Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair, Dave Drovetta. Meeting was presented via Zoom due to Covid social distancing restrictions. Introductions followed.

Committee members present: Dave Drovetta, Paul Chaffee, Don Seifert, Kent Seyfried, Megan England, Anne Melia, Kate Collum, Raymond Manley, Dan Jones, Debra Kring, Scott Martin, Mike Hey.

JCDHE Staff Present: Mary Beverley, Brandon Hearn, Craig Wood, Trent Thompson, Brian Alferman, Charles Marx, Eric Nelson, and Commissioner Becky Fast.

Presenter: John Blessing, Waste Management

Guests Present: Kathy Richardson, City of Lawrence; George Constable, Constable Sanitation; Piercyn Charbonneau, Ripple Glass; Meredith McAllister, Compost Collective.

Meeting Summary Approval

November meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Presentation: John Blessing, Public Sector Account Manager, Waste Management

Mr. Blessing gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding updates on the recycling markets and keeping stakeholders informed on changes in the markets. He gave a brief overview of the company and operational changes. $42M spent on installing 96 new and updated optical sorters and other new equipment. Also, new recycle carts contain 20% post-consumer plastic recycled materials. Highlighted 10K natural gas trucks, 11 C&D facilities in operation, 2 MFR’s in the state of Kansas, 44K employees nationwide, 30 commercial paper only recycling facilities. 2018 was the start of rough years for all recycling due to the China ban. Costs have increased 30% while material value has declined 50% in the last 3 years.

- Questions were asked about residential contamination rates, Mr. Blessing reported around 25%. Also noted that commination rates were higher in residential recycling vs. commercial recycling.
Talked about what recycling is not (feel good) and what recycling is (commodity market). WM is working on strategies for their program including education and outreach. Also piloting every other week recycling schedule. There are several advantages to this approach including less trucks on the road, less contamination, larger recycle bins. Johnson Counties “unlimited recycling” policy is helping with these changes.

- Several conversations sparked about the validity of only bi-monthly pickups and if that would be accepted by cities and residents.
- Also, several conversations had about the cost of recycling vs trash. Recycling costs about 1/3 of the cost of trash disposal.

The main points were that contamination remains one of the biggest issues driving up costs and market demand remains one of the biggest hinderances on the growth of recycling.

**Ripple Glass Partnership Discussion – Piercyn Charbonneau**

Johnson County DHE and Ripple Glass are exploring the possibility of a formal partnership that will be beneficial to both parties. Ripple is trying to expand service options in Johnson County, but cost is one of the biggest roadblocks. They would need more commercial customers to drive down those costs. Need better route density for less transportation. Discussed a pilot program to really track 10-12 businesses and see the diversion rates and reduction in regular trash costs. The committee agreed we need more glass recycling in Johnson County. Legal and conflict of interest issues still being researched. Ripple is the only glass end-recycler in the KC region.

- Questions/discussion about contamination rates in glass recycling bins. Piercyn noted that glass recycling is very low in the KC region and across the US. In most cases it is less than 3%.

**JCDHE Program Updates**

The following environmental updates were provided:

- HHW and Programs: Trent Thompson- Putting the finishing touches on the CIP for the new HHW facility. It is extremely important this passes due to the current HHW being demolished in July of 2023. The timeframe is very tight. Property acquisition scheduled for Q4 of this year. Finalizing the HHW collection numbers for required state reporting. Covid was interesting and caused obvious operational issues. Also, a hiring freeze was put on JoCo staff right after two HHW technicians left the organization. This resulted in fewer staff to take care of fewer appointments. Consequently, there was a 22% decrease in residential appointments. However, the amount of recycled wastes and non-hazardous waste was only down 8%. Strangely the amount of hazardous waste was only down 1%. This represents an increase of 14% total weight per residential drop off. Appointment wait times were up to 10 weeks at one point. The HHW is now currently fully staffed and taking the max amount of appointments per hour. Expanding additional appointment times is being piloted soon. Introduced new employee Eric Nelson, Senior Tech at the HHW.
• Sustainability: Brian Alferman- Updated work on the Regional Climate Action Plan. Executive summary being presented to MARC policy committees and was sent out the SW committee members during the meeting. Working on getting local city governments on-board. Solid waste goals: Reduce methane emissions from landfills and increase waste diversion. The plan is for more education/outreach and better management of methane capture systems at the landfills. Noted we are eliminating electric hand driers in all JoCo buildings due to sanitary concerns. Moved to paper towels that will eventually be composted. Piloting program at the new courthouse building that was designed for this process.
  o Questions asked about if JoCo will eventually go back to electric and that is unknown at this time.

• Education and Outreach: Brandon Hearn- Reported on the recycling waste audit campaign. Spring Hill community has been contacted to participated in an audit and education event. During hauler inspections it was noted there was a high level of confusion and lack of standardized bins. Hauler noted high contamination rates from that community. JoCo DHE will also be working with Constable Sanitation targeting HOA’s for audits. It is much easier to coordinate. Working on a new survey attached to the HHW scheduler to capture more relevant information from our residents. How many times they used the HHW, How long waste store in the household, etc. Also working on an external survey to collect more information and get the word out about the HHW and what surrounds operations and disposal.

• Landfills: Craig Wood- Updated current inspection schedule. All solid waste facilities in compliance. New cell at the JoCo landfill should help minimize odors due to the depth. There is also a new cell at the C/D landfill. Construction in JoCo has been exponential therefore lots of tonnages being collected. Talked to JoCo planning about the potential partnership with MO organics and the construction of a composting facility. They are putting it in their long-term planning goals. JoCo is growing at a rate of 10K residents per year so Craig talked about the importance of proper planning. Reported on the illegal C/D dumping going on near Gardner Lake at a personal property. A citation letter was crafted, checked by legal, and sent to the resident. Additional actions will be taken.

• Green Business/Haulers: Charles Marx- Updated hauler inspections and hauler compliance. 30 inspections completed in 2019. New tracking method in place for adequate compliance coverage. Three complaints last year, two involving yard waste comingled with trash, the other one being plastic bags escaping a trash truck. Started the process of licensing haulers for 2021. A few applications have already come in. A few changes were made to the application for Code compliance clarity. Green Business: A few minor changes were made to the GB application. Food diversion and assistance is on the application. Charles asked for feedback from the committee on weather or not to make this required of an elective. The general feedback was to make it optional at this
point with Covid concerns. Also, Charles is reaching out to the cities and their environmental councils for help getting the word out about the GB program.

Other Business, Announcements, and Conversations:
None

Public Comment
None

Meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting - The next meeting of the SWMC is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10th, 2021.

c: Ed Eilert, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners
   Solid Waste Management Committee
   Tom Winn, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, NEO
   Penny Postoak-Ferguson, County Manager
   Donald D. Jarrett, Chief Counsel, BOCC
   Larry McAulay, Legal Services Director
   Gayla Speer, Johnson County Conservation District
   Darryl Basham, Waste Management
   Nolan Sunderman, City of Shawnee