

## **A Report of the Recycling & Corporate Affairs Committee Meeting September 10, 2020**

A meeting of the Recycling and Corporate Affairs Committee was held on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. at the Authority's Administrative Office in Conway, South Carolina. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, notices setting forth the date, time, and place of the meeting were mailed to the news media.

Present were Committee Chairman Michael Hughes and Committee Members Pam Creech, W. Norfleet Jones and Ex Officio Committee Member Bo Ives. Other Board Members in attendance were Sam Johnson and Carl Schwartzkopf. Danny Knight, Executive Director and Directors Esther Murphy, Jan Bitting and Mike Bessant were in attendance. Other staff in attendance included Kendra Hooks, Victoria Johnson, Nannette Powell and Cecil Terry. Amelia Wood was present via teleconference call. There were no members of the public or media in attendance.

Mr. Hughes called the meeting to order and rendered the invocation. Mr. Jones led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Hughes asked for any revisions to the Agenda as contained in the Agenda Packet; however, there were none.

**Ms. Creech moved to approve the Agenda as presented. There was a second by Mr. Jones and the Motion was carried.**

### **Horry County Schools Recycling Programs Update- Cafeteria Recycling**

Mrs. Murphy indicated that Horry County Schools have started back this week. She stated that as of right now schools would be serving hot lunch. She commented that Smart Recycling would be collecting food waste from the schools that were participating in the program. Mrs. Murphy remarked that the amount of food waste collected this year would be significantly less than in the past due to many students attending school virtually.

Ms. Creech asked Mrs. Murphy why some of the schools were not participating in the food waste collection and if staff could talk to the principals and find out why. Mrs. Murphy commented that she would check with Mr. Porter about the schools not participating in the program.

### **Classroom/Office Paper Recycling**

Mrs. Murphy stated that classroom/office paper recycling collection program restarted on August 27, 2020. She commented that staff had started to monitor the containers at each school.

### **Talkin' Trash Program**

Mrs. Murphy stated that staff had modified the Talkin' Trash Program in order to ensure all students had the opportunity to participate in the program whether students were attending traditional or virtual classes. She commented that elementary school principals would have to agree to participate in order to make the program successful. Mrs. Murphy stated that she contacted Mark Porter, Executive Director of Elementary Schools and shared the revised guidelines. She

asked Mr. Porter for his assistance in determining the schools that wished to participate in the Talkin' Trash Program. She commented that the Talkin' Trash Program would need at least 15 schools to participate in order to efficiently continue the program.

Mr. Hughes asked Mrs. Murphy if she had heard back from the schools who wished to participate in the program. Mrs. Murphy stated that staff had not heard from any school as of yet but would be contacting Mr. Porter by the end of the week to ask if he had received any response from any of the principals.

### **Tours/Presentation**

Mrs. Murphy stated that staff had contacted all Horry County Schools regarding virtual tours and presentations. She indicated that staff had designed a new flyer that gave information about the virtual field trips and virtual presentations.

General discussion was held about information in the SWA's Public Education Library and if the parents who were homeschooling their children had access to books, media and videos. Mrs. Murphy commented that the information in the Public Education Library could be utilized by homeschoolers and stated staff would be sure to inform the schools of this. She also indicated that SC DHEC had a curriculum through "Take Action Today" that teachers could routinely participate in.

Mr. Hughes mentioned it was his understanding that schools have virtual coordinators who helped with the schools curriculum and stated this information could be given to the coordinators to share with parents.

General discussion was held about whether the libraries and museums in the area had information on SWA programs. Mrs. Murphy commented that recycling guidebooks were on display in these places. Ms. Creech asked Mrs. Murphy if she advertised this information. Mrs. Murphy commented that she would contact the public access channels and informed them of the resources that the SWA has available.

Mr. Hughes asked if the schools would utilize their recycling bins that were set up in the cafeteria for food waste collection. Mrs. Murphy explained that in the past reusable trays and silverware were used but this year everything would be disposable. She stated that she did not know if the schools were allowing students to use the system but staff would find out.

### **"Why Don't You Recycle" Focus Group Discussion**

Mr. Hughes commented at the August Board Meeting discussion was held regarding the creation of a focus group to discuss with individuals the reason they do not recycle. He said this was an effort to learn why people did not recycle and determine what action can be taken order for them to become recyclers.

Mr. Hughes commented that the first step would be to identify the participants. He said that staff could conduct online surveys through Facebook or the SWA website and other social media avenues. Mr. Hughes stated that staff could have paid advertising or could obtain information from an environmental group such as the Chirping Birds. He said he was looking for information from an actual person who did not recycle. Mr. Hughes commented that the environmental groups already recycle so he preferred to hear from people who do not to discuss their reasoning for not

recycling. Ms. Creech agreed with Mr. Hughes and commented that she wanted participants who did not recycle. Mr. Hughes commented that the focus group needed various people from all over the county to discuss this issue.

General discussion ensued about the different approaches to take in obtaining participants, whether participants were paid for the survey, advertise for participants on television or give some type of gift. It was suggested that if the focus group was paid for a response and participation in the survey then it could be viewed as a skewed survey. Ms. Creech asked Mrs. Murphy where would the participants come from. She asked if staff would put signs at the recycling centers. Mr. Jones suggested maybe the area talk radio shows could make the public aware that the SWA was looking for focus group participants to understand why some of the public would not recycle. Mrs. Murphy replied, upon direction from the Committee, staff would start putting signage out at the recycling centers and would also get the word out through social media. She also commented that staff would look into using talk radio as well as the public access channels.

Mr. Hughes and the Committee Members agreed that staff could begin looking for participants for the focus group. Mr. Ives commented that Keep Horry County Beautiful would like to participate and or assist with the focus group or at least share in the findings. Mr. Hughes said that SWA needed to be the ones who perform the focus group in order to ensure the right questions are being asked.

### **Resource Recycling Magazine Article Discussion “How Can the Recycling Sector Help Advance Racial Justice”**

Mr. Hughes indicated that the article on “How Can the Recycling Sector Help Advance Racial Justice” was originally going to be discussed at Roundtable Discussion. He said the article talked about things that have been talked about for years. Mr. Hughes said the SWA has had issues over the years getting qualified applicants whether they be African American, Hispanic or Caucasian. He commented that he thought about a way to broaden the pool for minority applicants. Mr. Hughes said that the SWA could be a leader if it included people from the surrounding communities to have as employees. He said that the SWA had a problem finding minority applicants. Mr. Hughes commented that if the SWA was only advertising in Carolina Forest for minority applicants or African American you would not find many. He asked how would the SWA broaden the minority based application pool. Mr. Hughes remarked that most of the rural areas had no idea of the kind of work that the SWA does. He commented that the public thinks the landfill is where you go and throw the trash in a big hole.

Mr. Hughes said that his focus or concern was trying to make the SWA the best that it could be. He pointed out that the SWA as a whole needs to look at the diversity of the SWA staff. Mr. Hughes asked where was the SWA advertising for its applicants, how were the applicants selected and did minorities have an opportunity to apply. Mr. Hughes inquired how does the SWA increase staff, how does the SWA maintain the staff and where does the SWA get the people from.

Mr. Hughes said a prime example of a location to search for qualified applicants was a Father's Place in Conway. He commented that the organization takes young men and sends them to school and trains them to become good employees. Mr. Hughes said his primary focus was to make the SWA the best it could be by expanding its applicant pool.

Mr. Hughes stated that the topic of racial justice or injustice was a sensitive topic. He commented that everyone must check his or her own self. Mr. Jones commented that the article was very interesting and he agreed with Mr. Hughes about the article and the perception of the SWA. He said that the public thinks that the SWA was just a hole where garbage was buried and not a professional organization. Mr. Hughes asked, regarding the different conferences that the SWA Board has attended, how many African Americans or minorities were there attending these conferences? He said he did not know if the minorities knew about these waste disposal organizations or the jobs they offer.

Mr. Knight reviewed the documents in the Committee Packet that detailed how the SWA searches for employees. He commented that different steps were taken for employment depending on the job applied for. Mr. Knight said if there was an opening for a truck driver the applicant must have CDL and they must take a physical and a drug test. He commented that staff has been looking for years for more qualified applicants. Mr. Knight indicated that the private sector can offer more money to keep employees. He commented that staff had contacted local churches about applicants to work.

Ms. Creech commented that she was glad that this was discussed and was happy that the SWA did not have a problem. She said as a woman, she had been overlooked in the workplace years ago. Ms. Creech asked if staff had tried the Unemployment Commission or Channel 14 Public Access for listing of jobs. Mr. Hughes commented about the Unemployment Commission and said that they have a program for job placement as well as Horry Georgetown Technical College and asked had staff spoken with them. Mr. Hughes commented that the Whittemore Alumni has a magazine that the SWA could post job applications and articles about recycling.

Mr. Hughes remarked it was time to start doing more. He stated that other information had been requested but that information would be best discussed at an Administration and Finance Committee Meeting or even during Roundtable Discussion.

Mr. Hughes asked if there was any other business to discuss. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned 11:15 a.m.