

## POWER Meeting Summary

April 1, 2010

Attendees: Kim Baggett (Waste Management), Karen Bremer (Bremer Consulting), John Casagrande (Waste Management), Paul Chiulli (EcoOrchard), Kate Davenport (EcoVentures), Holly Elmore (Elemental Impact), Britt Faucette (filtrexx), L'Anda Flowers (Chick-fil-A), Randy Hartman (GA Department of Community Affairs/Atlanta Recycles), Wayne King (US Composting Council), Jim Lammert (Huhtamki), Elizabeth Lowell (Harvest Power), Paul McMenemy (Harvest Power), Dennis Neal (The DEN Group), Abbey Patterson (Atlanta Recycles), Chris Pierce (Waste Management), Jean Pullen (City of Atlanta), Scott Seydel (Global Green), Steve Simon (Fifth Group Restaurants), Eric Taub (Verus Carbon Neutral), Diana Trettin (Sustainability Division of GA Dept of Natural Resources), Jack Walsdorf (Converted Organics), Fred Wellons, Chad Wright (Georgia Development Partners), Steve Yates (Kennesaw State University), Justin Young (Republic Services)

Meeting summary prepared by Chad Wright with Georgia Development Partners ~ thank you!

Scott Seydel, Chair Global Green, began the meeting by welcoming everyone that had gathered to attend. He stressed the importance of keeping things apolitical, as there are "competitors" in the markets gathered for a common good. Everyone agreed to be respectful and abide by his request.

Holly Elmore, Founder & CEO of Elemental Impact, thanked Pauline Reynolds at HLB Gross Collins for hosting the group and Bold American Catering, owned by Fifth Group Restaurants, for providing the lunch and networking reception.

Steve Simon commented on Fifth Group Restaurant's goal to be as close to Zero Waste in their operations as possible. He commented on the many challenges involved, especially in catering where the "back of house" changes at every venue. He is very willing to share his learned lessons with his competitors, as the cause is for the greater good.

Holly gave a review of POWER's purpose and read the newly crafted mission statement.

**POWER Mission Statement:** To explore and evaluate the highest good collection, recycling and use of perishable organics and make recommendations for deployment of economically viable projects with a defined geographic area.

Holly announced that today was in earnest the launch of POWER. The first two meetings in late 2009 were testing the waters of interest. It is important to work in collaboration with government, non-profits, trade associations and private enterprise to ensure we take effective action on the highest good end use of perishable organics. One of the EPA's focal points is diversion of organic matter from landfills due to the methane gas produced. Perishable organics end uses fit three main categories: Energy, Compost, and Feeding. The POWER Steering Committee is focused on action and POWER meetings on education and communication of action. Holly stated the two main challenges in the current scenario include limited composting systems and effective, economic collection systems.

John Casagrande, VP Waste Processing & Logistics with Waste Management, gave a presentation on the company's Organics Collection System. Waste Management is faced with the challenges of customer demand and less landfill space. Can the system maintain reasonable profit margins? WM has partnered with WalMart and other grocers to handle Pre-Consumer perishable organics (meats excluded). Post-Consumer is difficult due to contamination of the feedstock and the liquid volume during the collection process. Another partnership is with Harvest Power to build anaerobic digester facilities and other waste to energy systems for organics.

John reviewed their evolving logistics for organic material collection, including adaptations to the trucks, dumpsters, and pick-up schedules. Steve Simon commented on his challenges of using 35 gallon collection containers at his restaurants, as they get quite heavy to maneuver easily. Scott Seydel commented on how they have approached the liquids issue (weight and contamination aspects) in New York City by implementing machines that in essence centrifuge the liquids out. Weight savings alone in the tipping fees pays for the machines in a year. Refer to [www.elementalimpact.org](http://www.elementalimpact.org) for WM's PowerPoint presentation.

Holly began her introduction of Britt Faucette by stating the key to creating economically viable projects is ensuring there are strong markets for perishable organic recycling end products.

Dr. Britt Faucette, Director of Research & Technical Services with Filtrexx International, gave an overview of his company, which creates an end market for compost by incorporating it into their stormwater quality/management control products (40 of them). He stated compost is a great ingredient as it is locally produced, 100% recyclable, and carbon friendly. He stated there is a change in the way we should be focusing on stormwater in that it should be dealt with as much as possible on site versus piping away as quickly as possible (aids in nutrient retention, aquifer recharge, overall water quality).

Britt gave a review on how his product line is a good option for projects seeking LEED certification and how they impact carbon emissions reduction and sequestration. Wayne King, US Composting Council President, commented that there is a real need for a holistic approach in keeping the organics on-site for soil retention and runoff protection. He stated that the Natural Capital is much better with this approach and that the savings in water treatment monies can be huge.

Holly asked Britt if variables in the feedstock create different values of compost or application uses. He stated for his product line, not really, but Wayne stated that the US Compost Council is creating a grading system that will set standards consistent across state lines. The USCC is working on assisting the end use side as well in creating erosion and sediment controls, soil amendment standards for plants, and various categorical uses. Special attention is being given to the research on the physical attributes of the soil (porosity, capillary potential, etc.). The goal is to get compost use back in agriculture and cut down on fertilizer and petroleum use. Refer to [www.elementalimpact.org](http://www.elementalimpact.org) for Filtrexx's PowerPoint presentation.

Holly gave a review of some projects POWER is involved with:

- 1) Zero Waste Zone – working on use of compostable products in the foodservice industry and finding the threshold for carbon neutrality in the collection process
- 2) Urban Farm Labs – study the science of foods grown with perishable organic compost
- 3) CDC – Ga. Tech Research Institute – study how our endorphin systems have been impacted by dietary changes over the last decades; understand how compost may rejuvenate the soil so that it may produce food rich in nutrients, vitamins and minerals essential to human health.

Jean Pullen, Energy Engineer with the Office of Sustainability at the City of Atlanta, gave an update on the City of Atlanta Sustainability Projects/Studies, which include an anaerobic digester for the Department of Public Work's yard trimmings, a renewable energy plant at the water reclamation facility, and their Zero Waste Plan.

Jack Walsdorf, Chief Operating Officer with Converted Organics, gave an overview of his company's operations to collect pre and post consumer organic waste (including meats, bones, plant, and small bits of paper) and process them through their modular aerobic digesters into a pellet fertilizer and a liquid fertilizer used for turf care. Jack reviewed their trials and errors in the logistical and mechanical processes, the permitting processes, and the development of Scalable, Modular, AeRobic, Technology (SMART) that can make their technology packageable for multiple users and locations. Jack reviewed the benefits of using organic fertilizers to synthetically produced products and how his company is assisting the country of Mali. They are currently working on technology that will allow them to capture the oils from the organics and add a

third product line of biofuel. Refer to [www.elementalimpact.org](http://www.elementalimpact.org) for Converted Organics's PowerPoint presentation.

Holly stated the POWER Steering Committee has a technical committee that will access project metrics, CAPEX studies, and performances, so that info can be communicated and processes improved. POWER is to become the NATIONAL source for perishable reuse options. All presenters at POWER meetings must allow their slides to be shared on the POWER website for all to view.

Holly concluded by requesting options for future presentations, including Carbon Neutral possibilities and Food Residuals used in Animal Feed. Jim Lammert, Foodservice Marketing Manager with Huhmaki, recommended inviting a federal EPA executive to report on the EPA's position/assistance with food composting facility permitting across the nation.

The meeting was adjourned for a social hour for the participants.