



STAFF REPORT Information Only

3Rs Working Group 2009 Annual Report

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| Date: | January 18, 2010 |
| To: | Public Works and Infrastructure Committee |
| From: | General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services |
| Wards: | All |
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SUMMARY

The 3Rs Working Group (“3RWG”) Terms of Reference, approved as amended by City Council in May 2009, require an annual status report submitted jointly with the General Manager of Solid Waste Management Services. This annual report summarizes 3RWG’s work and activities in 2009, changes to membership and plans for 2010.

Financial Impact

There are no immediate financial impacts arising as a result of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

3RWG was convened after City Council adopted the recommendations contained in PW10.11 “Transition from CEAT to the 3Rs Working Group and Residual Waste Working Group” at its meeting of November 19 and 20, 2007. City Council Decision Document can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cc/decisions/2007-11-19-cc14-dd.pdf>

The report can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-7848.pdf>

3RWG’s Terms of Reference can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-7855.pdf>

At its meeting of April 29 and 30, 2009 City Council adopted, as revised, the amendments to the 3RWG Terms of Reference contained in PW23.2. City Council Decision Document can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/cc/decisions/2009-04-29-cc35-dd.htm>

The report can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-20051.pdf>

Amended 3RWG Terms of Reference can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-20052.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

As per Section 13 of the 3RWG Terms of Reference, the 3RWG shall submit an annual status report jointly with the General Manager of Solid Waste Management Services to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee detailing:

- issues, achievements and challenges during 2009;
- membership changes, if any;
- consultation activities undertaken, including but not limited to, meetings with the public and stakeholders, focus groups or phone polls and references to the resulting feedback received;
- meetings with vendors or lobbyists; and
- goals and plans for the upcoming year.

COMMENTS

1. Issues, Achievements and Challenges

a) Reduction and Elimination of Packaged Products

The 3RWG was very involved in providing input and advice into a contentious issue on reducing or eliminating a packaged product to affect a change in behaviour. The group have remained involved with staff on how “The One” (at-source reduction communications) project would progress and were advised in June 2009 that the Hot Drink Cup report was not submitted to committee at that time. Various reasons illustrate how this relatively minor behaviour change could impact the entire province. Minister of Environment’s proposal to review the *Waste Diversion Act, 2002* to enact simplicity in all Municipalities and remove barriers

province-wide would have a major impact on reducing the amount going to landfill.

b) Solid Waste Management Budget Process 2010

The group submitted a number of project ideas for consideration during the 2010 Solid Waste Management budget process. Ultimately many of the group's new ideas/projects were not adopted for 2010 due to the budget constraints. As well, due to the labour disruption in June and July, there was insufficient time to allow collaboration with staff prior to the submission of our ideas.

c) Launch of the 3Rs Ambassador Program

This is a key project initiative developed and endorsed by the 3RWG. This new program opens new communication strategies & training approaches aimed at residents in multi-unit buildings, while being mindful of the potential issues surrounding representation of City waste management programs. Hiring of a staff co-ordinator for this position was completed in the fall and was delayed, in part, due to the labour disruption.

d) Input into City Communication Campaigns

The 3RWG provided advice and input during the design phase of two significant communications campaigns: Source Reduction advertising and the "Blue Bin Sins" ad campaign in the fall of 2009. 3Rs members also helped to review and test the new City of Toronto waste and recycling online searchable database. In July 2009 the 3RWG recommended a review on the effectiveness of social networking as a possible medium used in the City's campaigns. Strategic Communications presented their findings in September 2009 and 3RWG supports staff to engage as appropriate.

2. Membership Changes and Recruitment Activities

In January 2009 the 3RWG consisted of fifteen (15) Toronto residents. During the year, the following membership changes occurred:

Member resignations:

- Mike Moselhy – January
- Sarah Webb, Charlotte Ueta – June
- Heather Ducharme (Chair) – September
- Melodie Barnett – November

New Members:

- Francesca Millescamps – January
- Anne Sabourin and Adi Astl – June
- Carol Bailey – September

Organizational change:

- Vince Higgins assumed the role of 3RWG Chair in September

In November, the 3RWG and staff conducted two (2) public recruitment sessions at the North York Civic Centre and Metro Hall. There was strong interest in the group and 122 applications received for consideration. Two (2) were deemed ineligible due to non-residence in the City of Toronto. Thirty (30) applicants were short-listed and interviewed by the 3RWG nomination panel comprised of the 3RWG Chair, the Director of Policy and Planning, Solid Waste Management Services and a representative from the office of the Vice Chair of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

Fifteen (15) applicants were selected from the interviews and their names have been submitted to committee for approval. Once approved, these applicants will comprise the replacement members for the 3RWG, to be appointed as vacancies arise. The applicants were selected according to the City of Toronto's social and geographic diversity guidelines.

3. Meetings, Communications and Consultation with the Public

The 3RWG held eleven (11) regular meetings in 2009. The July regular meeting was cancelled due to the labour disruption. All meetings were open to the public. Agendas, minutes and presentations from each of the meetings are posted on the 3RWG website: <http://www.toronto.ca/garbage/3rwg/meetings.htm>

Three (3) project teams (Reduce, 3Rs Ambassador, Website) were formed to address specific issues. Each project team met approximately once a month throughout 2009. Each project team provided a status update on their work at the subsequent full 3RWG meeting.

The 3RWG held an annual retreat in July to discuss budget submission ideas and group dynamics as well as review project structure and identify issues requiring resolution through the remainder of the year.

Members of the 3RWG also participated in the Multi-Family Waste Diversion Working Group, the Hot Drink Cup Taskforce and the Integrated Solid Waste Stakeholder Working Group.

The 3RWG distributed project and working group updates to a mailing list of interested Toronto residents through two (2) electronic newsletters in April and October.

The 3RWG was contacted by Zeina Ismail a University of Toronto undergraduate doing an internship in the Geography Department on waste management, she has been informing us regularly at our meetings of her findings so far on what other cities are doing for policy and behavioural changes, her final report will be in April of 2010 and we hope to report back on this addition in the new year.

4. Meetings with Vendors, Lobbyists, Stakeholders and Media Interviews

The 3RWG did not meet with any vendors or lobbyists in 2009.

3RWG members met with various stakeholders and community groups regarding the 3Rs Ambassador Program, including:

- Metro Toronto Tenants Association and Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC);
- Greater Toronto Apartment Association (GTAA), Waste Diversion Workshop on the 3Rs Ambassador Program (presentation by 3RWG);
- TCHC Animators and the TCHC 3Rs Outreach program;
- New York City (by conference call) regarding the NYC Apartment Building Recycling Initiative;
- Mayor's Tower Renewal;
- Wellesley Institute;
- Waste Diversion Educators workshop.

3RWG members also attended consultation sessions and workshops related to the *Waste Diversion Act, 2002* changes and Extended Producer Responsibility:

- RCO Wealth Without Waste Forum;
- Waste Diversion Ontario consultation event on Problematic Packaging and Consistency of Materials in the Blue Box program;
- *Waste Diversion Act, 2002* review event.

On February 11, Elaine Lepage (Vice-Chair, 3RWG) was interviewed by CTV news on recycling market value and a typical citizen's view how the cost of the market flux could affect the taxpayer.

On January 7, 2010, 3RWG member Hanna Ziada appeared as a panellist on Goldhawk Live (Rogers TV) to discuss Hot Drink Cups with Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker.

5. 3RWG Goals and Plans for 2010

The group discussed several creative ideas and approaches to enhance the Cities existing campaigns for 2010. Below are some of the strategies that 3RWG will discuss and develop with City of Toronto staff throughout the year:

- Explore existing Solid Waste Management Services publications (e.g., calendars) and suggest enhancements;
- Look at ways to engaging more youth to drive behaviour change (check what others have done, TDSB ECO schools program, etc.);
- Look into sponsorship for rewarding reduction efforts;
- Engaging more local Councillors on 3RWG activities;
- Analyze fostering sustainable behaviour and set up a template;
- Strategic planning for project shortfalls;
- Analyze feedback to reduction posters and website hits vs. communication plans roll outs to compare their effectiveness.

The 3RWG will continue its project-based approach, utilizing member skill-sets to fulfill the 3RWG mandate by working with staff to make recommendations to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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