

City of Florence
Environmental Management Advisory Committee
February 20, 2014 ~ Regular Session 2:00 pm

The proceedings of the City of Florence Environmental Management Advisory Committee were recorded on tape and on file at Florence City Hall.

- **Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda**

Chairperson (CP) Robert Forsythe called the meeting of the Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) to order at 1:59 pm. Others present included: Vice Chair Sharon McLeod, Committee Members (CM) Robin Sullivan, Sandra Davidson, Erika Bessey, Josh Haring, David Twombly (Central Coast Disposal), Dan Webb (County Transfer & Recycling), Mayor Nola Xavier (CoF), City Manager Jacque Betz (CoF), Public Works Director Mike Miller (CoF), Senior Planner Wendy FarleyCampbell (CoF), and Planning Technician Glen Southerland (CoF)

CP Forsythe asked the committee if they proposed any changes to the agenda, the committee had no changes to propose. CM Bessey motioned to accept the agenda, CM Davidson seconded. By voice all ayes, the motion passes.

CP Forsythe introduced a newly appointed member of EMAC, Josh Haring. CM Haring was born and raised in Florence, has worked in the oil industry for 17 years, worked as a reserve police officer, and has worked for the fire department.

- **Public Comments**

- Jenna Bartlett introduced herself to EMAC as a Florence Master Recycler and Promotions Manager of the Siuslaw News. She stated that the Siuslaw News for the past two years had produced “Where to Recycle,” an informative newspaper insert published prior to the Green Fair. Bartlett solicited EMAC for \$300 for their participation again to help support the publication. She said that if EMAC wanted to participate, they would need to contribute before the week of April 26th. CM Sullivan asked when the publication is printed. Bartlett responded that it would be printed before the week of April 26th.

- **Approval of Minutes**

- January 16, 2014
 - i. CM Davidson and VC McLeod mentioned that there were several statements that were misattributed between them. PT Southerland stated that if they could remember what was said, he would adjust the minutes. The committee agreed that the content of the minutes was correct.

CP Forsythe asked the committee if they wished to accept the minutes, the committee agreed. CM Bessey motioned to approve the minutes, CM Sullivan seconded. By voice all ayes, the motion passes.

- **EcNow Tech**

- Chris Vitello, President of EcNow Tech introduced himself and thanked Lynn Christensen for arranging this presentation. Vitello stated that his products

compost in 30 days during the proper conditions and his company operates a 17,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Corvallis.

- Twombly asked if Vitello knew if his products, as fiber based, conflicted with other fiber products in the wastestream. Vitello said that he would guess that most of his products are composted, but volumes are likely low in comparison. Vitello stated that his products could be recycled if there was a large enough volume.
- Vitello stated that his company assists clients with designing and manufacturing products as well as assisting them with collection for compost.
- Vitello said that his company does not make digesters, but has selected products made by Green Key, which uses a motor to churn materials and micro-organisms to digest the materials. He stated that the micro-organisms digest the materials into something that can be ejected into the normal sewer system and can be processed by a waste treatment plant and must be replenished about once a quarter.
- Webb inquired what kind of permitting a digester would require, for example at a restaurant discharging into a sewer system. Vitello replied that whoever permits from a waste treatment perspective would likely approve the system. City Manager Betz added that there would also be electrical and mechanical permits for such a system as well as possible costs for increased use of the wastewater system.
- City Manager Betz asked how large the system is. Vitello stated that he would answer that question with an upcoming slide and that the machine uses about as much electricity as a small to large refrigerator depending on the size of the model in question.
- Vitello stated that the design is similar to a mechanical stomach. He said that a user adds material, it is sprayed and churned and then 24-48 hours later, digested liquid is released. Twombly asked if there is a methane release. Vitello stated that there is not. VC McLeod asked if there was an odor associated with use of the digester. Vitello replied that there is not a decaying odor, but it does have a smell similar to gray water or compost.
- CM Sullivan asked if this system could be placed inside or outside. Vitello replied that most customers place the digester outside.
- Twombly asked if meat products could be disposed of in the system. Vitello stated that meat products could be disposed of in a digester, but bones will not be digested.
- VC McLeod asked what the noise level of the machine was. Vitello stated it was similar to a refrigerator because the only moving part is the churner, but likely the motor noise was part of the reason people put them outside. VC McLeod asked if the system was louder than a washing machine. Vitello stated that it was not.
- Vitello presented a table of capacity per day and costs for each model of machine. He stated that the capacity of the largest machine is up to a ton per day. Vitello said that for maintenance, the machines require a bottle of micro-organisms be added every quarter and possibly a motor replacement every seven years. Christensen asked if it was possible to place a large unit at a landfill and use a collection vehicle to go around collecting material for it instead of having a unit at each site. Vitello stated that that was a possibility.
- VC McLeod asked where the units were manufactured. Vitello responded that they were manufactured in upstate New York.
- Vitello stated that education was important when implementing this system to

help prevent disposal of non-biodegradable materials. Twombly asked if the system had a filter. Vitello stated that he would research to see if there was a filter. VC McLeod asked if there might be a lift-gate similar to a sewer system to pull out debris. Vitello said that if there is a stream of pure materials going into the machine, only fluid comes out. Webb asked if the system used a centrifuge to process the waste, he said that if it did, most of the debris would be trapped in the machine. CP Forsythe asked who produces the micro-organisms. Vitello said he would have to check into that. CP Forsythe elaborated that some types of micro-organisms can digest petroleum materials. Vitello stated that typically petroleum materials have an added ingredient which is digested by micro-organisms that then results in the breakdown of the material to very small pieces to be processed by other methods. VC McLeod stated that she would still like to know how objects would be removed that would not be able to be drained out with grey water. Christensen stated he would find out. Vitello stated that he would get that information back to the Committee by email.

- Vitello stated that there were 1500 digesters nationwide that are running. He stated that Corvallis uses a traditional composting facility, so Florence would be the first in Oregon to have a system like this. City Manager Betz asked where these systems were being used. Vitello stated he would obtain that information.
- Twombly asked PWD Miller what information he needed about this equipment. PWD Miller stated that he would need to know total suspended solids, pH, biological oxygen demand, and what type of discharge it is, as well as what type and if the microbes are being released along with the grey water. PWD Miller stated that some microbes are especially good at digesting oil and grease, but when they are released into the wastewater stream, they create foaming issues at the treatment plant.
- SP FarleyCampbell asked if Vitello's products are composting well in Corvallis. Vitello stated that they were and that they also were composting well in these machines.
- Webb asked if larger units had wheels as well as the smaller units. Vitello stated he would obtain that information.
- Twombly asked if the plant-based products would break down properly in compost. PWD Miller stated that it should break down in compost.
- Vitello stated that commercial composting takes place at 160°F and typical backyard composting takes place at 120°F, but his products have broken down well at both temperatures. He said that the season and temperature may have an effect, however, on this process, keeping the products from breaking down because the microbes may be inactive.
- VC McLeod asked if the grey water could be used to water crops. Vitello did not know the answer off-hand. PWD Miller stated that they would have to look at an analysis. SP FarleyCampbell stated that it may depend on the amount of microbes still in the grey water and their effect on the plants. Twombly said that certain levels of grey water could be used and stored without treatment, but the level of the grey water would have to be defined by DEQ. Vitello stated that he could provide samples and test results from existing installations. CP Forsythe stated that it was important to know the makeup when using it on an industrial level.
- VC McLeod asked if the cost to use would offset the cost of running the product through the sewer system. Vitello stated that in Corvallis, haulers gave people a lower rate to pick up compost waste. Webb stated that food waste is much heavier and more dense. Twombly stated that it would not necessarily have a

lower cost because of the cost of transportation, unless a facility was located nearby. Webb said that such a system would be ideal for a place that generated a lot of compostable waste, such as a restaurant or the school district.

- City Manager Betz stated that the City would not want to have a digester with an odor concern. Vitello stated he would provide a list of contacts of existing customers. City Manager Betz asked what the costs of the units are. Vitello stated that units run from \$20,000 to \$70,000, but that his high-end estimation is probably closer to \$50,000. He also said that the units probably have an operating cost of \$200-300 a quarter. VC McLeod asked what kind of maintenance the machine needed. Vitello stated that he was told the motors last for about 7 years. VC McLeod asked if there was a warranty for the units. Vitello said that there is a 1-2 year warranty, after which he would like to an arrangement for someone local to service the unit.
- CM Bessey asked if Vitello could forward specifications on the digester units. Vitello said that he would.
- VC McLeod inquired what the weight of the units might be. She asked if the units needed to be on a concrete pad. Vitello stated that some facilities would need to be installed. City Manager Betz asked SP FarleyCampbell if the units would require enclosures. SP FarleyCampbell replied that they probably would and would likely want to in order to protect their investment.
- Twombly asked if there were tax credits associated with these units. City Manager Betz wondered what the benefits would be for a small business to purchase one of these units. Webb guessed that the savings on the costs of garbage bills would be the incentive.
- VC McLeod asked what the estimated costs would be for these units including permitting and the timeline for payback.
- Twombly asked if this would fall under the definition of a recycling plant. He stated that recycling plants are eligible for tax credits. Webb stated that grants are still available from the county as well.
- Christensen stated that he has lived in the area for six months. He said that he would like Florence to be a green city on the coast. VC McLeod stated that she thought that was great, but business owners would like to know more about the bottom line.
- City Manager Betz asked if Vitello was currently reaching out to the Florence business community and suggested that selling products here might be a first step without the need for the City's involvement. Webb asked if EcNow Tech products were sold in town currently.
- CM Bessey asked what the cost difference was between the compostable products and regular disposable plastic products. Vitello stated that it was about 20% and that many businesses justified the extra cost with the marketability of using the compostable product.
- City Manager Betz asked if Vitello had obtained a booth at the Green Fair. She informed Vitello that it was coming up on April 26th. Vitello stated he had not. VC McLeod suggested that it may be a good place to reach local businesses.
- Twombly asked if Vitello's plastic bag was as strong as regular plastic bags. He said that because cities are passing plastic bag bans, it may be beneficial to promote the compostable product and persuade governments with plastic bag bans to allow this type of bag. Twombly asked if Vitello knew what the cost of his plastic bag was in comparison to a paper bag. Vitello stated that his bags are very strong, but are as much as 50% higher in cost than non-compostable products.

Twombly asked if he knew how it compared to paper bags. Vitello stated that Corvallis may end up opening the bag ban up to plant-based bags, but he did not have a cost figure for comparison to paper bags. Twombly said that he asked because any reaction in Florence would likely be based around the cost and the product's comparison to other bags.

- VC McLeod asked if Vitello had any printed literature. Vitello did not have any beyond his own materials so he would forward any literature or information about questions asked to SP FarleyCampbell.

- **Greener Florence Award Marketing and Promotion**
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that April 17th would not be early enough to make the Council staff report deadline so ratings would need to be submitted earlier in the week or individually via email. VC McLeod asked if it would be possible to rate online. SP FarleyCampbell stated that the proposals are due Monday and the packets for City Council are due by noon on Thursday.
 - VC McLeod asked if each Committee member could come in sometime on the 14th or 15th. CP Forsythe asked the Committee if they would all be available sometime during the day on April 14th, 15th, or 16th. The Committee agreed that they would be able to come in those days or rate submissions via email.
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that the City would be including mention of the Greener Florence Award in the March Newsletter. She had also mentioned it at the Master Recyclers meeting, soliciting applications. SP FarleyCampbell stated that PSAs would go out to the newspaper and radio station the first week of March as well as the City website. She said that as of today, she had 3 inquiries. SP FarleyCampbell stated that Susy Lacer is also working on the website to prepare for Greener Florence.
 - SP FarleyCampbell asked for suggestions on other ways to advertise the Award. VC McLeod asked if the Merchant's Association would participate. SP FarleyCampbell stated that Chamber of Commerce is the only group existing and that she would speak to Cal Applebee of the Chamber of Commerce. CP Forsythe suggested that Susy link the City's page on the Chamber website and the Port website to information about the Greener Florence Award.
 - Mayor Xavier stated that the Chamber also holds a "Green" Award, so there was confusion in the past and she hoped that there would be greater participation as a result. SP FarleyCampbell stated that two of the applicants had not applied before. VC McLeod stated there should be a master list of non-profits in Florence. SP FarleyCampbell stated that she would adjust the marketing materials to reach a non-profit target and she might be able to pull information from the business license renewals list.

- **Lane County Wasteshed Stakeholders Debrief & Next Steps**
 - SP FarleyCampbell informed the Committee that she CP Forsythe, Twombly and Webb attended a Lane County Stakeholders Meeting on January 28th. She said that it would be the first of three meetings this year and that the meeting's goal was to replace the Recycling Advisory Committee that was dissolved. SP FarleyCampbell stated that the first part of the presentation dealt with the upcoming rate increase, equipment replacement, and \$10 tipping fee increase that will be starting July 1st. Twombly said that the Lane County representatives said that this was a first step.
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that there were also potential transfer site closures.

Webb stated that Lane County said that only two of their transfer sites are profitable, but they did not want to close any satellite sites.

- CP Forsythe stated that since Lane County operates on a fee base, rather than a tax base, as they increase recycling, the amount of fees being generated drops. SP FarleyCampbell said that recycling going to Lane County is not generated by haulers, but that trash service customers are subsidizing the recycling done by customers visiting the transfer site instead of utilizing the haulers.
- CP Forsythe stated that Lane County seemed extremely reluctant to discuss privatizing the transfer sites.
- Mayor Xavier asked what the coverage of the Florence transfer site was. Twombly stated that the transfer site pulled from out to the county lines and east to Deadwood. Webb agreed with Twombly's assessment. VC McLeod pointed out that Florence could be subsidizing Lane County's facility as a result.
- Webb stated that there are many materials that people can take to Eugene that they are not able to recycle at the satellite transfer sites in addition to haulers not being able to utilize the Florence transfer site.
- CP Forsythe stated that one of the Lane County representatives wanted to debate that two hauler's trucks was less wasteful than one truck leaving their transfer site. Webb stated that in reality, the County is competing with commercial haulers.
- Twombly stated that the DEQ requires landfill operators to have a certain amount of money in order to perform maintenance after a site closes. He said that Florence is not required to participate with the County Transfer Sites and other places like Cottage Grove withdrawn and may no longer participate if fees increase too much.
- Twombly stated that hauler's hands are tied because of systems benefit charges and the distance between Florence and other landfills.
- SP FarleyCampbell stated that Lane County will be presenting this information to the Board of Commissioners at the end of March. CP Forsythe asked what the chances of getting a meeting with Sarah Grimm. Twombly said that he did not know if Sarah was the best person to talk to at Lane County and suggested that EMAC speak to Dan Hurley. The Committee suggested that it may be possible to talk to both of them.
- CM Bessey asked the haulers what the current tipping fee is. Twombly stated that for the haulers the tipping fee is \$69. For everyone else, the fee is \$68.
- CM Davidson asked what the difference would be if haulers could take recycling to the transfer site instead of needing to take it elsewhere. Twombly stated that they could likely reduce rates and expand service if that were the case. CM Davidson asked what exactly kept commercial haulers from being able to use the transfer site. Twombly said that DEQ does not require transfer sites to accept commercial haulers, only residential recyclers and since they are not required to, they do not.
- CP Forsythe suggested that the haulers are not commercial, but rather agents for residential customers. He asked how many residential recycling customers the haulers serve. Twombly said around 4000 households inside the City limits. CP Forsythe said that by taking recycling, haulers reduce the number of cars visiting the transfer site. CM Bessey stated that according to case law, haulers are not legally an agent for residential customers, but accepting commercial haulers is discretionary.
- CP Forsythe stated that Florence was being affected by the same rate increase as

someone who was in Eugene. VC McLeod stated that the cost would be passed onto the customers in Florence. Twombly said that the City Manager of Eugene suggested a tiered system because his citizens were being penalized even though they were closer to the transfer sites. Twombly said that a tiered system could create a tipping fee increase of \$8 in Eugene and \$12 in Florence. He said that representatives from Lane County said that Glenwood was the only profitable transfer site.

- CM Bessey asked if there was an agreement with the County that discusses these issues. SP FarleyCampbell stated that there was an IGA discussing benefit fees, but that was all she was aware of. She said she would look for more to bring to EMAC.
- SP FarleyCampbell said that the next topic after the rate increase was the discussion of the 2050 Vision. She stated that this topic was broken into funding, goals and measures, and recycling opportunities. She said that the final product should be presented in 2015. SP FarleyCampbell stated that the next meeting would be in April. VC McLeod asked when and SP FarleyCampbell responded that she would send the documents she had available by email.

- **Keep America Beautiful Grant**
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that the City Council had approved a grant request for six recycling containers in Miller Park on February 3, 2014.
 - VC McLeod asked if the containers come with fittings to be chained down. SP FarleyCampbell stated that they come with mounting hardware.
 - VC McLeod asked if the container was metal or plastic. SP FarleyCampbell said that the bottom is powder-coated metal and the top is plastic.

- **Green Fair Preparation Update**
 - SP FarleyCampbell said that an order was in at Shipping Solutions for a Banner. She said that the banner will be a simple City of Florence design that could be used by other Committees and would be ready in time for the next meeting.
 - VC McLeod asked if the banner would have a recycle logo. SP FarleyCampbell said that they were trying to keep it generic. She said that it would be possible to affix something to the banner with tape for the Green Fair.
 - SP FarleyCampbell said that VC McLeod had colored several pictures for display at the Green Fair booth.
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that EMAC also needed to develop a quarter page advertisement for the Green Fair. She asked for suggestions from EMAC.
 - Twombly stated that his donated booth for the Green Fair was taken by Laura Smith. He said she would be bringing crafts for children to do and would be taking pictures of them at the Fair, but did not know if she was going to man the booth. SP FarleyCampbell stated that she had spoken to Smith about someone being at the booth during the Fair. VC McLeod asked if she would be distributing our handouts. SP FarleyCampbell stated she would coordinate with Smith.
 - SP FarleyCampbell stated that she would bring items showing what the final display table would look like.
 - Mayor Xavier asked if Bartlett would have enough time after the March 20, 2014 EMAC meeting to be able to include us in the printing. SP FarleyCampbell said that she probably would since she was going to print the week prior to the Green Fair. CM Davidson said that she thought it was already budgeted for EMAC. Mayor Xavier said that the Committee could make an approval based on the

assumption that it was already included in the budget. She said that if it was already in the budget, the vote would be final. SP FarleyCampbell stated that since this was part of the Green Fair, it would be part of that agenda item.

VC McLeod motioned to approve the expenditure. The motion was seconded by CM Davidson. By voice all ayes, the motion was approved.

- **Committee & Staff Discussion/Report Items**

- City Hall Kiosk
 - i. CM Davidson said that she had read in the newspaper that the Genealogical Society was collecting inkjet and toner cartridges as well as electronics for a fundraiser. She stated that currently, she mails cell phones and cell phone batteries to a company called Call to Recycle.
 - ii. VC McLeod asked if the organization was a non-profit. CM Davidson said that they were and that the fundraiser pays for their Ancestry.com membership.
 - iii. Webb asked what the collection points were for the fundraiser. CM Davidson stated that there were collection points at the Siuslaw Public Library and at True Value Hardware.
 - iv. CM Davidson asked if the Committee had any objections to giving these items to the Genealogical Society. The Committee had none because it kept CM Davidson from having to package and mail the items.
- PaintCare
 - i. CM Sullivan stated that he had spoken to Habitat for Humanity again and found out that PaintCare was working on new agreements. He said they were currently working on an agreement that would encompass all of the Habitat stores in the state. CM Sullivan said that he had spoken to Kate Redwine that morning to see if she knew of any progress from Portland. He said she had not, but she let CM Sullivan call Portland directly. He called Paul, but had not received a response. CM Sullivan will continue to pursue an answer for the Committee.
 - ii. SP FarleyCampbell said that the progress was promising. She said that previously, Roy Weedman was creating contracts for every location in the state individually. She said that after a conversation with Weedman, she was able to convince him that it may be easier to deal with a regional Habitat for Humanity representative, rather than each location individually.
 - iii. SP FarleyCampbell said that the agreements should be completed soon, hopefully by the 1st of March. She stated that the County was hoping to having them complete by the HHW event in April.
 - iv. VC McLeod asked if the timing allowed promotion of the program for the Green Fair. SP FarleyCampbell stated that she thought it would.

- **Election of Chair and Vice-Chairpersons**

- VC McLeod volunteered for Vice-Chair. CP Forsythe asked if anyone wanted to be elected to Chairperson. SP FarleyCampbell stated that she had not heard anyone say that they would be against being in any position.
- CP Forsythe stated he would continue as Chairperson if no one wanted to be elected. The Committee resolved that the positions would remain the same.

- **Where to Recycle Insert**

- SP FarleyCampbell said that this should be a voting item. She could put it on the next agenda in order to revisit the EMAC budget prior to the vote.
- Mayor Xavier asked what the budget for the Committee was. VC McLeod stated that there is an anticipated expenditure report and a discretionary fund.
- The group agreed that the expenditure report approved last year would have included expenses for the Where to Recycle insert.

- **Other Items**

- VC McLeod asked if any volunteers were needed for any upcoming events. SP FarleyCampbell stated that EMAC was going to do something for the Home and Garden show, but presentations were cancelled.
- Mayor Xavier stated that she appreciated the work done by EMAC and thanked them for their efforts. She said she intends to come to at least one meeting a year in order to help the Council better understand the work done by EMAC. VC McLeod stated that her support was invaluable and CP Forsythe invited the Mayor to attend any meeting she wished.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 20, 2014 2:00PM

Adjourn

CP Forsythe motioned to adjourn. VC McLeod seconded the motion. By voice all ayes, CP Forsythe adjourned the meeting at 3:41.

APPROVED BY THE EMAC ON THE _____ DAY OF _____, 2014.

Chairperson, Robert Forsythe

Date