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Morry Galonoy
Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

September 22nd, 2022

Environment, Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

this was a teleconference zoom meeting

Attendees

Frank Wu
Rosamond Gianutsos
Steven Raga
Laura Shepard
Lauren Springer

Absentee

Chhemang Lama
Benjamin Lucas
Karla Perez
Anthony Tudela

Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert, CB2 District Manager

Guests

La Shaun Lesley
Kara Napolitano, Outreach & Education Coordinator, SMR

Frank Wu welcomed everyone to the CB2 Environmental, Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting.

Frank Wu introduced Kara Napolitano, Education & Outreach Coordinator, Sims Municipal Recycling (SMR)

Kara Napolitano introduced herself and presented a presentation to the committee of the recycling system. (*presentation is attached*)

- The company was known as Sims Municipal Recycling (SMR), however, they were recently purchased by an investment firm called Closed Loops Partners. They now own 51% of the company. The company is still connected with Sims but they are presently known as SMR.
- Most of the processing takes place in the Brooklyn facility. It is located right on the waterfront in Sunset Park Brooklyn on the Gowanus Bay near the Gowanus Canal.

“Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth”

- The type of facility being operated at this location is called a material recovery facility. This is a sorting facility for recyclables. This facility exists around the world.
- 100% of NYC's recyclables that go into the blue bins are sorted in this facility as well as a smaller facility in New Jersey.
- SMR sorts 1,000 tons of material a day.
- That is a lot of material a day, which makes the Brooklyn facility the largest in the world for sorting material.
- Kara Napolitano went over what goes into the Green and Blue Bins.
 - Plastic bags are not recyclable.
 - Pizza boxes can go in the green bins.
 - Peanut butter containers don't have to be cleaned so thoroughly; the main thing is that they get put in blue bin for recycling.
 - Cartons do not go into green paper bin as they are coated with a plastic.
 - Batteries should never go into the blue bins. They are dangerous to go through the sorting process as they can explode.
 - For anything broken, example glass; it would go into trash as the human factor has to be considered.
 - Plastic bottle caps on plastic bottles should stay on.
- Recyclables are 1/3 of waste and composting is the other 1/3. Kara Napolitano encourages everyone to go to www.nyc.gov/curbsidecomposting to order a brown composting bin. These are large amounts of waste that can be diverted from going into the landfill by recycling and composting.
- The Department of Sanitation picks up these recyclables and drops it off at the sorting facility.
- LIC and the Bronx are Transfer Stations. No sorting is done at these locations.
- Staten Island and lower Manhattan get recyclables sent to the New Jersey facility and 2/3 go to the Brooklyn facility.
- Recyclables are loaded in LIC onto barges. These barges then travel to Sunset Park in Brooklyn to the sorting facility.
- The LIC facility on Newtown Creek can be seen here: <https://goo.gl/maps/kokzkYAJ9v9a7w4L8>
- The hours of operation at this sorting facility in Brooklyn are 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, 3 shifts.
- Paper & cardboard get dumped at this facility but will not be sorted. These recyclables get loaded on a large truck and go to the papermill.
- Their sorting system consists of 2½ miles of conveyor belts which sorts the recyclables.
- Kara Napolitano explained through the presentation the separation process of the glass, metals and rigid plastics.
- Employees are the last step of this conveyor belt process, where they remove items that were in the wrong place.

- At the end, a similar recyclable item is compressed into a bale.
- These bales go out by truck and or railcar and are sold.
- These materials are then reprocessed into other items.
- Reduce and Reuse are the largest impacts on recycling a person can have as well as composting.
- A regular small battery can be placed in the trash, if it is a rechargeable or a computer battery, E-scooter or E-Bike batteries can be returned to the place of purchase.
- Producers of batteries must get more involved into the recycling of batteries.
- Producers of packaging that is not recyclable has to get more involved with their packaging design. Legislation is being looked into regarding this issue.
- They do tours of this sorting facility in Sunset Park Brooklyn. School tours and adult tours.
- They have a recycling education center.
- For more information visit their website at www.simsmunicipal.com

Frank Wu had a discussion with the committee regarding upcoming committee meeting topics. Some suggestions were:

- Air quality
- Department of Environmental Protection regarding flooding.
- NYCERTA - regarding programs and rebates that are available.

Every meeting the committee records the existing CO2 air quality. Today's reading was 416.31 ppm which is down from August when it was 417.19 ppm and up from last September when it was 413.43 ppm.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:
Kim Waber