



Resource Conservation Advisory Committee (RCAB)

Boulder County Staff Liaison: Meghan Wiebe, mwiebe@bouldercounty.org

Meeting Address: Boulder County Recycling Center • 1901 63rd Street, Boulder, CO 80306 • www.BoulderCounty.gov

Boulder County Resource Conservation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes – August 23, 2023

Board Members Present:

David Snapp – CDPHE (Chair)
Mircalla Wozniak – At Large (vice-chair)
Zan Jones – EcoCycle
Angie Gilbert – CU Recycling
Joe Pitts – Resource Central
Alexis Bullen- Town of Superior
Cody Lillstrom – Boulder County Resource Conservation Division
Eric Loof – Western Disposal
Charles Kamenides – City of Longmont
Lizzie Szorad – City of Lafayette
Bridget Johnson – Jamestown
Kayla Betzold – City of Louisville

Board Members not present:

Leah Haney – Town of Nederland
Tim Towndrow – Republic Services
Lauren Folkerts – City of Boulder
Dan Hoback – Town of Erie
Kathy Carroll – Town of Lyons
Matt LeBeau – At Large
Brandon Hill – At Large

County Liaison

Meghan Wiebe – Boulder County RCD

Guests:

Chandra Valenza – Boulder County RCD
Jamie Harkins – City of Boulder
Eryka Thorley – Town of Erie
Marti Matsch – Ecocycle
Rick Kattar – Boulder County RCD

1. Call to Order / Introductions

David Snapp called the meeting to order at 4:52 p.m.

2. Approval of July 26, 2023 Minutes

David asked if the July 26, 2023 meeting minutes could be approved.

Zan Jones asked for an amendment to the minutes. The sentence in question entails Marti Matsch telling the board that the Boulder County Recycling Center has never accepted #3,6,7 plastics. There was discussion about what was said at the meeting. There was consensus about how to make an amendment to that sentence.

Charles Kamenides motioned to approve, seconded by Mircalla Wozniak, followed by an RCAB approval.

3. Boulder County Resource Conservation Division Updates

Resource Conservation Division staff presented various updates for the board.

Meghan Wiebe has been hired as the new Zero Waste Strategic Advisor and will be the staff liaison for RCAB from here on out. As the liaison, Meghan talked through some of the board bylaws and highlighted the four duties the board has. These duties are: policy development, program review/recommendations, communications from the board meetings to their communities, and review of the Zero Waste Funding.

Cody Lillstrom updated the board on the Circular Economy Funding, previously called “Zero Waste Funding.” Last year was one of the only years where they received fewer requested dollars than what was available. There are two funding categories this

year and he is hoping that it will be a little more competitive. Applications are due Friday, September 8.

Cody asked for three volunteers to be on the review subcommittee to go through the applications. Joe Pitts, Bridget Johnson, and Eric Loof volunteered to be on this subcommittee.

Chandra Valenza updated the board on education and outreach as well as the Hazardous Materials Management Facility. In terms of the education and outreach, there are new wayfinding and educational displays at the recycling center that include Spanish translations. Outreach tables at different events have been a good way to connect with residents.

The Hazardous Materials Management Facility (HMMF) has been doing lots of outreach with underprivileged residents. HMMF staff has hosted collection events throughout the county. The Home HazMat Pick-Up program is one way they are supporting older adults that may not be able to drive or don't have access to reliable transportation. This program has been advertised via Meals on Wheels.

Rick Kattar updated the board on the recycling center retrofit happening now. There are three major upgrades: two optical sorters, new eddy current, and rewiring the whole system so it is one flowing system. The reason for the optical sorters is to sustain the end markets with the fiber material stream. The new eddy current replaces the 22-year-old one. It will recover more aluminum on the back end.

Mircalla asked how Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will affect the recycling center. Rick said that EPR will facilitate free recycling to all Colorado residents which will open avenues of flow from all over the state. The recycling infrastructure that already exists will be important to get all this material. The Boulder County Recycling Center wants to be in a position where we can accept a variety of material and efficiently process it in different parts of the system without having to utilize the whole plant.

Bridget Johnson asked if the recycling center will lower gate fees with EPR. Rick said that the idea is you would eliminate gate fees since packaging industry will compensate. These details have not been decided on.

The last update came from Marti and Rick. Previously, Ecocycle and the County were going to change the guidelines to exclude black plastics and plastics #3,6,7 on the "no" part of the guidelines list. The update is that the guidelines will no longer be changing.

Marti told the board that they believe these materials are still problematic, but they want to change the approach in addressing the issues with these plastics in a less problematic way. There were some misperceptions and confusion about the new messaging. Marti emphasized the notion that Ecocycle is wondering if we *should* recycle these problematic plastics when we are building towards circularity and a less toxic world. We are transparent about where our material goes, and they want to be honest in what plastics are better than others.

Ecocycle will be leaning on the procurement areas of businesses and organizations to keep plastics #3,6,7, and black plastics out of circulation. Marti urged people to avoid purchasing these materials in the first place so the consumer doesn't have them. The Sustainable Takeout Container Guide was created in collaboration with Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE) to help businesses find alternatives.

Rick added to this discussion by letting the board know that the recoverability of black plastics is problematic as the optical sorters have a hard time "seeing" these

materials. The marketability of black PET is a problem, not so much for black polypropylene. These problematic plastics are going to come to the recycling center by default so it would be good to find end markets.

Angie Gilbert asked if any black plastics have been certified safe. Marti responded that she is not aware of any certification process or close regulation for plastic safety.

Mircalla asked, in response to procurement, how do we tackle larger businesses, like Costco, that use black plastic in their packaging. Rick replied that we need to push toward alternatives that take larger businesses on the path to success with the same value from the black plastic packaging.

Marti ended the conversation by letting the board know that if any of them want to do an education campaign to reach out to her.

4. Selecting a new RCAB priority

The board had wanted to work on creating language for a universal recycling ordinance that municipalities could use throughout the county. Since the TASP application for help with this ordinance language was not accepted, David thinks the board should select a new task. David said he would like to have a discussion and send out a poll to decide on a new priority for the board.

Zan brought up the notion that RCAB should decide on a priority based on where they can make a difference versus big issues that are unattainable. What can the board realistically and feasibly do?

Zan asked that a subcommittee be formed to dig deeper into some of the topics and then come up with a few deliverables that the board can vote on. Mircalla, Zan, Meghan, and David volunteered to be on that subcommittee.

5. Community Updates

Zan Jones for Ecocycle: Political signs can be taken to the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials facility. The signs will be used for reuse or recycle.

A lot of work has been going into the Sustainable Takeout Container Guide.

Angie Gilbert for CU: CU had a “Circular Economy Sale” with Resource Central. Materials from the Spring move out was used for the sale and sold to students in the new school year at minimal cost. About 120 students came through to get items.

Mircalla Wozniak: Eric Loof helped her obtain a dumpster from Western to dispose of the concrete in her backyard.

Jamie Harkins for City of Boulder: Deconstruction Working Group meetings have been going well. The meetings are for contractors and partners to talk about the ordinance and see what’s working and what needs to be improved. With the information from the meetings city employees will go back to City Council with recommendations for how to tweak the code requirements on deconstruction.

City Council is also interested in exploring “Design for Deconstruction.” They want to know how they can make some in-roads on how to build buildings in City of Boulder in a way that they can be deconstructed most efficiently and easily.

David Snapp on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) work done at CDPHE: The Producer Responsibility Organization that was selected is responsible for contracting with a separate company to conduct a state-wide needs assessment. That contractor will provide recommendations on how to move forward with funding and financing the EPR. The contractor has been selected.

6. Adjourn

David adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m.