Boulder County Resource Conservation Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes – September 28, 2022

Present:
Brandon Hill – Resource Central (Vice-chair)
Andrew Sawusch – Town of Erie
Matt LeBeau – At Large
Tim Towndrow – Republic Services
Eryka Thorley – Town of Nederland
Mircalla Wozniak - At Large
Dan Matsch – Town of Lyons
Elizabeth Szorad – City of Lafayette
Charles Kamenides – City of Longmont
Meghan Wiebe – At large
Cody Lillstrom – Boulder County RCD
Kayla Betzold – City of Louisville
Suzanne Jones – Eco-Cycle
Eric Loof – Western Disposal
Lauren Folkerts – City of Boulder

Active Members Not Present:
David Snapp – At large (Chair)
Bridget Johnson – Town of Jamestown
Caitlyn Stafford – Superior
Vacant – Town of Ward
Vacant – CU Recycling

RCAB Staff Liaison:
Noah Eisenman – Boulder County RCD

Guests:
Dan Hoback – Town of Erie
Jamie Harkins – City of Boulder
Susie Hidalgo-Fahring - City Council
Chandra Valenza – Boulder County RCD
Jace Driver – CDPHE
Mark Persichetti – City of Louisville

1. Call to Order / Introductions
Brandon Hill called the meeting to order at 4:48pm.
David Snapp is on vacation, so Brandon is filling in as chair.

2. Approval of June 2022 minutes
Brandon asked if the July 2022 Minutes could be approved. Eryka Thorley had one amendment – “C&D program is run through building permits.”
Charles Kamenides motioned to approve the minutes. Tim Towndrow seconded the motion, followed by unanimous RCAB approval.

3. Statewide Diversion Rates & Statewide Organics Management presentation by Jace Driver
Statewide Organics Management Plan | Department of Public Health & Environment (colorado.gov)

Here to talk about the organics management plan they recently finished up. Jace works on recycling, waste diversion, collection, and regulatory oversight as well compost lead for the division.

Highlights from the presentation include:
- Reporting comes from the facility level
  - Directly reported to CDPHE from the facilities and is voluntarily done
  - 182 recycling facilities and vary in size
- 16% MSW diversion rate for 2021
  - Not particularly great
  - Look at it on per capita basis
    - Looking at amount of waste generated per resident is like other states, around 7lbs per person per day
- Waste composition study to see what’s in the MSW stream
  - Food waste and yard waste = 1.7 million tons disposed of in last year, 28%
  - Cardboard capture is under 50% using this data
- Trends and issues
  - Compost feedstocks and cardboard are on a solidly linear trend upwards
  - Paper is on decline with the dying of print media
  - Glass took a hefty jump when Momentum came online in 2017, doubled glass recycling
  - Plastic is steadily rising
  - Stagnation of recycling in CO
- China’s National Sword impacted diversion, started seeing impacts 3 or 4 years ago
  - Plastic is the most impacted material stream
  - More plastic being processed in the US and have also increased landfilling of plastic
  - Plastic market values bottomed out in 2020
- CDPHE Grants
  - Recycling Resource Economic Opportunity (RREO) Grant
    - Awarded nearly $25million
    - NextCycle program
    - Statewide
  - Front Range Waste Diversion Grant
    - Specific to 13 front range counties
    - Began in 2019
    - Up to $15million per year when fully funded
    - Enterprise fund
  - Funding comes from landfill tipping fees
- Recently passed legislation
  - Circular Economy Center will open in 2023
    - Use funding from RREO & FRWD
  - Extended Producer Responsibility to begin in 2025
- Organics Management Plan
  - We don’t need to rely on a foreign market to know what to do with organics
    - Can be managed locally
  - Access to curbside or drop off organics doesn’t mean it’s being used
- Not always free
  - 2.5 million tons of organics available for diversion and only about 160k tons of current capacity
    - Will need to increase infrastructure dramatically
  - Significant burning of waste still occurring
  - Going forward
    - Regulation change for what compost facilities can take food waste
    - Develop market in agricultural world

Questions or comments for Jace:

Jamie Harkins: Clarify the difference between feedstock, compost, and organic materials.

Jace: Things that organic that won’t typically be composted. The data was taken from disparate composition studies, so they needed to have a catchall.

Zan Jones: In regard to phasing in yard waste disposal, if you had a magic wand what would that look like?

Jace: Not a one size fits all will fit for Colorado. There are differences in density of population, education, funding, etc. Phasing idea was to target the front range with populations over 50,000 then go to rural areas. Have stipulations in those rural areas for exemptions.

Elizabeth Szorad: In regard to domestic paper mills, status update on the possible foreign funded mills that would be created in the U.S.?

Jace: Haven’t heard anything about significantly increased paper capacity. He doesn’t get national data.

Dan Matsch: Heartland bumped up the organics in the short period it was open. Does that mean it’s the packaged products they were processing there that bumped that up?

Jace: Can assume it was all reported as food waste. It was the things that were difficult to handle at a typical facility like liquids. Also, a lot of food waste increased due to Heartland.

Elizabeth: With more plastic manufacturing facilities coming down the line do you foresee accepting lower grade plastics in recycling?

Jace: Low grade plastics are not very valuable. Essentially taking them to keep them out of the landfill. When EPR comes into play it will change everything. The funding will be there to recycle these materials. Can create incentive for producer to find a better solution for the lower value plastic. Can it be made from something more readily usable? Things are going to change and there will be positive steps in packaging.
4. Community Updates

Meghan Weibe - Plugs in for FRWD grant program and NextCycle CO. For the FRWD grant program there is an RFA opening October 4th. Meghan is a FRWD ambassador so she is happy to speak with anyone who wants to know more about that opportunity. NextCycle CO application opens October 18th. A lot of pathways for grant funding and for business development. To contact: frwdambassador@recycle.com

Zan – RRS and EcoCycle were awarded the technical assistance service provider phase 2 contract which will help cities and counties who need zero waste assistance. Launching the technical assistance program by November that will involve things like hosting workshops for cities interested in doing different projects.

Jamie – Made some changes to UZWO in City of Boulder. In consultation with Western and EcoCycle they loosened requirements of front of house compost bins and provided recognition of and guidelines for businesses that want to keep the front of house bins. Working on public space bins that have been sources of contamination. Will be getting the message out via social media, newsletters, and other news outlets. Focus on getting a quality compost stream and not quantity. This is Boulder’s opportunity to accelerate into a circular economy.

Eric Loof (Western Disposal) – From a hauler’s perspective on compost contamination the haulers are doing visual inspections. Communicating back to customers if they find contamination. Once they take possession, they are going through it and being familiar with what’s in the hauling.

Dan Matsch – A1’s primary message is that we need to be monitoring contamination all the way back to generation. Mostly the commercial stream that they are challenged with. Any one business can spoil the whole load. We need point people at every point of contact to implement the changes they need to see.

Andrew Sawusch (Town of Erie) – RFP scheduled to close on Friday for organized residential curbside waste management services i.e., pay as you throw single hauler services for residents who are not currently included in the contract. Zero waste policy for town facilities from May-August – diverted 900 pounds of compost from landfill with minimum contamination. One of the larger items, January 23, 2022- grant 1 time waiver to accept Marshall Fire asbestos. Extended the waiver until 2023. Significant reduction of materials being disposed of.

Tim Towndrow (Republic Services) – Republic expanded hauling operations for trash and recycling to Western slope. Acquired two independent haulers over there.

Elizabeth – Starting new single hauler contract with Republic that includes weekly compost collection. Running a call for artists to find 6 pieces of art to place on recycling containers downtown. Working on circular economy guide set to launch on November 15th.

Dan Matsch from EcoCycle POV – Boulder County grant to do some demo projects demonstrating small, conditionally exempt composting facilities with simplified version of
technology that will demonstrate the technology able to be located within a community. Make connection of keeping organic waste local and go directly to farmers that can strengthen our food systems. Also doing carbon farming demonstrations with a two-year study with EcoGro.

Dan Matsch from Lyons POV – Small victory in that the new board of trustees has instituted regular meetings with all board and commission chairs. Fantastic to finally sit down with the board on a regular basis and put together work plans. Hoping to get back to having a sustainability coordinator.

Kayla Betzold (Louisville) – Focusing on compost contamination education and outreach. Is there a more regional approach to talking about this? Is there a better strategy that might be employed? What are the next steps?

- Dan M. – At the top of the Composting Council agenda is to create a state-wide messaging. Don’t want to create more confusion. Isolate streams to minimize contamination.
- Zan – EcoCycle would be interested in coordinating with other cities to get out the same message. Can use the “Dirty Dozen of Compost” document already made.
- Don’t want different language or wording. Make decisions on a united front.

5. Suggestions for upcoming RCAB meetings

- Proposed by Brandon - EcoCycle’s Dirty Dozen of Compost and how to use it effectively
- Proposed by Zan - Plastic Pollution Reduction Act
- S-Tax presentation by Susie Strife, Tim Broderick or Zac Swank
- Proposed by Noah and Cody - Boulder County Zero Waste grants – there is $100,000 to use for resource conservation projects. We could run through the applications together as a board. Needs to be done before the November meeting so it can get to the commissioners before the holidays. If you are applying for the grant, you would only recuse yourself from scoring your own proposal but can score others. Leaning towards presenting proposals and creating sub-committee to score.
  i. Send out proposals ahead of Oct meeting, look through proposals at the meeting and then create a sub-committee to score the proposals.

6. Adjourn

Brandon Hill adjourned the meeting at 6:18p.m.