

November 13, 2020

To: Members and Prospective Members of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network

From: Steven Rinaldi, Chair - New Jersey WasteWise Business Network, NJDEP, Bureau of Sustainability

Subject: Minutes from the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network virtual meeting/webinar of 11/10/20

Minutes:

**Next Meeting: The next meeting of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network will take place in May of 2021 (specific date not yet determined).**

**Welcome** –Network Chair Steve Rinaldi ([Steven.Rinaldi@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Steven.Rinaldi@dep.nj.gov)) welcomed everyone and explained that the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is the DEP’s free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn more about waste reduction, recycling and recycled product procurement. Steve highlighted the 2020 DEP recycling award winners who are also members of the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network – Princeton University in the Institution category, Public Service Electric & Gas in the Business category, Burlington Stores, Inc. in the Retail Merchant category, Long Beach Township in the Leadership category, Lisamarie Schieli of the Borough of Maywood in the Rising Star category and Merck & Co., Inc. in the Source Reduction, Resource Management/Sustainability category. Steve also discussed America Recycles Day, New Jersey’s new single use bag legislation (which takes effect in 2022) and recent state laws that call for the creation of various councils and commissions to address solar panel recycling, food waste, recycling markets and plastics.

**Long Beach Township’s Oyster Shell Recycling Partnership** – Angela Andersen, Sustainability Coordinator, Long Beach Township, [andersen@longbeachtownship.com](mailto:andersen@longbeachtownship.com) – Ms. Andersen stated that it is important to look beyond bottles, cans and paper and find solutions for specialized waste streams. As such, Long Beach Township implemented and runs the first municipally-based food waste diversion program for oyster and clam shells in New Jersey. Through this innovative voluntary recycling project, diverted oyster and clam shells from restaurants are beneficially reused for establishing a research oyster reef in Little Egg Harbor Bay. The township educates restaurant owners about the benefits of the program, transports the shells from the participating restaurants and works with its partners to deploy the shells in the bay where they act as a host for baby oysters and provide habitat for other species found in the bay. Educational strategies used to promote the program include the use of social media, hosting “Shellabration” events, and the creation of flyers, articles and table top displays for restaurants. A documentary film called “The Oyster Farmers” has also been produced and is available. Thus far, the program has diverted 5,500 bushels of shells, which is equivalent to about 165 tons, from being disposed in the Ocean County landfill. (PowerPoint to be available at [www.anjr.com](http://www.anjr.com))

**Putting Used Bikes and Sewing Machines to Good Use** – David Schweidenback, President, Pedals for Progress/Sewing Peace, [dschweidenback@gmail.com](mailto:dschweidenback@gmail.com) – Pedals for Progress/Sewing

Peace's mission is to empower sustainable economic development by collecting unwanted, used working bicycles and sewing machines destined for U.S. landfills and instead shipping them to motivated people in the developing world. Mr. Schweidenback, who founded the organization in 1991, indicated that transportation is the key to economic development in developing countries. His organization ships about 3,000 bicycles each year to developing countries around the world. Mr. Schweidenback stated that he began collecting sewing machines in 1999. Mr. Schweidenback described a sewing machine as a "job in a box." Pedals for Progress/Sewing Peace holds collection events throughout New Jersey and the surrounding area. Mr. Schweidenback also indicated that he has helped many new similar organizations get off the ground and that there are now about 70 similar organizations throughout the world. Visit <https://www.p4p.org/> for more information. (Powerpoint was not used in this presentation.)

**Worldwide Paper and Plastics Recycling Markets Update** – Mike Arcieri, Trader, Ekman Group, [Michael.Arcieri@ekmangroup.com](mailto:Michael.Arcieri@ekmangroup.com) - Mr. Arcieri stated that when the pandemic hit in March of 2020 it caused many commercial and residential recycling programs to be put on hold, which led to worldwide recycling markets going into what he called disaster and survival mode. While paper mills did well due to the increased demand for toilet paper and similar products, the vast majority of the recycling industry faced a very rough stretch from March through August of this year. Mr. Arcieri indicated that markets started getting stronger in August/September and have continued this trend into the fall. In fact, the market for all recyclable paper commodities is extremely strong at the moment. For example, old corrugated cardboard is now trading at \$125/per ton delivered to the pier. Mr. Arcieri stated that China has shifted course and is no longer looking for recyclable paper grades, but rather recycled pulp made in the U.S. and elsewhere. Another important new market trend is the increase in U.S. paper mill production capacity, which will make the U.S. much less reliant on export markets. In addition, Mr. Arcieri noted that minimizing contamination remains a top priority in the recycling industry. Plastics markets were also touched upon during the presentation. Mr. Arcieri stated that recycled plastic prices are tightly correlated with oil prices and with oil prices low, so are recycled plastic prices. (Powerpoint was not used in this presentation.)

**Case Study: PSE&G's Successful Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiatives** – Rebekah Cocola, Associate Project Manager and Bridget Donnellan, Permitting Specialist IV, [Rebekah.cocola@pseg.com](mailto:Rebekah.cocola@pseg.com) and [Bridget.donnellan@pseg.com](mailto:Bridget.donnellan@pseg.com) - Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) has 7,000 employees and 277 locations in New Jersey, which includes offices, substations, customer service centers and construction sites. The company achieved a 93 percent recycling rate in 2019 by recycling and tracking 50 categories of recyclable materials. Ms. Cocola stressed the importance of knowing your company's waste profile and collecting data on your efforts. PSE&G's recycling program began in 1992 and has grown since then to not only encompass recycling, but also waste reduction. The company is not only focused on educating its employees about recycling, waste reduction and sustainability, but also organizations and customers that interact with the company. Environmental staff perform inspections at construction project locations and operational facilities to ensure that the company's environmental initiatives are implemented properly and to identify opportunities for continuous improvement. (PowerPoint to be available at [www.anjr.com](http://www.anjr.com))