



**Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Universal Recycling Ordinance Phase 2 Committee
DRAFT Minutes**

February 16, 2011 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street, Austin, Texas
Council Chambers

Board Members in Attendance:

Rick Cofer, Maydelle Fason & Rahm McDaniel

Staff in Attendance:

Jessica King

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Rick Cofer called the Subcommittee Meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
 - a. **Introduction of the Solid Waste Advisory Commission Committee Members** Chair Rick Cofer gave a brief introduction and stated the purpose of the committee. This subcommittee will be reforming the Universal Recycling Ordinance, Phase 2. Phase 2 addresses issues specific to retail, industrial, manufacturing and food service industry. The goal is to divert organic waste from local landfills and to create value from the processing of them.
 - b. **Inform audience of process and rules** – Staff has recommended that the committee limit gatherings to 6 meetings.
2. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

Sharon Watkins of Chez Zee wanted to remind all in attendance that Austin has approximately 4,500 restaurants and 1,300 trailers. There are currently only 2 organic providers and no single stream providers to this sector.
3. **REGULAR AGENDA**
 - a. **Staff presentation on discussions with various sectors** –
 - i. **Retail Sector** – Staff met with the retail sector in 2010 and gathered research and information. Significant staffing changes have occurred since the last meeting. Bob Gedert, Director of Solid Waste Services, will restart discussions.
 - ii. **Industrial/Manufacturing** – Staff could not identify one signal key stakeholder association in this sector. Director Bob Gedert will engage with various businesses to begin discussions with this group.
 - iii. **Food and Beverage Industry** (Hotel/Motel, Event Facilities, etc) – Several members of the hospitality industry have participated in the Universal Recycling Ordinance Phase 1 discussions. Discussions to this point have been with independent groups. Staff will begin discussions to include an expanded scope of this industry.
 - iv. **Restaurants** – Staff held meetings twice a month for 6 months, there is a large disparity in the types of restaurants. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work for this sector. Key concerns were: cost of service, increase in frequency of services, cost of

infrastructure, interior/exterior space limitations, back of house recyclables (i.e. large containers usually plastic or tin), front of house materials(i.e. plastics, glass, bottles, jars, cardboard, paper, wax paper, aseptic containers, aluminum, tin, plastic film), franchise purchasing policies, back of house organic waste, front of house organic waste which has a high contamination rate, stand alone businesses vs. leased properties and safety issues. Stakeholders recommended a green business program which would allow those stakeholders who cannot achieve waste reduction to take other greening efforts. Darryl Wittle with the Greater Austin Restaurant Association provided comment and feedback.

- b. Staff update on pilot projects to explore recycling and composting options among food service provider** – Funding has been set aside for recycling and composting pilots in participating restaurants. Staff recommends starting with a 6 month pilot, hopefully to run from April to September. The goal of the pilot is to address the key issues that restaurant stakeholders come across during the pilot. Based on stakeholder feedback, staff would like the pilot to be highly flexible and offer a variety of methods for the restaurants. The pilot will include approximately 15 different restaurants with a variety of type of restaurant.
- c. Discussion and possible action on objectives and time table** – Discussion on future meeting dates and scheduling. Staff will present a proposed calendar at the next meeting. No action taken

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Overview of Organic Waste Diversion resources and city facilities
- Solicit an evaluation of the organic diversion capacity within the community
- Overview of what comparable cities have done in terms of best practices and ordinances
- Pilot Proposal and budget and timeline with goals and metrics
- Solicit the feedback and statements of retail, industrial and food and beverage sectors
- Glass overview by Bob Gedert
- Address stakeholder concerns with appropriate representatives (i.e. health dept., OSHA etc.)
- Hornsby Bend inventory of types of materials (digesters vs. composting)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rick Cofer adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m. without objection.

GREATER AUSTIN RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY of AUSTIN
SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION
UNIVERSAL RECYCLING ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

February 16, 2011

With a shared goal of long term environmental sustainability in mind, and in possession of an acute sense of social responsibility, The Greater Austin Restaurant Association applauds the efforts of the City of Austin aimed at creating a universal recycling ordinance. We are grateful for the opportunity to be involved in this effort as stakeholders in the community, and we support any attempts to promote a transparent and inclusive approach to pluralistic local government.

As stated previously before City Council, the Greater ARA supports reasonable but necessary public oversight related to environmental impact. For instance, we pride ourselves on our unified efforts towards wastewater treatment and disposal, manifested in an almost universal utilization of commercial grease catchers in our restaurants.

To this end, members of the Greater Austin Restaurant Association have participated in a year-long study group comprised of restaurateurs of different stripes, exploring different approaches to recycling and becoming more educated on the salient issues for our businesses.

With regard to the creation and implementation of a local recycling ordinance, we believe the issues pertinent to the restaurant industry to include the following:

- Situational commonality of operations, or lack thereof;
- Procedural processes and logistics, including time, material and spatial requirements;
- Financial burden of implementation, including commercial design standards;
- Reporting requirements and responsibilities;
- Legal liability for rummaging injuries to the public, including children and the homeless;
- Sanitation challenges and health code compliance, including punitive action for non-compliance of either the health code or a recycling ordinance;
- Responsibility for education and training of management, staff and the public;
- Public relations regarding waste management.

Upon the implementation of any recycling ordinance, we support, philosophically, incentives for compliance versus penalties for non-compliance, and we would argue for the inclusion of opt-out provisions and exemptions to any such ordinance, as well as provisions for alternative compliance.

2

Finally, a number of our members have offered to participate in recycling pilot programs, should public funding become available, in order to further educate our members, the community and this committee regarding the potential opportunities and potential consequences of such an ordinance.

In addition, I would like to inform this committee that the Greater Austin Restaurant Association is in step with the Texas Restaurant Association and the National Restaurant Association with regard to this issue. TRA CEO Richie Jackson, an Austin resident, is presently serving on this year's NRA Committee for Sustainability and Social Responsibility.

In addition, I am presently serving as the chairman for this year's TRA committee of the same name. At our last state board meeting in Galveston in September, TRA members expressed their concern for Austin's recycling initiative. I believe it would behoove the City of Austin to continue to weigh carefully any actions regarding this issue and to be mindful of the two sides of social responsibility with regard to restaurateur stakeholder interests.

Darryl R. Wittle / President, Greater Austin Restaurant Association



**Solid Waste Advisory Commission
Universal Recycling Ordinance Phase 2 Committee
DRAFT Minutes**

March 21, 2011 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street, Austin, Texas
Room 1029

Board Members in Attendance:

Rick Cofer & Rahm McDaniel

Staff in Attendance:

Bob Gedert, Jessica King, Tammie Williamson & Aiden Cohen

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Rick Cofer called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
 - a. **Introduction of the Solid Waste Advisory Commission Committee Members**
 - b. **Inform audience of process and rules**
2. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**
No citizen communication
3. **REGULAR AGENDA**
 - a. **Discussion and action on meeting schedule** – May 21st typo on the meeting schedule will be corrected as June 21st Meeting. Mobile Food Vendors will be added to the May 17th meeting agenda. A motion to accept the meeting schedule with the above corrections was approved on a Commissioner Rahm McDaniel motion, on a 2-0-0 vote.
 - b. **Discussion regarding solid waste characterization of restaurants** – Staff presented on research findings. Jessica King presented on a Waste Characterization Study from 1999 in Fresno, California and the various materials that were found to be prevalent in the food service industry. General discussion focused on 3 main materials: food, composite paper and uncoated corrugated cardboard. The subcommittee and stakeholders agreed that these 3 materials were representative and relatively consistent with Austin's restaurant waste stream. Director, Bob Gedert, discussed Standard Industrial Codes (SIC).
 - c. **Discussion of waste management criteria options for restaurants** – The subcommittee sought information from stakeholders. Staff will research management criteria options in peer cities such as: Seattle, Portland, New York, Chicago, Columbus, Phoenix or other peer cities and present them at the next meeting.
4. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
Subcommittee would like a Water Utility representative, a W/WW Commission Representative and/or an Austin Water Utility representative to attend the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rick Cofer adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m. without objection.