budget discussions. Will ask SNRB to make this request to City Manager.

2023 Meeting Dates:

January 24th
February 28th
March 28th
April 25th
May 23rd
June 27th
July 25th
August 22nd
September 26th
October 24th
November 28th
December none

