

Litter Task Force Meeting Notes December 14, 2005

Participants:

Greg Gerritt, Barry Schiller, Jef Fornaro, Lynn Ruggeri, Alma Miller (DOA) and Tom Getz

Minutes from November meeting were approved.

Legislative update:

Litter Tax

Barry Schiller brought up the topic of recapturing some of the litter tax for work on reducing litter. Barry has talked to his local (North Providence) representative and senator (Greg Schadone and Dominic Ruggerio) and they have agreed to introduce a bill in their respective chambers. He indicated we really need both bills and to funds needed to be placed into the state budget. They also agreed to introduce bills to make a mandatory refund at grocery stores when folks bring their own bags, \$.03 per bag. Barry noted that Eastside market does give refunds but does not have a sign noting it. He suggested that the threat of legislation might move more stores to do a voluntary program.

It was noted that RI's plastic bag recycling program has been successful and is attracting notice from other states, which have asked about it.

Smoking on Beaches

Jef indicated he has left messages with Rep. Peter Lewiss and will follow up with Rep. Art Handy.

DEM indicated it has the ability to regulate smoking on beaches. The legislature did not pass the bill last year it is not a good idea for an agency to pass regulations after a measure fail in the legislature. It was thought that it would be better to get the bill reintroduced and the Task Force should be more proactive on it this year.

We are still waiting (until January) to see what makes it into the Governor's legislative package as regards to litter for 2006.

Commercial Recycling

There are efforts under way to get RIRRC to raise the price for tipping commercial waste by \$.50 per ton and use the money for promotion of commercial recycling.

Solid waste Plan will be coming out soon, Greg shall get word out to task force when hearings are scheduled.

Fish lines and tires

This issue will be held over for January meeting, when DEM staff will attend the meeting.

Dunkin Donuts Welcome Center on 295

The facility will be approached to see if they will participate in litter pick up around the facility and highlight recycling. Jef Fornaro is having conversations with them about these topics. It would be good to have a before and after litter survey near the facility, similar to an Earth Day clean up. In this way we can determine how much and what kind of litter is on the highway.

Would be good to have recycling signage at the welcome center, and maybe standard signage at all state facilities.

Richmond Visitors Center

This has been an ongoing issue. Lynn and people of Richmond have had conversation with center manager about recycling and been not been able to get any commitments about recycling in the facility or pushing the litter issue. This facility could present a good opportunity to provide leadership in support of the Governor's anti-Litter initiative. Litter task force will draft a letter to EDC about this topic. Greg Gerritt will draft a letter on this topic.