

PAG Meeting 6/9/21

Start time 9:32

Attendees:

Dustin Deel, Weatherford
Nick Williams, Stephenville
Robert Berndt, Tarrant County
Robert Smouse, FW
Jeremy Hutt, Cleburne
Trey Yelverton, Arlington
Sunada Katragadda, Arlington
Ami Reeder, Denton
Brian Boerner, Denton
Howard Redfearn, City of Mansfield
Edith Marvin, NCTCOG
Tamara Cook, NCTCOG
Cassidy Campbell, NCTCOG
Elena Berg, NCTCOG
Michael Carleton, AZB
Rachel Hering, KTB
Michael Oden
Jennifer Wells, TCEQ
Nora Coronado, Arlington

Formalize the PAG Discussion

Dustin D- Is the PAG going to be a subcommittee of the RCC (Resource Conservation Council) and will it focus on the western region?

Cassidy C- Would need to take that back to the COG team and see if that's feasible to have it be a subcommittee and the COG would be interested in being a part of it but can't decide that just yet.

Michael- Could go either way, whether it's a part of the COG or separate entity. Up to the cities on how they would want it affiliated with the COG moving forward. Gave the SWS group as an example. They meet periodically to see how they can do things cooperatively. They have training opportunities etc.

Robert S.-Which alternatives would/should be advanced through an established PAG, an Agency or collaboratively with interested organizations by activity/alternative?

Michael- This could be something that goes through one city to go out for grant. One example of how the PAG could work is Weatherford, which is evaluating a composting project and they are looking for sludge etc. This would help with improved communication within that region to know what options are available. Originally, Weatherford was not considering going to other cities with the project, but that is

now an option. Making recommendations will come to a head by the end of the year. Will there be interest by cities/counties once this study is complete? Will it continue and do you see a benefit in continuing to meet?

Brian B.- It is a conduit specific to that region, maybe report out to the RCC. Create synergy and resources within the region. A PAG is a basis for the agency. You'll still need an opportunity for regionalization but the formal side could springboard into the agency.

Michael- That was one of the tasks of that PAG, look at how you could possibly form an agency if there is an interest.

Cassidy C- Helpful to come back to this discussion after we discuss the alternatives. Might be helpful to know we don't have to make decisions today, it can evolve if we keep meeting. Even before the study we discussed having this group to provide guidance on the study, once we had the alternatives, then we could lock in on how to pursue alternatives. Membership might change over time. Include elected officials to help with big ticket items like creating a landfill etc. It would be helpful to have a mix of folks at the table guiding the discussion.

Robert S- The difficult decision is that we've talked about the PAG and there is a need for the alternatives, but its going to take one step at a time. Some organizations may need the PAG to collaborate on, but items like the landfill lends itself more to the agency function. At the end of the meeting, we need to come back to define what organizations want to participate.

Dustin D's chat comment- I think there is definitely interest from Weatherford to continue these meetings / discussions after the study is over, at least in a non-formal form. Obviously, there is a lot of MSW infrastructure needs on this side and we plan to be a part of its growth and progression. The more partnership and collaboration we get, only benefits us all. Even if it is just a quarterly lunch to spotlight hot topic issues, problems, etc. that this region is facing. Maybe something more formal grows from those needs.

Brian B- Believes this should be a city/county responsibility to have a PAG, not the COG.

Tamara C- Spoke more on the Regional Coordination Committee (*I think*) that has morphed into a regional group. She hasn't been involved in 7 years but could be similar/model for the PAG.

Alternative 1 WRSWMA Discussion

Brian B's chat comment- rework the name - Western Solid Waste Regional Management Agency (W-SWaRMA)

Robert S's chat comment- I think NTMWD was also created by a legislative act for water/wastewater utilities (mid 60's)?

Trey Y- What's the private sector role, why do we need a public agency vs. private?

Michael- To our knowledge they have not identified landfill capacity, seem unsure of the market for that facility (it is dependent on Fort Worth) especially if someone else builds a big facility. Nothing about this agency that would preclude a city from contracting out operations if they were to build a landfill. From a risk perspective, they don't know where that capacity would come from.

Brian B- Density is key, the centralized contracting an agency could provide could be helpful. You guarantee that 3rd party if you have density from a bigger agency.

Michael- Both WM & Republic felt it was easier for the local government to identify and secure a landfill location than for the private sector. Not that an agency couldn't instruct a 3rd party to do that. The risk is just too great for the private sector and there is concern about whether there is going to be enough waste. Efforts to get something in Palo Pinto county went nowhere.

Robert B- FYI - Tarrant County's FY2022 has already been submitted. No money until FY2023.

Howard R- Would eminent domain be available to the agency?

Michael- Member cities through Upper Sabine weren't limited to jurisdictional boundaries.

Michael's questions to Trey Y- Even though Arlington has capacity, do you see benefits in joining something like an agency?

Trey Y- Late to the game so haven't studied this in detail. Looking at the map and projected growth, it's clear we're going to struggle. Arlington has capacity, but it's still finite. From a long-term perspective, there needs to be planning for the next generation. We hope that waste management will find its footing but we would still want to be in the conversation. From a funding perspective I would be challenged. We have no need for a transfer station. Concerns about uniform garbage collection. They want control/responsibility over curbside program.

Alternative 2 & 3- Public Information Programs /Cooperative Marketing Recycling Discussion

None

Alternative 4- Increase Convenience Station & Recycling Center Discussion

Robert S- Started the voucher program with the HHW. This is something that the city would be interested in discussing with some of the cities listed. We think a model exists. Are nearby partners going to participate?

Michael- In the report, we tried to identify opportunities that make geographical sense. If you have 2-3 cities/counties could they work together on a project like this.

Nick- Right - We receive requests frequently for Convenience Stations and Recycling Centers

Alternative 5- Increase Organics Management Capacity Discussion

Brian B- Special Utility Districts that have their own package plants are hauling every day. Not just a program but training operators so you can manage the program more efficiently.

Dustin D's chat comment- They are in the early stages of developing a program.

Brian B- PFOS? The regulation of biosolids might limit the ability to use this material in a beneficial way. Be cautiously optimistic.

Robert S- Fort Worth does currently have a program with Republic but we know from the way the landfill is designed that at some point in the next 10 years there will be issues with maintaining the mulching on the landfill property and the city will have to address. Brian is correct on the PFOS, the regulations could create significant challenges.

Alternative 6- Cooperative Collection Services Discussion

Michael- Example - 5 cities in Parker County working under the same contract.

Alternative 7 Cooperative Disaster Debris Discussion

None

Alternative 8 Increase Transfer Station Discussion

None

Alternative 9 Increase Landfill Capacity Discussion

General Discussion

Michael- Are there benefits to cities working together?

Robert S- The most beneficial for FW, increasing landfill capacity is the alternative most needed. They are interested in advancing that alternative.

Michael- Any concerns about an agency being established, being left out in the cold? Is it more of a wait-and-see issue?

Howard R- As one of the larger/smaller communities, our concern is about being bullied by a bigger community. Personally, I think the private sector isn't going to do this in an efficient manner. Having every community have transfer/convenience stations isn't efficient either. There's just so much potential to deliver far better services at a better cost to residents if we do it on a collective basis.

Michael- Please send comments, emails into the next draft before it's submitted to the RCC. Is there more interest in workshop sessions to discuss this further? Which alternatives would you like to see for these workshops?

Brian B- An in-person workshop would be beneficial. We would get more responses.

Robert B's Chat Comment- We need to know about estimated cost about formalizing a PAG.

Dustin D's Chat Comment- It wouldn't hurt from my view to discuss the composting interests. I think we eventually plan to do that regardless. I am very open to other alternatives.

Robert S- 4 alternatives we've identified for our needs. Landfill, organics, convenience stations (we're still advancing that in our voucher program and could extend that), and formalizing PAG and the agency.

Michael- Look at PAG & Agency together, Organics & convenience stations, landfill capacity. Will work with the COG staff to set up some dates to do that. Look at what we can do to hybrid meeting in-person & online. We'll have workshops, present to the RCC. As we look at formalizing the PAG, the cost would be up to the members and what the role is. I don't anticipate a large cost because it's basically an organization to help establish training, public information programs etc. We're invested in the project and want to see this move forward but I will be available to assist in whatever way I can to get the PAG established and how we can move it forward. The final action by the RCC would be the acceptance of the study. Consider presenting to city council etc. and letting them know some of the issues facing the region and how you might want to move forward from that perspective.

Meeting Adjourned 11am