

**askHRgreen.org Recycling & Beautification Committee Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, 2020**

Due to the declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in response to the continued spread of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19 and to protect the public health and safety of the committee members, staff, and the general public, the askHRgreen.org Recycling & Beautification Committee meeting was held via Zoom Video Conferencing. These electronic meetings are required to complete essential business on behalf of the region, and a recording of the meeting is available on the website.

Attendance:

Debbie Blanton, HA
Megan Hale, CH
Dan Baxter, NN
Craig Simmons, VB
Samantha McNeil, YK
Elisabeth Wilkins, GL
Sarah Sterzinger, NO
Fleta Jackson, NO
Wayne Jones, SU

Lacy Kuller, CEIC Member
Jessica Steelman, ANCPC
Becky Greenwald, CEIC Chair
Rogard Ross, CEIC Member
Stephen Leaman, NEC Chair
Brittany Collins, SPSA
Mike Baum, KVB
Rebekah Eastep, HRPDC
Katie Cullipher, HRPDC

The meeting summary is as follows:

1. Summary

The Committee reviewed and approved the Committee meeting summary for June.

Action: Approved.

2. askHRgreen.org Outreach Events

9/12	Go Green Market	Yorktown
9/17-9/20	Isle of Wight County Fair	Windsor
10/3	Virginia Beach Master Gardeners Fall Gardening Festival*	Virginia Beach
10/3	Arlo's Shed Radio Promotion	Chesapeake
10/8-10/11	Suffolk Peanut Festival	Suffolk
10/10	Lynnhaven River Now Fall Festival*	Virginia Beach
10/16-10/18	Poquoson Seafood Festival	Poquoson
11/10	Sensible Seafood Fest - Rescheduled	Virginia Beach
3/27-3/28	2021 Daffodil Festival	Gloucester
6/19	RiverFest	

- Peanut Festival has been cancelled.
- Trailer maintenance on locks being completed during downtime from events.
- askHRgreen.org bottle top logo completed by Suffolk for the trailer.

Action: Committee members are encouraged to provide updates to event calendar as new information comes available.

3. Great American Cleanup 2020

The Committee discussed the Great American Cleanup planned for September 18-19.

- HRPDC staff have updated and distributed the event flyer. The website has also been updated and volunteer registration is now open.
- HRPDC staff will develop a news release and social media samples and update the Team Up 2 Clean Up video.
- Keep Virginia Beautiful (KVB) has shared new events information with Keep America Beautiful and the Earth Day Network (EDN). EDN may be able to provide a small grant to assist with a celebration party to be held at O'Conner Brewing.
- KVB should be able to get billboards from Adams Outdoors to promote the cleanup events.
- The Committee agreed the emphasis should be on promoting smaller, resident-led cleanups since public health restrictions for larger groups are unpredictable. Some organized events will still be needed.
 - Norfolk will hold two organized events: Ocean View Beach (NO), Broad Creek Park
 - Hampton has two events scheduled for Saturday.
 - Suffolk and Chesapeake are hesitant to organize larger events at this time. Both will hold HHW & recycling events on September 19.
- Committee members should encourage Adopt a Spot participants to clean this weekend as part of the regional cleanup.
- HRPDC can develop a portal using Google Forms for reporting results. Prizes could be offered for randomly drawn winners or by category such as most pounds collected.

Action: Committee members should reach out to permit holders and core volunteers to encourage cleanups on September 18-19. HRPDC will continue to develop outreach materials such as news release, video, and social media templates.

4. Regional Recycling Roundtable

The Committee continued discussing regional recycling outreach and education efforts as outlined at the June meeting. The main takeaways from the June meeting were the development of a three-part video series focused on:

- The journey of recycling
- Back to the basics of what is recyclable everywhere
- Contamination

HRPDC staff stressed the importance of having a regional commitment to utilizing the outreach resources developed in order to reach the most residents with a consistent message/theme.

Members from the Chesapeake Environmental Improvement Council (CEIC) and Norfolk Environmental Commission (NEC) were on hand to discuss regional recycling

education. Stephen Leaman expressed interest in and support of a regional recycling message. He also stressed the importance of reaching audiences beyond social media. The Norfolk City Council is also supportive of a simplified recycling message.

Becky Greenwald with CEIC is excited to collaborate with the Committee and would like to support the regional recycling message. Rogard Ross emphasized the importance of keeping the message positive. Focusing on all the things you can't recycle can discourage resident participation in recycling.

Newport News emphasized the importance of recycling audits. Audit results help identify neighborhoods to target. Often issues include wishful recycling but also use of recycling cart as a second trash can. Newport News actively removes recycling carts from households with obvious and very high contamination rates.

Suffolk inquired about the ability of researching local recycling habits or knowledge. Previous benchmarking data completed through askHRgreen is available. The results show but when self-reporting on surveys individuals usually overestimate how well they are doing on environmental behaviors. Polling functionality is available through the askHRgreen website. The Committee recommended paper surveys as well to use at events. HRPDC asked for volunteers to serve on a working group to develop what questions should be included in a survey. The following Committee members volunteered: Sarah Sterzing, Dan Baxter, Wayne Jones, and Debbie Blanton.

The Committee requested a toolkit of resources to use for recycling education. Creative messaging and concepts TBD. Current recycling education resources are available for download by Committee members and the general public through the askHRgreen media toolkit.

CEIC and NEIC raised the issue of plastic bags. New law may allow localities to tax plastic bags. There is some difficulty on this topic due to COVID-19. Some stores are not allowing reusable bags and many people are using curbside pickup.

Actions: Workgroup will discuss a survey for use in gauging public recycling knowledge. Red Chalk Studios will develop creative concepts for the campaign for Committee review.

5. Grants Update

DEQ Competitive Litter Grant - HRPDC staff will submit an application to support the back to basics recycling video series. Application is due July 15 for FY21 competitive grant. Letters of support from localities are welcomed. Megan Hale and Wayne Jones have reviewed and provided feedback on the application.

KVB 30-in-30 Grant – We have received \$500 from KVB for the “Big Butts” public art and outreach project. The Committee discussed a plan to gather materials and volunteers for a “big butts” production workshop. The workshop could possibly be held

in a park for social distancing and safety guidelines. A few heat guns will be needed (Dan Baxter and Fleta Jackson each have one available). About 5-6 people would be needed. The workshop will also be filmed/photographed to develop a how-to video. HRPDC staff recommended possibly using the HRPDC outdoor patio area since it is private and outdoor with easy access to power and supplies.

DEQ Competitive Litter Prevention & Recycling Grant – The litter lending kit materials are available for pickup from the HRPDC by appointment. HRPDC staff is working on the project summary/performance reports.

Action: HRPDC staff will submit the application for the FY21 DEQ competitive grant and coordinate a workshop for producing the big butts.

6. Staff Reports

FY21 Budget - The Committee reviewed the FY21 budget. Cutlery sets are on order.

Actions: None.

7. Roundtable Discussion & Locality Updates

- Virginia Beach - Operational focus at the moment, percentages from residential waste continue to be up over last year.
- York - HHW event last weekend was very well attended, will coordinate with HRPDC staff to pickup litter kits from HRPDC
- Newport News – HHW collection moving from 2 days/week to quarterly due to financial reasons, latex paint collection, videos produced for school learning
- Suffolk - focused on grant applications and reporting, encouraging adopt a spot cleanups
- Chesapeake - grants and reporting tasks, CEIC project on municipal conservation landscaping, contests for notable yards and calendar, CLPP project from KVB grant
- Norfolk - grant and reporting tasks, new safety protocols for litter cleanups, cleanup bingo game with prizes being offered, litter kit lending, adopt a spot restarting July 23, big cleanup planned for this weekend for litter hot spot in downtown, virtual learning experience for summer camps
- Gloucester - environmental committees are merging, rewriting solid waste plan, DCR Scenic River program designation for York River, thinking through new outreach efforts since in-school programs are unlikely
- Hampton - cleanups every weekend (Friday/Saturday) through August making up for spring cancellations, rethinking outreach efforts for public and schools programming
- SPSA - phase 3 has brought slight slow down in loads, regular HHW events resuming

Actions: None.

Next Committee Meeting – The next regularly scheduled meeting is August 11, 2020.