

**KING COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC)
March 21, 2008**

Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance

Carolyn Armanini
William Beck
Joe Casalini
Bob Dixon
Richard Gelowicz
Jerry Hardebeck
Joan McGilton
Suellen Mele
Ray Schlien

Others in Attendance

Gemma Alexander
Terri Barclay
David Freiboth
Jeff Gaisford
Sharon Hlavka
Kevin Kiernan
Sean Krohnberg
Mary Lang
Josh Marx
Laura Moser
Diane Yates

Action Items

Lines 05-09: Approval of February minutes by consensus.

1 **Call to Order and Introductions**

2 SWAC Chair Carolyn Armanini called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.
3 Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

4
5 **Approval of January Minutes**

6 Armanini pointed out two typographical errors in the February minutes. SWAC member
7 Suellen Mele asked that her comment at line 150 be clarified by specifying “the proposed
8 Zero Waste guiding principle.”

9 *The amended minutes were approved by consensus.*

10
11 **Updates: SWD / MSWMAC Update / Legislation**

12 **SWD Updates**

13 Division Director Kevin Kiernan reported that the new Shoreline Recycling and Transfer
14 Station has successfully operated for one month. The division placed an ad in the local
15 paper thanking the City of Shoreline and its residents for their support and cooperation
16 during the planning, design and construction process. The division has been surprised by
17 the amount of metal residents have brought to the new station to be recycled. Between

18 opening day on February 16 and March 5, Shoreline received 31,300 pounds of metal for
19 recycling, necessitating a larger bin for metals. As a result, the division is looking into the
20 possibility of expanding metal recycling services at other transfer stations.

21

22 Radio talk-show host, Dori Monson, who does not support public art generally, included
23 incorrect information on the art at the Shoreline Station in his program. Specifically, he
24 said that a lot of money was spent on tires for the sculpture at the front gate, when those
25 tires could have been sourced from “the dump.” In fact, no money was spent on the tires,
26 which did come from Cedar Hills, where they had been used in operations. The budget
27 for art at Shoreline was \$225,000. That money was managed by 4Culture, and was spent
28 on numerous community meetings and school art programs. One Percent for Public Art is
29 required in both state law and county code, and is not optional for the division. 4Culture
30 will attend SWAC’s June meeting to talk about the arts program for the reconstruction of
31 Bow Lake.

32

33 In response to a question, Kiernan said that the state law for One Percent for Public Art
34 does not apply to the division, but county code does.

35

36 The construction equipment has been removed from the free recycling area at Shoreline.
37 Space is available at Shoreline for additional recycling, if the Comprehensive Solid Waste
38 Management Plan (Comp Plan) update results in the decision to add recycling services at
39 the stations. There was an initial flurry of complaints about the wall in the self-haul area,
40 but there has been sufficient room to allow for the smooth flow of self-haul traffic. A
41 transfer station operator is stationed on the floor to assist self-haul customers who need
42 help.

43

44 Kiernan reported that the division has signed the landfill gas (LFG) contract. The
45 contractor, Ingenco, is already developing the state environmental policy act (SEPA)
46 checklist. Construction is expected to begin this summer. The contract will generate a
47 minimum of 1.3 million dollars annually for the solid waste fund. Once Ingenco begins to
48 produce pipeline gas, the division will stop flaring gas as a regular practice. However, a

49 flare will be located near the LFG facility as a backup, and some waste products will be
50 subjected to “thermal oxidization,” which may look like flaring to the casual observer.

51

52 Kiernan said the property needed for Bow Lake reconstruction has been purchased from
53 the Washington State Department of Transportation and for less than the division had
54 budgeted. The lower price will be somewhat offset by the high cost of clearing the
55 property. The division will be constrained during construction by the need to provide
56 continuous commercial service throughout the project. Self-haul service will be diverted
57 from Bow Lake during construction. The division will fund construction through bonds.
58 If necessary, the division can borrow internally from its cash reserves. However, the
59 major expenses for the project are still some time in the future.

60

61 Kiernan said the division has purchased the second parcel necessary for reconstruction of
62 the Factoria Transfer Station. There will be no need to rezone the property, but a special
63 use permit may be required.

64

65 The Skykomish Drop Box is now open. Roof replacement is scheduled for this summer.
66 Although it serves a very small population, the drop box needed to be reopened quickly
67 because its service area is so remote.

68

69 Kiernan reported that the county’s current green building ordinance has been extended to
70 July, pending council’s discussions of whether to make the ordinance permanent. Mele
71 asked about the cause for the delayed decision. Kiernan replied that council is asking for
72 more cost information, especially related to initial costs and payback. The challenge is to
73 pull out capital costs related to green building. Some incremental costs are higher, but
74 they can be hard to identify as part of a comprehensive building design. Recycling and
75 Environmental Services Manager Jeff Gaisford added that council is interested in setting a
76 payback period as part of a new ordinance, but individual green features have different
77 payback periods, so simple numbers are hard to generate. He said that council seems
78 supportive of a green building ordinance, and is trying to determine where to set the bar,

79 rather than whether to support green building. Mele asked the division to keep SWAC
80 informed on the progress of the green building ordinance.

81

82 Kiernan said the division's 2006 budget proposal to insource hauling of recyclables from
83 the transfer stations to recycling processors is still under consideration at council. The
84 consulting firm Gershman, Brickner, & Bratton, Inc (GBB), which performed the third
85 party review of the Transfer Plan, was hired to perform a third party review of the
86 division's insourcing request. GBB performed a full cost analysis, while the division's
87 analysis looked at marginal costs. The division disagrees with GBB's approach, as well
88 as with some of their numbers within that approach. Even so, the difference between
89 GBB's conclusion and the division's is small enough to fall within the margin of error for
90 both studies. The council's decision will ultimately be a matter of policy.

91

92 Kiernan said SWAC and MSWMAC had a successful joint meeting in December. After
93 reviewing the schedule, the division suggests that it might be useful to combine SWAC's
94 expertise with MSMWAC's for the April meeting, where recycling topics will be
95 concluded. At their meeting last week, MSWMAC agreed to a joint meeting. They hoped
96 that a joint meeting could be held at their regular time, 11:45 on April 11, instead of on
97 SWAC's meeting date of April 18. Lunch would be provided.

98

99 There were no objections to the proposed schedule. Armanini said that agenda item five,
100 WPR Evaluation Criteria Application, would be deferred to April, as it is already on
101 MSWMAC's April agenda. Kiernan added that the division will email all SWAC
102 members with the new meeting time and will ask for RSVPs in order to get an accurate
103 count for lunch orders. Yates said that she would find out if the joint meeting will be an
104 open public meeting and would let everyone know by email.

105

106 Kiernan said that he recently received an email from the Department of Ecology regarding
107 grants for conversion technologies that would turn organics into biofuels. The grants are
108 in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range and a number of academic institutions, including WSU,
109 are recipients. Kiernan noted that this is an example of the level of activity surrounding

110 new conversion technologies that are developing on the horizon as energy markets
111 change. He said that he would forward the message to all SWAC members.

112

113 SWAC member Joe Casalini said a recent article on National Public Radio reported that
114 biodiesel blends are often not true to specifications. However, the same study found that
115 biodiesels are less damaging than petroleum when spilled into bodies of water.

116

117 SWAC member Richard Gelowicz said a Canadian project is working to turn plastic film
118 into fuels. Armanini added that it is important for the Comp Plan to acknowledge the kind
119 of activity that currently surrounds the development of new conversion technologies.

120

121 SWAC member Ray Schlien said that a 2005 memorandum of understanding (MOU)
122 between the division and the City of Kirkland states the division will limit tonnage at
123 Houghton Transfer Station to 135,000 tons per year. Yates replied that while a tonnage
124 limit was initially proposed by the City of Kirkland, it was not part of the final agreement.
125 Kiernan said the MOU does contain a commitment from the division not to keep loaded
126 trailers at Houghton overnight.

127

128 MSWMAC Update

129 SWAC and MSWMAC member Joan McGilton reported that MSWMAC viewed the
130 recycling presentation SWAC will see today. Several members felt the proposed
131 deadlines were not aggressive enough. MSWMAC had an internal discussion relating to
132 the role and function of the Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Group (ITSG), and tasked
133 ITSG with evaluating the goals and deadlines proposed by the division. ITSG's
134 conclusions will be presented at the joint meeting with SWAC.

135

136 McGilton said MSWMAC approved the Business Plan as being consistent with the
137 requirements of Ordinance 14971. MSWMAC also continued its ongoing discussion of
138 conversion technologies. Chair Garber reported that she is concerned about the skewed
139 data that is being presented by proponents in presentations such as the one recently

140 sponsored by Enterprise Seattle. Proponents are presenting data based on conditions on
141 the East coast, which are quite different from the conditions faced here.

142

143 Armanini said that a recent letter from King County Councilmember Kathy Lambert
144 inviting city elected to tour the Spokane incinerator included some factual errors.

145

146 Legislative Update:

147 SWAC Staff Liaison Diane Yates reported that the division tracked approximately forty
148 bills during the legislative session, most of them were related to recycling. Of the bills the
149 division tracked, only two passed. These were the Children's Safe Products Act, which
150 establishes limits for the amount of lead, cadmium and phthalates that can be contained in
151 children's products and a bill allowing private schools to participate in recycling awards
152 programs.

153

154 Mele commented that the mercury bill got to the Rules Committee in the second house,
155 which was really good attention. She said it will be interesting to see how the bill does
156 next year.

157

158 SWAC members discussed fluorescent lamps, which save energy but contain mercury.
159 The new Shoreline Recycling and Transfer Station will soon begin accepting them for
160 recycling, and CleanScapes in Shoreline picks them up at curbside. The Take It Back
161 Network includes recycling options as well. Although it would seem that product
162 stewardship initiatives would raise the price of the lamps and discourage people from
163 switching to fluorescents from incandescent bulbs, in practice large companies are able to
164 absorb the extra costs of product stewardship without huge price increases.

165

166 In response to a question, Mele said she would forward the results of a study that
167 examined the path of mercury released from broken fluorescent lamps. Schlien said
168 Consumer Reports recommends airing out any area where a lamp has broken and carefully
169 scraping up the pieces. If a lamp breaks on carpet, they recommend cutting a square out
170 of the carpet rather than vacuuming, which will volatilize the mercury.

171

172 SWAC members discussed the pharmaceuticals bill, which did not pass, noting that
173 although drinking water in the Seattle area is not contaminated by pharmaceuticals
174 because of its source in an upstream watershed, many areas that use groundwater are
175 finding pharmaceutical contaminants in their drinking water.

176

177 Hardebeck announced that the City of Seattle is about to enact its new garbage contract,
178 and his company, CleanScapes, hopes to be one of the contractors. He said he will keep
179 SWAC members informed as things progress.

180

181 **WPR: Presentation and Discussion**

182 Gaisford gave a presentation on Waste Prevention and Recycling (WPR)
183 Recommendations Part I. This presentation can be viewed at:

184 <http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrp/swd/Reccomend1SWAC03212008.ppt>

185

186 Gelowicz commented that recycling markets are very volatile. For example, low grade
187 plastic film has no local markets, and China recently shut down its market for the material.
188 Casalini added that too much supply can drop prices or raise standards too high to
189 maintain the market.

190

191 SWAC members discussed special recycling events, which are popular with residents, but
192 are costly and difficult to site. SWAC member Bob Dixon asked if household hazardous
193 waste was included in the recommendation to consider discontinuing special recycling
194 events. Gaisford said household hazardous waste programs are developed under a
195 separate plan from the Comp Plan. Mele suggested that special recycling events be
196 funded by product manufacturers as part of a product stewardship program. Gelowicz
197 commented that companies may view this as a marketing opportunity rather than a
198 punitive measure. Mele said that in some Canadian provinces, some producers pay for
199 curbside collection programs. She added that tires would be a good addition to the list of
200 targeted products.

201

202 In response to a question about food waste goals, Gaisford said that food banks already
203 have strong relationships with grocery stores and food processing companies. The place
204 where they need more help is in connecting with restaurants, where the food is already
205 prepared and needs to move quickly.

206

207 Gaisford said that standardizing collection services countywide would mean that as
208 contracts are renegotiated, everyone would be working toward providing the same
209 services.

210

211 Armanini suggested using the word “consistency” rather than “standardization.” She said
212 that targeting areas that have lower recycling rates is more efficient than planning
213 programs that would affect all areas of the county equally.

214

215 SWAC members commented that throughout the presentation, the emphasis was placed
216 too heavily on recycling. Armanini proposed that the primary focus be on waste
217 prevention and reduction, with recycling as the next objective. She said, for example, that
218 encouraging reusable bags should take priority over recycling plastic bags, especially in
219 light of market concerns. Mele added that all categories should be reconsidered to see if
220 similar waste prevention priorities could be identified.

221

222 Gelowicz commented that the multifamily recycling stream is very dirty and contains a lot
223 of contamination. Because that population is more mobile, education to improve the
224 quality of the recycling stream is very difficult.

225

226 Casalini noted that the term “curbside mix” has a very specific meaning to recycling
227 processors, signifying a specific paper grade. He suggested the division use a different
228 term to refer the recyclable materials that are generally collected at the curb.

229

230 Hardebeck said that the county should lead by example during this Comp Plan cycle.
231 Although space for recycling is not available at some transfer stations, the county should
232 require self haulers to recycle at transfer stations, where possible, before instituting a

233 curbside garbage ban of recyclables. Gaisford noted that curbside garbage bans will apply
234 in the unincorporated areas where recycling rates are currently very low.

235

236 In response to a question, Yates confirmed that the timeline for implementation is based
237 on the expectation that the Comp Plan would be fully adopted in late 2009.

238

239 **Ordinance 14971 Business Plan**

240 Kiernan said that Ordinance 14971 was passed nearly four years ago. It required many
241 deliverables, including the Milestone Reports #1-4, the Solid Waste Transfer and Waste
242 Export System Plan, the Governance Report, and a Business Plan that would address nine
243 specific issues. This document does not look like a standard business plan, but it does
244 address the issues required by the ordinance. Through the Comp Plan process, the
245 division will be making changes to its business. When that process is complete, the
246 division will prepare a more traditional business plan. Armanini said that SWAC is not
247 required to take action on the Business Plan.

248

249 Mele asked if the plan addresses the need to keep Cedar Hills Landfill open to provide
250 disposal capacity in an emergency. Kiernan replied that it defers to the Cedar Hills Site
251 Development Plan, which will be updated this year and will examine possibilities to
252 extend the life of Cedar Hills. He added that a major disaster would fill Cedar Hills. A
253 regional group called the Seattle Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) has developed a
254 draft disaster plan that deals more directly with emergency capacity. Both UASI and
255 FEMA emphasize the importance of diverting disaster debris in order to save landfill
256 capacity for waste that presents health issues.

257

258 Referring to Section 5 of the Business Plan, Schlien said the division would want the
259 authority to contract for waste collection within the urban growth boundary. Kiernan
260 replied that state law governs that authority and awards franchises for the unincorporated
261 areas. The division can set collection standards for those areas through its Comp Plan.

262

263 Armanini asked if members had any further comments or wanted to take any action on the
264 Business Plan. There were no comments.

265

266 **OPEN FORUM**

267 Armanini said the next meeting will be April 11th at 11:45 for lunch. She said she would
268 notify everyone in attendance if the meeting would be open to the public.

269

270 The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

271

272 Submitted by:

273 Gemma Alexander, SWD Staff