

**KING COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC)  
July 17, 2009  
Meeting Minutes**

Members in Attendance

David Baker  
William A. Beck  
Joe Casalini  
Bob Dixon  
Richard Gelowicz  
Jerry Hardebeck  
Suellen Mele  
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann  
Ray Schlien  
Relaena Sindelar  
Judy Stenberg  
Dave Whitley  
Bill Ziegler

Others in Attendance

Jon Bengtsson  
Russ Bensley  
Ann Berrysmith  
Ed Davis  
Jeff Gaisford  
Kathy Hashagen  
Shirley Jurgensen  
Sabrina Kang  
Kevin Kiernan  
Hilary King  
Yolanda Pon  
Mizan Rahman  
Grace Reamer  
Margaret Shield  
John Taylor  
Diane Yates

Action Items

**Line 12-13: Approval of April Minutes**

**Line 77-78: Approved nomination of Tim Crosby for appointment to SWAC**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

SWAC Chair Joe Casalini noted that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves. Casalini thanked division staff for the high quality tour offered to SWAC members in June. He found it valuable and recommended that SWAC members avail themselves of the opportunity. Solid Waste Division Director Kevin Kiernan noted that an evening tour is planned for the public on July 30th at 6:00 p.m. Those wishing to attend should contact Diane Yates.

**Approval of April Minutes**

12 **SWAC Member William Beck moved approval of the April minutes as written. *The***  
13 ***motion was approved by consent.***

14

15 **Updates: SWD / MSWMAC / Other**

16 SWAC Liaison Diane Yates said there will not be a MSWMAC update at this meeting  
17 because the July MSWMAC meeting was cancelled.

18

19 SWD Updates

20 Kevin Kiernan said the division received a significant amount of positive media in response  
21 to the July 14 “Recycle Relay.” Teams of citizens competed to sort the greatest amount of  
22 recyclables from garbage in ten minutes.

23

24 Kiernan noted that the division’s final report of the 2009 state legislative session is on  
25 handout table, along with an update of the division’s 2009 legislation for council. The King  
26 County Council will probably focus most of its attention on budget issues for the balance of  
27 the year, leaving limited time for other legislation.

28

29 Kiernan said that the site preparation phase of construction at Bow Lake is in process. The  
30 contractor is moving six truck loads of material from Bow Lake to Cedar Hills each  
31 working hour. The majority of the material is stockpiled or being used for daily cover. The  
32 negotiated procurement process for the second phase of construction is expected to result in  
33 a short list of contractors in August. Those contractors will be invited to submit materials  
34 that will allow them to be considered for the contract to build the new transfer station.

35

36 Kiernan reported that the King County construction management audit results were  
37 announced as part of the Accountability audit. That audit recommended that consistent  
38 construction management procedures be used throughout the county. The utility audit was  
39 completed by Ernst and Young in March. The Washington State Auditor’s Office has not  
40 released the report to King County.

41

42 Kiernan said that the Solid Waste Division made presentations to the Regional Policy  
43 Committee (RPC) and the Physical Environment Committee (PEC) in June. The  
44 PowerPoint files used for those presentations can be found at:

45 [http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrrp/swd/RPC\\_June%2009\\_%20Final.pdf](http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrrp/swd/RPC_June%2009_%20Final.pdf) and  
46 [http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrrp/swd/PEC\\_June%2009\\_%20Final.pdf](http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrrp/swd/PEC_June%2009_%20Final.pdf).

47

48 Kiernan reported that two projects from the Solid Waste Division have been submitted for  
49 Federal Stimulus Funds. The first is a request for \$470,000 for Leadership in Energy and  
50 Environmental Design (LEED) elements at the new Bow Lake Recycling and Transfer  
51 Station. The second is a request for \$100,000 to advance producer responsibility legislation  
52 for compact fluorescent lights.

53

54 Work on a new rate study has begun. The current rate was adopted for the three year period  
55 2008 through 2010. More information about the rate study will be available for discussion  
56 with SWAC in the first quarter of 2010. Kiernan noted that a new rate must be approved by  
57 the King County Council. When that has occurred, cities, haulers and the Washington  
58 Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) are given 90 days notice of the new rate  
59 before it goes into effect. That is why it is important to begin the rate study work at this  
60 time. More information will be provided in the financial briefing later in the meeting.

61

62 Kiernan said that tonnage decreased again in July, more steeply than it was decreasing in  
63 May and June. It is too early to know if the decrease will continue but the change presents  
64 additional financial challenges. SWD will manage to the decreased revenue.

65

66 Kiernan noted that weekend tonnage, which is comprised mostly of self-haul customers, has  
67 shown a double digit decrease though commercial tonnage is also down. Casalini noted the  
68 increasing tonnage declines are not limited to the Pacific Northwest, but have been reported  
69 by garbage and recycling organizations along the west coast.

70

71 In response to a question Kiernan noted that the consultant contracts for siting new  
72 recycling and transfer station facilities have been sent to the county's procurement offices.

73

74 **Membership**

75 SWAC Chair Joe Casalini and SWAC Vice Chair Judy Stenberg interviewed SWAC  
76 Applicant Tim Crosby and recommend his nomination for appointment to SWAC. **SWAC**  
77 **Member David Baker moved that Crosby's nomination be sent to the Executive for**  
78 **appointment. *The motion was approved by consent.***

79

80 Another new applicant is Hilary King from council district 7. She has applied for the  
81 interested citizen position and will be interviewed after today's meeting.

82

83 **Pharmaceuticals: Pilot Project and Product Stewardship Legislation**

84 Margaret Shield, Local Hazardous Waste Management Program (LHWMP) staff presented  
85 information concerning the safe disposal of unwanted prescription and over the counter  
86 (OTC) medicines. Shield and SWAC Member Suellen Mele were co-lobbyists for the  
87 Secure Medicine Return Bill during the 2009 Washington State legislative session.

88

89 The Local Hazardous Waste Management Program's initial interest in the safe disposal of  
90 unwanted medicines was to prevent them from getting into the environment where they are  
91 an emerging contaminant of concern in water and sediments. Though much of the  
92 pharmaceutical contamination in the environment comes from medicines that pass through  
93 the human body, properly disposing of unwanted medicines is a fairly simple and important  
94 source reduction measure.

95

96 Extra medicines are also a public safety and health issue because of the growing abuse of  
97 prescription drugs and increased accidental poisonings from prescription and OTC  
98 medications.

99

100 Disposing of unwanted medicines in the trash is not secure. That is a particular concern for  
101 controlled substances. Methods for citizens to make it more secure are cumbersome and  
102 seldom followed. Additionally, leachate from landfills eventually goes to the wastewater  
103 treatment plant. Wastewater and septic systems are not designed to treat chemicals from

104 medicines. Currently, the preferred disposal method for unwanted drugs is high-temperature  
105 incineration because it destroys biological activity of the drugs and prevents any possibility  
106 of reclamation for illicit use. Because many waste medicines are designated as hazardous  
107 waste under federal law, hazardous waste incineration is most appropriate.

108

109 The Secure Medicine Return bill would require that producers of medicines sold in  
110 Washington create and fund a product stewardship program to collect unwanted medicines  
111 from consumers and appropriately dispose of them at a hazardous waste facility. Despite  
112 the focus on budget in 2009, the bill had strong support but did not get to a floor vote before  
113 the session adjourned. The bill will be brought back to the legislature in 2010.

114

115 Shield discussed the positive results of the medicine take back program pilot called  
116 PH:ARM. The pilot successfully collected medicines at thirty seven pharmacies and at two  
117 boarding homes for seniors. However, collection sites cannot accept return of legally  
118 prescribed controlled substances because current federal law and Drug Enforcement  
119 Agency (DEA) rules mandate that they can only be collected by law enforcement officials.  
120 Efforts to amend the Controlled Substances Act are underway. SWAC Member Richard  
121 Gelowicz suggested that since drugs, including controlled substances, can be sent by mail, a  
122 drug mail-back program could partially address this issue.

123

124 In response to a question, Shield noted that a similar take back program in British Columbia  
125 is funded by producers at an annual cost of approximately \$6000 per manufacturer. Mele  
126 suggested that money from advertising could be used to pay for the program because  
127 customers would perceive a medicine take back program positively. Mele said that the key  
128 opponents of the proposed bill are pharmaceutical companies.

129

130 SWAC Member Jerry Hardebeck asked if other states have enacted similar legislation.  
131 Shield responded that efforts are moving forward in other states but that with the exception  
132 of a small program in Maine, none have come to fruition.

133

134 Kiernan noted that the Secure Medicine Return legislation is on King County's Legislative  
135 Agenda. In response to a comment Shield said that assistance in engaging support from the  
136 Association of Washington Cities on this issue would be welcome. Mele noted that the City  
137 of Seattle SWAC endorsed the legislation last year. Hardebeck suggested that SWAC  
138 revisit what can be done to support this legislation. The issue will be added to the October  
139 agenda. Based on input from that meeting, Mele will draft a proposed endorsement by for  
140 SWAC's consideration at the November meeting.

141

142 **Financial Plan**

143 Finance and Administration Manager Ann Berrysmith said that the Solid Waste Division  
144 has experienced an eight percent decline in tonnage this year from the same period in 2008.  
145 While tonnage decreases had stabilized in May and June, tonnage in July is lower than  
146 expected.

147

148 The Solid Waste Division has revised its 2009 revenue expectations and adjusted its  
149 planned expenditures to reflect the lower tonnage. Additional planning and analysis of the  
150 2010 proposed expenditures will be required. Staff will work with the Budget Office on  
151 adjustments to its 2010 budget request.

152

153 The Solid Waste Division intends to maintain the \$95/ton rate for the entire 2008-2010 rate  
154 period. A rate study considering all variable and non-variable costs is underway to  
155 determine the need for a rate increase in 2011. In response to a question, Kiernan said the  
156 rate study will include analysis of a transaction fee.

157

158 In response to a question, Berrysmith said that tonnage relates directly to revenue. Though  
159 self-haul customers may be bringing in less waste per trip while continuing to pay the same  
160 minimum fee, the difference represents a small percentage of the total and does not impact  
161 revenue significantly.

162

163 SWAC Member Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann asked if measurements have been made to  
164 determine if a decrease in consumer packaging is partially responsible for lower tonnage.

165 Kiernan replied that the Solid Waste Division periodically performs a waste study to  
166 identify the components of the solid waste stream. The last study took place in 2007 and  
167 information that is more current is not available at this time. Kiernan also noted that waste  
168 reduction is difficult to measure because you're trying to measure something that didn't  
169 happen.

170

171 Kiernan explained that the Solid Waste Division is an enterprise fund. Revenue from  
172 tipping fees covers the division's expenses. Though less tonnage does result in lower  
173 variable costs, non-variable costs, such as debt service, do not decrease with reduced  
174 tonnage. While the Solid Waste Division has attempted to maintain programs during the  
175 current economic downturn, changes should be expected if revenues continue to decrease.

176

177 Kiernan went on to say that a decrease in tipping fee revenue is expected to occur over time  
178 as recycling rates increase. However, the decrease in revenues during this economic  
179 downturn has presented particular challenges. Mele said that there were discussions during  
180 the development of the state's Beyond Waste Plan about the need to develop a new revenue  
181 model that isn't disposal based to fund solid waste programs.

182

183 SWAC Member William Beck asked if the economic downturn has resulted in an increase  
184 in illegal dumping. Kiernan responded that there has been no increase in the number of  
185 illegal dumping complaints that can be traced to the economy.

186

### 187 **Cedar Hills Site Development Plan**

188 Solid Waste Division Staff Shirley Jurgensen noted that SWAC had previously reviewed  
189 alternatives being considered in the Cedar Hills Site Development Plan. Alternatives under  
190 consideration add four to thirteen additional years of capacity using tonnage estimates from  
191 early this year. None of the alternatives encroach on the west, north or east buffers. Those  
192 areas are zoned residential. Some of the alternatives would require relocation of some  
193 facilities and do encroach on the southern buffer. That area is zoned industrial.

194

195 Preliminary review shows no significant difference in price per ton for the additional  
196 capacity added in each of the alternatives. The decision will probably be made based on  
197 other types of considerations. However, the longer that Cedar Hill operates, the longer  
198 increased fees to citizens will be deferred.

199

200 Cedar Hills Site Development Plan scoping began late in March with a public meeting to  
201 gather feedback from citizens in April. The opportunity to provide input to the scope of the  
202 draft EIS closed in May.

203

204 Upon review, the Solid Waste Division noted that though the majority of scoping comments  
205 listed anticipated issues, a few unanticipated issues to consider were identified. Studies for  
206 those issues have been added to the schedule. The additional studies will review particulate  
207 dispersion, the possible release of pollutants from aeration of wastewater, and vibration  
208 from flares and equipment. As a result of the time needed for these additional studies, the  
209 Cedar Hills Site Development Plan will be completed later than originally scheduled.

210

211 The draft EIS is now scheduled to be released in early September followed by a six week  
212 comment period. The Solid Waste Division anticipates recommending an alternative in the  
213 fourth quarter of 2009.

214

215 In response to a question, Kiernan noted that changes to the landfill gas to energy plant will  
216 not be considered under any alternative. SWAC Member Bob Dixon asked if the  
217 alternatives included the opportunity to recover resources from excavating previously  
218 disposed waste. Jurgensen responded that though soils could be recovered, previous  
219 excavations have shown that most of the waste in the areas that could be excavated has  
220 decomposed.

221

222 Kiernan noted that Jurgensen would soon be retiring from King County. He said that much  
223 of what the Solid Waste Division is proud of at the landfill is a result of her work.

224

225 **Open Forum**

226 In response to a question Kiernan said that the landfill gas to energy facility at Cedar Hills  
227 operated by BEW is still in start-up. The operator is testing various aspects of the large,  
228 complicated new facility which is operating intermittently. BEW is working on the noise  
229 caused by facility operation.

230

231 SWAC Member Ray Schlienz said that the 2008 Annual Report did not include financial  
232 information concerning the impact of recycling on revenue. Kiernan responded that the  
233 financial impact of recycling is included in the long term financial projection. It is not  
234 broken out separately because planning for increased recycling is part of the work of the  
235 division and is not considered to be a separate issue.

236

237 **Adjourn**

238 The next meeting is scheduled for September 18th.

239 The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

240

241 Submitted by:

242 Kathy Hashagen, SWD Staff