

King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

October 21, 2011 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Room
Next SWAC meeting – November 18, 2011 - 9:30-11:30

Meeting Minutes

| Members |
|--------------------------|
| David Baker |
| Jerry Bartlett |
| William A. Beck |
| Joe Casalini |
| Jean Garber |
| Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann |
| Judy Stenberg |
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| Others |
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| Ann Berrysmith, SWD Finance and Administration Manager |
| Ed Davis, Public Health Seattle King County |
| Jeff Gaisford, SWD Recycling and Environmental Services Manager |
| Kathy Hashagen, SWD Staff |
| Beth Humphreys, SWD Staff |
| Kevin Kiernan, SWD Director |
| Michelle Miller, SWD Staff |
| Thea Severn, SWD Planning and Communications Manager |
| Diane Yates, SWD Intergovernmental Liaison |

Approve September Meeting Minutes; Review Agenda

There was no quorum. As a result, no action was taken regarding September meeting minutes.

Updates

SWD

Kiernan reported that in November or December SWD will be coming to SWAC with non-substantive changes in the comp plan. Because the comp plan has been in process for some time it was necessary to update some data. Other relatively minor changes were made in response to Department of Ecology comments.

The consultant that will work on the siting for the new northeast and south county recycling and transfer stations has been selected. SWAC will receive additional information when the selection has been made public.

Recently there was a stir at the Bow Lake Transfer Station. One of the subcontractors – Interstate Sheet Metal – is non-union and Sheet Metal Workers International Association Local 66 and Iron Workers Local 86 picketed the construction site October 19th. The subcontractor was not onsite and they left at 12:30 p.m. Some commercial hauler loads were diverted to Algona while the picket line was in place. The subcontractor will be onsite Monday October 24th and it is possible the picketers will return. The construction site has a separate gate from the gate used in SWD operations and renewed picketing is not expected to disrupt operations. (Update since the meeting - This issue has been resolved. No additional picketing occurred.)

King County does not have a requirement for union labor for minor contractors such as Interstate Sheet Metal when contracting for construction.

On October 12, the division hosted a media event to begin the 2011 “Bag your Bag” campaign. Two elementary schools in the Highline School District competed to see which school could collect the most bags and plastic film. Coverage from KING 5, KCPQ, the Seattle Times and Highline Times showed the students at the event loading 75,000 bags into a school bus, bucket

brigade fashion. Both schools received a bench made of Trex plastic lumber in recognition of their participation. Plastic lumber is one of the primary markets for plastic film. Sixty five grocery stores in King County participate in the program which encourages shoppers to recycle their plastic film by bringing it back to the store. More information about the program is available at www.bagyourbags.com.

In August, King County added a link to the eco-consumer website that allows consumers to opt out of receipt of junk mail, catalogs and phone books. Since then, 1800 county residents have signed up opting out of over ten thousand mailers and phone books. Though businesses are not required to honor the requests made through this program most prefer not to send out mailers they know aren't wanted. More information about the program is available at <https://kingcounty.catalogchoice.org/>

2012 Budget Preview

SWD Finance and Administration Manager Ann Berrysmith provided SWAC with an overview of the proposed 2012 budget in relation to the approved 2011 budget. The handout is available at [here](#). Changes shown in the revenue section include:

- Disposal fee revenue has increased as a result of the increased rate. Tonnage is projected to remain essentially flat.
- The landfill gas to energy plant has been shut down for a couple of months. The 2011 adopted budget has been revised to reflect the decreased revenue. The plant is projected to be back in operation in the first quarter of 2012. Revenue in the 2012 proposed budget reflects that expected down time.
- Harbor Island rental revenues are currently received in the operating fund. Then related expenses are removed and the net proceeds are transferred to a capital fund. In the 2012 proposed budget the revenues will be retained in the operating fund.

SWD Staff Lisa Youngren provided information about changes in the expense side of the budget.

- Debt service increased to support the capital program.
- The Landfill Reserve Fund is significantly higher because there was a recalculation of the interest rate assumed in the model. Based on discussions with the County Auditor SWD revised the assumed interest rate down from the 3% used previously. The lower interest rate meant that more money needed to be transferred to the fund which pays for the maintenance of the landfills after they are closed.
- The construction fund was increased to reduce future debt service costs.
- The overhead allotment increased. It refers to general fund overhead and is assigned by the Executive's Budget Office.
- Recycling and Environmental Services budget increased due to the addition of grants to cities.
- In the 2011 adopted budget, Information Technology appeared separately. A lower amount to support IT shows as an increase in the proposed 2012 Finance and Administration budget.
- Though five positions were eliminated in transportation that budget shows an increase as a result of increased diesel prices.
- The Cedar Hills Disposal budget bears the increase in the rent payment for use of the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill.

- Landfill Gas and Wastewater is higher due to an increase in sewer rates. That has a significant impact on the division because leachate from the landfill is processed as wastewater.

In response to a question, Kiernan said that though BioEnergy Washington is required to pay the division for the gas provided whether or not they are able to process it, the division loses revenues from the sale of green energy credits which are not available when the plant isn't in operation. SWD also is unable to collect a premium paid to the division on gas which is processed and sold to Puget Sound Energy. Until the plant is back online SWD will continue to flare the gas as required by permit

Kiernan noted that the 2012 proposed budget includes nineteen fewer positions than the 2011 adopted budget.

Renton Transfer Station Hours Changes

The 2012 proposed budget included modifications to hours at the Renton Transfer Station. The proposed change would save the division about a half-million dollars in 2012. Approximately \$300K of the savings is shown as a decrease in the budget. The remaining amount is avoided costs such as lower maintenance.

Severn said that the proposed hours changes have been modified as part of the budget review process. It is likely a budget proviso will require that the hours be maintained until June 30th while outreach occurs and an analysis of the use of the transfer system is completed. SWD will come to SWAC with the results of the analysis early next year.

Since 2007, weekend tonnage has dropped about 28% at Renton. That's three percent more than the system-wide average. Renton customers have nearby options when the station is closed. Bow Lake and Factoria are less than nine miles away, and Bow Lake has extended hours.

Constraints such as shifts defined in labor agreements make it impossible to slightly decrease hours at each station in response to decreased tonnage. More information is available at [here](#).

Discussion included:

- The Renton Transfer Station weekday hours may be shifted to accommodate the needs of commercial haulers though the number of hours will not change.
- The preliminary plans for the new Factoria Transfer Station have been downsized in response to decreased tonnage. Some current projections say that tonnage will not return to 2007 levels for fifteen years.
- Though it would be less expensive to build and operate transfer stations that only serve commercial customers, opposition to stopping self haul continues to be strong.
- Most residential self-haulers have garbage service and are using the transfer stations for bulky items or large clean ups.
- Some cities provide curbside collections of bulky items as part of their collection contracts.

Transfer Station Recyclables Collection Changes

Gaisford said the 2012 proposed budget includes changes in recycling services at transfer stations. The proposal removes “free recycling” of curbside recyclables such as paper, cardboard, tin etc. from stations in service areas where curbside service for those materials is available and paid for as part of the monthly garbage fee.

- “Free recycling” is not available at Factoria and Algona due to space constraints. It is not available at Bow Lake due to construction.
- According to the most recent telephone survey (2007) 93% of household in SWD’s service area subscribe to curbside recycling.
- “Free recycling” will be retained at Snoqualmie Pass and Skykomish because curbside service is not available in those locations and at Vashon because curbside recycling is available but only at an additional cost.
- “Free recycling” services are not free. Including the revenue received the net cost of providing the service is about \$400,000. SWD collects 4000 tons of “free recycling” at transfer stations while 115,000 tons are collected curbside.
- Recycling these materials at transfer station consumes space and resources that could be used to focus on services for which other options aren’t readily available. Choices will be made facility by facility and services will need to be at least revenue neutral.

Discussion included:

- A member noted that this discontinued service may result in increased illegal dumping which costs about \$2200 per ton to clean up.
- Gaisford said the division will look at options to collect cardboard and paper inside the gate where compacting the materials and decreasing hauling fees are a more viable option.
- Entire loads of materials collected in the free recycling area occasionally need to be discarded because they are contaminated with other materials or garbage.

Unsecured Loads Fee Increase

SWD is proposing an increase to the unsecured load fee. The current fees which are \$3, \$5, or \$10 depending on the size of vehicle have not changed since 1994. The division is proposing an increase to \$20 for all vehicles, which is well within the range of fees charged elsewhere. The cost of an unsecured load traffic violation is a minimum of \$216.

In accordance with state law, SWD assesses a fee to vehicles arriving at transfer stations with unsecured loads. A member asked if Cedar Grove could charge the fee, Severn said she did not know, but would look into it.

Customers with objections are reminded of the cameras on the scale houses. Most customers do not object once it is explained to them.

Emergency Debris

SWAC received a presentation about Emergency Debris Planning from Beth Humphreys, SWD Staff. A copy of the presentation materials is available [here](#). The presentation included an update on emergency debris management planning progress in the division and in the region.

King County's Operations Disaster Debris Management Plan was completed in 2009 and has been reviewed and accepted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA disaster reimbursement can only occur however after the County Executive, the Governor and the President declare a disaster.

In response to a comment Kiernan noted that the county works very closely with cities to help ensure they have the necessary resources for emergency planning such as GIS maps.

Open Forum

Referring to recent articles in newspapers about composting, Bartlett offered to do a presentation on composting facilities for SWAC members.

Garber noted that a recent article in the Seattle Weekly on that topic caught her attention noting that composting doesn't produce methane.

Schmidt-Pathmann said he was recently invited to give a presentation about waste diversion to the Washington Clean Technology Alliance. He noted in that presentation that

- Germany has created 300,000 jobs in the recycling industry which generated over 70 billion Euros
- It would be necessary to increase landfilling fees in order to increase recycling to that level in the United States.
- Germans are looking into mining landfills for metals.

Schmidt-Pathmann's materials from that presentation can be found at this link.

<http://wacleantech.org/category/events/>

Beck said that at the Group Health Cooperative Annual Meeting he asked the Board to consider putting a note on medicine containers asking that unused medicines be returned to GHC pharmacies for safe disposal. He also asked that the cooperative consider providing return mailers to patients that are not hospitalized and are receiving palliative care.