

Waste Equity Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday May 19, 2020

12:30 – 2:00

Meeting Minutes

Waste Equity Advisory Group Members in Attendance:

AJ Simpson	City of Roses Disposal and Recycling
Carl Peters	Recology
Brian Heiberg	Heiberg Garbage and Recycling
Val Solorzano	Chick of All Trades
Laura Tokarski	Trash for Peace
Dom DeWeese	ORTOP
Alex Witter	Chetco Construction

Waste Equity Advisory Group Members Absent:

Dom DeWeese	ORTOP
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Waste Equity Community Consultants in Attendance:

Rob Nathan
Nate McCoy
Liz Start

Meeting Facilitators: Try Excellence – Dr Steven Holt, Ericka Warren

BPS Staff in Attendance: Arianne Sperry, Josephine Davis

Community Members in Attendance: Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA), Dean Kampfer (Waste Management), Jackie Lang (Waste Management), Taylor Cass Talbott (WIEGO)

Welcome

Dr Holt welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed Zoom meeting logistics, roll call, 7 principles of agreement.

Equity vs Equality, Review of Equity Definitions

Dr Holt shared an image illustrating differences between Equality and Equity – two images facing a ball game with a fence barrier. In the first of two images, all three people have one crate to stand on. In other words, there is “equality,” because everyone has the same number of crates. ... In contrast, in the second image there is “equity” — each person has the number of crates they need to fully enjoy the game. Group thoughts:

- Everyone can see the game in the Equity image, better to focus on Equity vs. Equality.
- Not everyone has the same access to the same solutions. We should seek out equitable solutions not equal solutions.

- In the equality picture everyone is provided the same resources but not everyone is starting from the same baseline.
- Other versions of this visualization tool have a third image where the wall is removed and labeled “liberation” symbolizing the complete absence of all barriers for everyone.

Reviewed BPS, Try Excellence and KAPWA Consulting definitions of equity. Group thoughts:

- BPS definition doesn’t necessarily capture action, Try Excellence definition does. Identifying and eliminating barriers should be the goal: actions are louder than words.
- Working toward equity may feel like a takeaway for some; systemic and programmatic change often impacts people in a personal way.
- KAPWA definition is a great fusion of BPS/Try Excellence definitions; highlights opportunities that this group can consider when creating vision and goals. Helps us narrow in on what we trying to get at, what needs to shift within systems and institutions.

Advisory Group Principles and Values

Before group can develop their own definition of equity, it is important to define core principles and values that will inform our practice and approach. Some work has already been done - the Waste Equity Workplan and 2018 franchise review provided two guiding principles:

- Focus on increasing the participation of women and minority workers
- Reducing barriers to economic opportunities for minority-owned and woman-owned companies

Do these initial guiding principles still serve us? Do they represent what we are trying to achieve? Are there others that need to be added? Group thoughts:

- We need to rethink how we address barriers, not all barriers are not in control of City; our work needs to be about creating opportunities – this is something that the City can control.
- We need to take a broader approach and include everyone that is contributing to the functionality of the waste system, not just franchisees and haulers. How do we make sure that all perspectives and voices are considered through this process?
- Waste picking is still criminalized, there are folks contributing to the system without getting recognition.
- Who are the services for, who has access, is service being done equitably?
- Access to capital is a key issue. Financing equipment can be difficult to secure; in general and historically, banks have not served communities of color equitably when it comes to lending.
- Explore mentorship between large and small companies, apprenticeships etc. while keeping in mind and addressing the assumption/fear that you mentoring companies are training their future competition.
- Draw from equity work in the construction sector: partnerships on projects, large/small companies work side by side, small company gets experience, and both get financial benefits.
- In theory Portland’s system allows “anyone to become a hauler” if they obtain the required permit, meet certain guidelines and secure equipment (vs other cities the region where the only way to enter the system is to purchase an existing franchise). Despite this structure, it’s still hard to enter the system.

- We need to be careful to not shoot for the stars and be too quick to push for progress without addressing the root issues. Need to set attainable goals.
- What have we learned from COVID-19, how have service levels changed, what has been the impact to hauler income, are there business models that have proven to be more resilient? How can we use lessons learned to inform our process?
- Create a campaign to educate and increase awareness in the community about the industry, build a pipeline for the workforce.
- Could Portland Hauler Assoc. facilitate relationship building/mentorship opportunities?
- Stronger, narrower language is needed; “reducing” and “increasing” not firm or specific enough terms to increase accountability.
- We need to consider what the City’s role and accountability is, what would the group like to see from City?
 - Implement stepping stones, facilitate resources to help break down the barriers
 - Conduct more research about who contributes to the waste collection system (be more inclusive of the informal players)
 - Be open to modifying specific policies so that more voices can be included
 - Provide incentive to larger companies to mentor smaller companies to learn the ins and outs of operating a hauling company like dispatching, etc.
 - Identify size categories, what does it mean to be small/mid/large size company? (could we use route count? Gross revenue?)
 - Firm expectations/accountability, transparency
 - Replicate contractor participation goals to work with MWESB companies
 - Help facilitate pathways to banking/financing sources.
 - Offer equipment purchase subsidies
 - Integrate Metro representation into this process, their perspective is missing, and they are a significant stakeholder.
 - City could work with Metro and Housing bonds with new developments to identify mentorship/partnership opportunities to service new affordable housing developments that will be coming to market (3-5 years).
 - Be a conduit to redistribute resources – consider designating certain franchises or new customers for women and minority companies so that they avoid placing these companies into open market.
 - Consider commercial sector franchise system to create more opportunities.

Next Steps/Wrap Up

- Notes from this meeting will be compiled, key themes and ideas will be identified and summarized – will email back out to group to make sure thoughts were captured accurately. Not all ideas will make it to our final definitions, but its not personal - just the reality, especially if our ultimate goal is to lift up companies that are below the sight line to give them access.
- Today’s discussion first step in developing goals and identifying performance metrics to measure progress over time.
- Hoping to add another meeting for June – originally scheduled for 6.16, proposing to change to 6.9 and 6.30, let Arianne if those dates won’t work.