

**MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting**

Dec. 13, 2024 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

<b><u>MSWAC Members</u></b>		<b><u>King County Staff</u></b>	
Joan Nelson	Auburn	Eyasu Ayalew, Public Health Seattle/King County	
Jon Gire	Bellevue	Nat Bennett, DNRP staff	
Ella Williams	Bellevue	Ali Blum, SWD staff	
Emily Warnock	Bothell	Sylvaine Bucher, SWD staff	
Shellie Bates	Covington	Theresa Curry Almuti, SWD staff	
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw	Brian Halverson, SWD staff	
Rebecca Kovar	Federal Way	Erin Hislop, SWD staff	
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way	Wen Huang, SWD staff	
Sam Tarvin	Issaquah	Ryan Kellogg, Public Health, Seattle & King County	
Tony Donati	Kent	Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director	
Carly Joerger	Kirkland	Mark Monteiro, SWD staff	
Jenna McInnis	Kirkland	Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff	
Amy Shaw	Maple Valley	Nina Olivier, SWD staff	
Alana DeRogatis	Mercer Island	David Pierce, SWD staff	
Jeff Brauns	Newcastle	Hannah Scholes, SWD staff	
Aaron Moldver	Redmond	Andy Smith, SWD staff	
Amy Tsai	Redmond	Chris Stubbs, SWD Deputy Director	
Meara Heubach	Renton	Adrian Tan, SWD staff	
Linda Knight	Renton	Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
Mason Giem	SeaTac	John Walsh, SWD staff	
Sarah Bruemmer	Shoreline		
<b><u>SWAC Members</u></b>		<b><u>Guests</u></b>	
Jay Blazey, Manufacturer		Phil Allen, resident	
Alissa Campbell, Waste Industry		Laura Belmont, SCA	
Robin Freedman, Waste Management		Joe Camero, Waste Management	
Amy Lam, Local Elected Official		Katie Jerauld, Dept. of Ecology	
Bill Louie, Citizen Representative		Jeanette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting	
Leah Tischler, Public Interest Group		Han Kirkland, Waste Management	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Brad Lovaas, WA Refuse and Recycling Association	
Wendy Weiker, Chair, Waste Industry		Laura Moser, Waste Management	
		Andi Parnell, Sound Cities Association	
		Chris Reigelsperger, Waste Management	
		Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann, The Institute for Energy and Resource Management (IeRM)	
		Rick Vahl, Washington State Recycling Association	

## **Call to Order and Introductions**

Chair Weiker (SWAC) and Vice Chair Knight (MSWAC) called the meeting to order at 11:16 a.m.

## **Meeting Minutes**

Van Orsow moved to approve the November MSWAC minutes. Nelson seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Louie moved to approve the November SWAC minutes. Freedman seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Van Orsow wanted to know what happened with the storm and what can be done to prevent it from happening again. He said an after-action plan from the county would be nice and will follow up in email with other questions if necessary.

## **Public Comment**

Jerauld provided one update about the LSWFA grant – Ecology will be hosting a second annual LSWFA workshop on Jan. 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Join in the morning to learn about 25-27' LSWFA program changes and in the afternoon, to experience a live demo of application forms, including tips for how to apply. Please register for the workshop [here](#). If you want more information, please reach out to Jerauld.

Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann introduced himself as the president and CEO of the Institute for Energy and Resource Management (IeRM). They are a locally based, 501c3 non-profit organization focusing on scientific research and education concerning municipal solid waste. Schmidt-Pathman said that based on the MSWAC/SWAC agenda, attendees will be hearing about glass recycling, and he shared that they have major concerns and disagreements with the information provided in the slides. Some of these are noted in the memorandum submitted on Dec. 13 which should be made available. He asked attendees to read it and contact IeRM with any questions.

## **SWD Updates**

McLaughlin provided the SWD update.

## **Welcome Mayor Millman!**

Mayor Mike Millman joined MSWAC as the Representative from the City of Woodinville. Jared Hill will continue representing Woodinville as an alternate. Thank you for the expanded participation by the City of Woodinville.

## **Tonnage Update**

Tonnage is up 1.01% through October (705K tons in 2024 vs. 698K ton in 2023) compared to last year at the same time. That's an additional 7,000 tons increase from last year at this time.

Transactions (637K through October) continue to rebound from a slow first quarter. We are ahead of last year at this time by +16,000 transactions (an increase of 2.56% over last year at this time) and almost 5,500 more transactions this October compared to last October.

Yard waste tonnage (over 14K tons through Oct.) is still down from this time last year (-1,010, a decrease of 6.56% over last year at this time). However, the trend is in a positive direction. At the end of March 2024, we were 30% behind March 2023, now we are slightly less than 7% behind last year's pace as of October.

## **SPA PIC Presentation Update**

On Wednesday, Dec. 11, SWD presented an overview of the Long-Term Disposal Study at the Sound Cities Association Public Issues Committee (PIC).

The Committee raised thoughtful questions, particularly around the financial impacts of the long-term disposal decision and future engagement with ILA partners.

We appreciated all the engagement of the cities on this important decision and the work that both committees are doing to get this decision right.

### **Capital Project Update**

From a capital project perspective, we have important milestones approaching.

Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station project (NERTS): SWD is currently reviewing the draft final environmental impact statement (EIS). We anticipate issuing the Final EIS in February 2025 and a siting decision will shortly follow.

South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS): Construction is around 50% complete and substantial completion is anticipated in the second quarter of 2026.

Renton Redevelopment: SWD signed a contract with the project consultant (Jacobs) and has begun early work on community and partner engagement planning and developing the long list of alternatives for redevelopment. You may recall that there had been thoughts of closing the Renton Transfer Station once replacement capacity was made available and through the opening of Bow Lake and Factoria, we have the opportunity to revisit this and consider potential alternative uses.

### **SWD Receives Landfill Methane Emissions Grant**

SWD was awarded \$2.6 million from Ecology's Landfill Methane Emissions Reduction Grant Program, which provides funding for projects aimed at reducing landfill gas methane emissions and improve compliance with the new regulations.

This project will replace a section of landfill gas pipeline infrastructure at Cedar Hills Landfill to improve the gas collection and control system and replace aging components that are reaching end-of-life.

Thank you to Heather Trim and Zero Waste Washington for providing a letter of support for our application.

### **New rates beginning in January**

Friendly reminder that beginning on January 1, SWD will enact a rate adjustment for solid waste disposal. Revenue for the 2025 rate will allow SWD to continue essential services, while supporting capital projects and programs that make progress on climate neutrality, resource recovery, and waste reduction efforts.

### **Re+ cities technical assistance position**

On Friday, Dec. 13, we posted a new position that will work in collaboration with our Government Relations Team to deliver technical assistance program to assist cities with implementing actions and programs that support Re+ goals. Their role will be helping cities with actions that support Re+ goals such as exploring opportunities for food waste prevention and diversion, sustainable purchasing, assistance with hauler contract language, and policy development.

Please [share this opportunity](#) with your networks!

Van Orsow asked about the emissions grant and wanted clarification that the upgrades helped SWD not emit as much gas. He also wanted to know what the status was with Bio Energy Washington (BEW). McLaughlin replied that the grant will fund a maintenance project that is going to replace a section of the landfill gas pipeline and its associated infrastructure. We believe that as we replace those aging components, it will help us improve and sustain better controls

over the overall system. In terms of the dispute with BEW, it is still unresolved. We are continuing through the litigation process and have a court date May 7. On May 7, we will go before a judge unless there's resolution before then. We continue to avail ourselves to any reasonable opportunities to resolve that dispute.

### **Post-storm update**

Mark Monteiro, SWD Operations Manager, joined McLaughlin to provide this update.

McLaughlin shared that the division would be conducting a full lessons learned exercise that we will share with the Committees but wanted to provide an update in the meantime. McLaughlin stated that SWD's facilities were not impervious to the impacts of the bomb cyclone storm in November. We lost power at all almost all our transfer stations and the landfill. We were able to continue operations at all facilities, but we could not load trailers to take garbage from transfer stations to Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRL) while on generator power. One of the benefits that we have, especially with the modernization of our facilities, is the ability to have a couple days of emergency storage. We found ourselves collecting a significant amount of waste that continued to come in while we were unable to move it to CHRL.

In our attempt to be a regional service and support residents and businesses impacted by the storm, we secured a proclamation of emergency that allowed us to waive fees for wood storm debris. We had a tremendous response to it from the public over the first weekend after the storm and unfortunately had to end the fee waiver period after only a few days. We had not yet allowed ourselves to recover from the substantial waste that had accumulated at stations while we were operating on generator power. Because we exceeded the three days of storage, it took us many days to recover – even with the help of the diversion of materials to Snohomish County. Monteiro stated that it took 15 days to recover from irregular operations.

Another compounding factor was that our transfer stations were receiving waste from commercial collection companies over the weekend, which is not typical. We were still trying to recover following the Thanksgiving holiday, and in our labor agreements, we can't mandate overtime. We can offer it, which we did, but it is subject to the will and interest of the employees.

McLaughlin shared that SWD had regained capacity at all transfer stations and had returned to normal operations. McLaughlin was pleased to announce that we are going to open receiving waived fee yard waste again Dec. 14 and 15, Dec. 21 and 22, and Jan. 11 and 12. We will offer this at Shoreline, Factoria, Bow Lake and Enumclaw. We are going to push out a broad announcement via various channels.

Gire thanked King County on their efforts during this storm. Gire also thanked and recognized the haulers and saw in Bellevue different Republic vehicles navigating fallen trees and servicing the community during this time.

Lam wanted to express her appreciation for all the work that the haulers have done and wanted to know if members could get an update on the Disaster Debris Management Framework. McLaughlin replied that we opened it up and wanted to give kudos to the region for having an updated debris management plan to help guide the discussion and kudos to the many cities that activated and set up collection points to help channel the volume of debris. One of the challenges we also found was unspoken expectations – when cities set up their collection sites, McLaughlin thought that these would be a point for any qualifying debris in that region. When in reality, the cities were using these sites as places where the cities themselves could bring debris that they collected and not for resident or business debris. One of the realizations from this is that if we have a site, there must be staff for safety and security reasons – and we must be able to figure out how to do this with no notice. There are things to revisit in our Disaster Debris Management Framework to make sure that the intentions are well understood, and everyone can mobilize under that plan.

Weiker chimed in that we also have the power of relationships. She gave a shout to Cedar Grove and Jay Blazey for bringing in an extraordinary amount of volume of yard debris - there was a lot of debris that needed to get cleaned up

and moved. There were a lot of people struggling with power outages for days and the last thing they want to do is deal with all the debris on their sidewalks and businesses. On behalf of the haulers, they put a lot of money into their trucks, fuel, and driver teams to keep their commitments with the cities. Weiker thanked her team and King County for being flexible working with Republic and Blazey's team for doing what they could at both Cedar Grove locations to take everything. This work speaks to the power of partnerships that we have across cities and neighboring counties.

Trim said it was very impressive how everything has been running and asked what percentage of the material was able to be chipped versus composted. Blazey said he would get back to Trim because wood debris so it can be mulched or chipped, but he has not been out there to confirm. You can stockpile some of it and use it in composting, which is a great bulking agent, but you can also chip it. Cedar Grove does not typically run a huge chipping operation so his guess is that it will be composted or a combination.

McInnis said in the chat to Trim that she believed that most of the chipping would probably be done by cities before sending out other debris.

McLaughlin echoed Blazey's comments and thanked the team at Cedar Grove. It is a great advantage to have an operation like Cedar Grove in our region.

Van Orsow said that one of the questions that came up was regarding the backup generators – SWD has them, but they do not have sufficient power to operate the compactors. He wanted to know if there was a possibility that there could be additional generator capacity in the future or if there could be a temporary mobile generator onsite to keep things running. To his understanding, some of the modern transfer stations have an opening for open top loading but that does not help stations if they have bailers. The other question was if there was going to be improved communications between SWD, cities and haulers. He received a message from his haulers that the information that they received wasn't always timely or accurate.

McLaughlin said the generator constraint option is already being investigated by Monteiro. In response to the second item, McLaughlin said that everyone will be a part of the after-action report. We are not just going to look at this from our perspective – we want to hear examples like that given from Van Orsow around whether something worked well or not. We will be inviting many members to that after-action review so that we are really learning from the various perspectives on how to do more of what worked well and how to correct what didn't go well. McLaughlin asked Monteiro to speak on what we have learned so far.

Monteiro said the first thing we did was assess what would be the best way to continue to provide services in a situation like this – did we want to open all the compactor sites or did we want to focus on Bow Lake and Factoria to keep the system up and running. The second piece was identifying what our power needs were and how we can get those needs permanent or mobile. We have determined that the power needed to run these compactors are about 800 KVH, and this is the piece we are at now. We need to identify how many compactors we need and if we are going to go mobile or hard wire them into the facilities. When they were first built, it seems that the engineers assumed that something like this wouldn't happen. In the 12 years that McLaughlin has been here, something like this hasn't happened. We must plan for something like this, and it falls on us to plan for it – and we are in the planning and assessment stage. The last piece of the puzzle is determining when we will be able to fund these investments at our facilities. We must bring all these pieces together and then decide when we will be able to install the compactors.

Nelson shared that Auburn was not as impacted as other surrounding cities and they did not do drop stations because they had done them before and found that there is a lot of air with waste, and they ended up paying a lot for hauling. If it got to a point where they were impacted, they probably would have brought in a chipper and then hauled it because it is more economical. They launched their curbside pick-up that they have as part of their contract with Waste Management where they can get three storm debris pickups per year. In the weeks following the storm, people could

set out extra yard debris for Waste Management to pick up. One thing to add for SWD's after action report is the timing of the launch of the no cost yard waste. SWD did not launch this until a week after the ice storm that happened several years ago. Nelson said it's a great service. In response to an earlier comment by McLaughlin about drivers and labor issues – she asked if SWD had thought about partnering with other local unions where the operators all have Class A CDLs and wanted to know if SWD could have an MOU around this time of year and get their help. This is an idea to use these partnerships and have the options ready to go when SWD is short on drivers but there are a lot of material that need to be moved.

Campbell added to comments about moving forward with storm debris clean up and re-opening free self-hauling – she wanted to know what SWD's confidence level of managing this debris based on where we are at. Monteiro said when we opened the free self-hauling the last time, we were already at capacity and even if we used all the drivers available, we didn't have anywhere we could take it and process it. At some point, we had to throw things into the trash and that quickly filled it up because we had not prioritized moving refuse. McLaughlin asked Monteiro to elaborate on where we are at now and why we are confident that we can do this. Monteiro said because are not at capacity. On a given weekend, we are at about 40% capacity and then we clean out on Sunday and start Monday fresh. We will increase our staffing on Saturday and Sunday to deal with this extra volume. We have the capacity, we have the drivers, and we can move it.

Searcy had a comment about not being able to mandate overtime and said that you don't want to mandate overtime as a norm but for a situation like this, management should have the ability to say that employees need to respond to this emergency. Searcy is not sure if this is something that can be worked through within the division or with other groups. He asked if SWD had any absentees during this period of if there was full staffing. Monteiro said everyone that was scheduled was there and everyone that was available and eligible was offered overtime. We exhausted all options for drivers. McLaughlin added that Thanksgiving added to this because it is optional to work on a holiday and we don't typically have a full staff of drivers. One of the elements we will be looking at is our labor contracts and considering if there are new bargain conditions that we should consider approaching.

Knight shared her appreciation for the work that was done and appreciated the county's response under difficult conditions and felt for the members of the public that were significantly impacted by the power outages. It wasn't just trees down – there was spoiled food from the power loss. Knight said there are other threats that are incorporated into the Disaster Debris Management Framework and while this storm had a lot of vegetative debris, the next event could be a big earthquake where there are mixed materials. An event like this would have many of the same challenges, like power outages and a lot of debris. She knew that the some of these issues have been thought through but after this bomb cyclone, some of the lessons learned could be applied for other types of significant events. Knight hoped that the county will revisit the Disaster Debris Management Framework considering the recent bomb cyclone.

### **MSWAC and SWAC Update**

No update.

### **2024 Committee Recap & Reflection**

Blum led this section.

We want to go over some of the accomplishments that MSWAC and SWAC have had this year.

MSWAC is comprised of representatives from each city with a signed interlocal agreement to King County's solid waste system. SWAC is comprised of local elected officials, waste industry representatives, public interest groups, manufacturers, marketing interests, bargaining units, and community representatives.

2024 was a busy year. Some of the things we talked about in 2024 at MSWAC and SWAC were:

- Waste acceptance rules
- Unincorporated KC service levels
- Landfill regulations
- Mixed waste processing
- Comp Plan
- NERTS update
- 2025 Rates
- Long-term disposal
- Re+ Grants
- SCRTS update
- Transfer station recycling
- C&D fee update
- Legislative updates
- Recycling Coordinators update
- Disaster Debris Management Plan

Some of the major Advisory Committee accomplishments in 2024 were:

- Advocated for the 2025 Rate
  - Letters of support helped the rate pass early and by a unanimous vote of the King County Council
  - 2025 rate allows SWD to continue essential services, while supporting capital projects and programs that make progress on climate neutrality, resource recovery, and waste reduction efforts.
- Advocated for a C&D fee update.
  - Passed as part of the 2025 rate proposal.
  - The new fee enables SWD to increase landfill diversion, support Re+ circular economy goals, and promotes equity through new programs.
- We have made a lot of progress on the long-term disposal decision.
  - Committee input helped SWD eliminate three options and narrow the focus of the report and EIS
  - Committees helped shape SWD's engagement process and encouraged better collaboration between jurisdictions.
- Supported King County's new disaster Debris Management Framework
  - Committees helped increase collaboration and communication between jurisdictions that will result in better coordination.
  - Committee letters demonstrated support for this regional framework to manage major disasters while helping keep alignment with Re+

And discussion and input that helps shape future projects, policies, and programs!

We appreciate all that you do to advance our shared priorities. We are looking forward to continuing this work in the new year.

### **Re+ Year-end Update**

Bucher and Olivier gave this update.

As a reminder, Re+ is King County's approach to reinventing our system of waste management. About 70% of what goes to the landfill can be recovered or repurposed in some way.

These are the current Re+ fast action starts that we are implanting:

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging and Paper Products
- Statewide Organics Policy Legislation
- Single-Family Organics Collection
- Re+ Community Panel
- Re+ City Grants
- City/County Collaboration
- Non-Residential Food Waste Recycling
- Mixed Waste Processing
- Innovation Platform and Re+ Circular Economy Grants

2024 Re+ highlights: organics

- Statewide organics policy legislation
  - HB 2301 passed. A lot of work this year has been on passing this bill.
  - Commercial organics technical assistance
  - Embed policy into county contracts.
- Single-family organics collection
  - A lot of the recent work works on the draft review of Ecology's model ordinance.
- Non-residential food waste recycling
  - Organics management proviso report submitted to council

2024 Re+ highlights: Community and City

- Re+ Community Panel
  - 12 members meet monthly and provide frontline community perspectives.
    - Members have given input on EPR, organics, grants, MWP, 2025 SCAP, etc.
- City/county collaboration
  - Re+ city pledge – 25 cities pledged support.
  - Pledged cities represent 72% of total garbage collected for jurisdictions.
- Re+ City Grants
  - \$390k for King County cities: 5 projects funded, representing 12 cities including:
    - Bothell, Kirkland, Bellevue, & Redmond – The Eastside Bring Your Own Cup campaign expansion has added 20 new businesses to the program.
    - Shoreline & Lake Forest Park – The North King County Reuse Center & Tool Library pilot launched a full circular economy marketplace with weekly "Fix-It Nights;" its Bike Shack volunteers have repaired over 100 bikes since May 2024.

2024 Re+ highlights: Grants

- Re+ Circular Economy Grants
  - Cycle 1 completed: \$2.3 million funded 14 projects, including:
    - Zero Waste Washington – Reusable food service pilot project reduced single-use products in 64 businesses through mini-grants.
    - Refuse Artisan Initiative – Repurposed post-consumer coffee bags into reusable products; provided jobs to 10 refugee programs.



- 2024-45 Cycle: \$2.2 million, funding 14 projects. The recipients have been informed and the public will be informed next year. More info: [kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/garbage-recycling-compost/solid-waste-programs/re-plus/re-plus-grants](https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/garbage-recycling-compost/solid-waste-programs/re-plus/re-plus-grants)
- NextCycle WA
  - Seed Grant Program: planning mini-grants up to \$10k in 2025.
  - Circular Accelerator: Cohort 2 pitch showcase complete and Cohort 3 application review in progress.

#### 2024 Re+ highlights: & more

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
  - Provided strong testimony & communications on need for EPR.
  - Deposit Return System put into separate bill.
  - EPR bill closer to passing, well positioned for 2025.
- Mixed Waste Processing
  - Mixed waste processing study development
- Re+ Communications
  - We launched the Re+ Awareness Campaign
  - The Re+ newsletter now has 624 subscribers. Link to newsletter: [Re+ \(zero waste\) - King County, Washington](#)

#### Re+ Updates at Advisory Committees in 2025

- What we heard from you
  - Requests for more frequent Re+ updates
- What we can do
  - Quarterly updates on Re+

Please spread the word about Re+ and the work that we are all doing. This not only highlights King County work but also all the work local jurisdictions re doing. Video: [Re+ \(zero waste\) - King County, Washington](#)

### **Long-Term Disposal – Eutrophication and Water Criteria Discussion**

Liu and Walsh presented this information.

Last month, we talked about the water eutrophication criteria and how it is a bit problematic because the models in the study put their leachate through wastewater treatment and use some method of wastewater leachate drying. There are no LCA models that analyze leachate drying in landfill operations. Even if we can get impacts from leachate drying, it is no longer an equivalent comparison.

We brought this up to the advisory committee and we'd like to get your opinions.

This is the same thing with water consumption. The issue is that the concept is confusing and may not be an accurate reflection of reality. We won't be able to say for certain that dams will be dismantled because we will be able to produce a lot of energy from mass burn.

Our suggestion is to drop both eutrophication and water consumption from the comparative tables and move that information into a narrative in the LTD study. Both things may not be an equivalent comparison, but we still want to retain the information in the study.

WEBR and Mass Burn with Rail Export can still be compared with transport and process analyses.

Searcy stated that water consumption was something that did not make sense. He wanted to know if the eutrophication came up later or if that was always part of it. Liu replied that it came up later – the confusion with water consumption was always there but we discovered after talking with the consultants about the LCA models they used that it was not equivalent. There are no LCA models that reflect drying of leachate – they all assume wastewater treatment. Once this was uncovered, we talked to the consultants and brought this forward to the advisory committees. Searcy supported removing eutrophication and water consumption.

Tsai thanked Liu and Walsh for their work on these topics and questions. She asked if there are problems with the water consumption analysis and wanted to know what we gain by moving it into the narrative and retaining it. Liu answered that we don't know for sure that LCA model is not an accurate version of reality, but we feel that it isn't and because there is a lot of confusion around what the LCA model is communicating, it is worth having a conversation about if we need to handle it differently. Tsai responded that if it's being held differently, the committee should have a chance for further engagement on how the narrative appears. Liu replied that members had an opportunity to review the draft report - the intent was that SWD knew that the water eutrophication item was going to be an issue, and we talked to our consultants and said that our advisory committees will need to have another pass at that section. The same thing would go for water consumption, and we would need to have committee members review it to ensure that the narrative makes sense, the information is being presented clearly and that there is a clear justification for why it is not being included in the comparative table.

Liu asked if members needed to take a vote. Weiker said a vote would make it more official. Weiker added that as one of the companies that manages a landfill and dries leachate rather than use it wet, keeping it in the narrative is a good choice so that audiences know that we addressed it and considered it before moving it to the narrative from criterion. This lets everyone know that we didn't miss it. Weiker supported Liu's recommendation.

McLaughlin added that we have asked the consultants to reach out to the specific landfills that we are considering over the course of these various long-term disposal options to ensure that any description/data that could be provided around how the leachate is treated/managed/handled is coming from the landfills that are most likely going to be involved if that solution is chosen. In other words, Republic, Waste Connections and Waste Management will have an opportunity to share that information directly and have it reflected in that report. Weiker replied that she recalled an email thread about this before the storm and all three companies are standing by and waiting for the consultants to reach out. They appreciate the oversight that was adjusted and updated accordingly.

McLaughlin stated that he supported Liu's recommendation to drop the two criterions to the narrative.

Recommendation was generally accepted. No opposition.

### **Glass Recycling and Roundtable Update**

Tan provided this update.

Last month, Ardagh announced that they would close their glass manufacturing facility in Seattle permanently. They have had issues since July, when they closed their production. At that time, we were told it was only temporary. A lot of our service providers, like SMI, have struggled to find alternative end markets. Some service providers are still able to send glass collected from recycling programs. Other service providers are stockpiling and/or taking glass to landfill to use as road base. There are no changes to glass recycling in King County, but we have noted that some jurisdictions have made amendments to their contracts and have either stopped collecting glass or only collect it at drop-off locations.

Some challenges with glass recycling are that glass is infinitely recyclable but a heavy material. Most glass in King County is collected comingled curbside which is why it's expensive to deal with. Glass from MRFs can have up to 15-20% contamination and needs to be cleaned and sorted – this has a cost.

While is recyclable, it is also a heavy material that is costly to transport over long distances and may not be environmentally beneficial to do so. Glass recycling is best done locally. King County is investing resources to ensure glass remains recyclable in the region. We are considering how to support long-term sustainability for a regional facility – there remains challenges with the viability of the site without significant upgrades.

We have compiled a regional roundtable to deal with this issue and are now looking at long-term solutions like encouraging more local demand for glass, looking at policy approaches (EPR for packaging, Deposit-Return System for beverage containers, etc.), and promoting efforts on reuse of glass bottles and containers. This roundtable meets regularly to stay updated and work on solutions to ensure glass recycling in the region. SPU has secured additional space for stockpiling glass cullet, and they are studying alternative approaches to glass collection and recycling.

Lam was not sure what is happening with the glass that is being collected. She wanted to know where it is being stockpiled. Tan said that as of two weeks ago, Waste Management was able to stockpile it and then send it to SMI. Recology told us that we were able to stockpile it. Weiker said Republic is stockpiling it and looking for alternative options. Lam asked for clarification that nothing is going to the landfill. Weiker said everyone is looking for alternative options and nothing is going to the landfill.

## **2025 Legislative Update**

Tan and Scholes gave this update.

This upcoming session is going to be a long session of 105 days. It will start Jan. 13, 2025, and the last day is expected to be April 27, 2025. This is a budget year, and we know we are facing a \$10M budget shortfall.

### 2025 WA State – Expected Bills:

- EPR for Packaging & Paper Products
  - King County Council has adopted our agenda for this year, and we are expecting a bill to be sponsored again by Rep. Berry.
  - It is now going to be called “Recycling and Reformed Act” instead of the WRAP Act. In effect, it's very similar to what it has been, but the language now models Minnesota's EPR bill. They were successful by having broad support of that bill - Rep. Berry is trying to imitate that. While there are some differences between Washington and Minnesota, there are a lot of
  - similarities.
- Deposit Return-System (DRS)/Recycling Refund for beverage containers
  - We want to make sure that there is equitable access for drop off locations for any DRS.
- Statewide list + needs assessment + producer registration + truth in labeling + recycled content requirements
  - Representative Fey put forward this bill to improve recycling in a variety of ways.
  - This has been supported by the service providers like WRRRA
- Right to Repair
  - We've seen this bill over the last couple of years.
  - Representative Gregerson is still working on it. Last year, it included a lot of different product categories – electronics, wheelchairs, appliances and tractors. It's possible this could get narrowed down.
- Delaying solar panel stewardship (state agency request)
  - This bill passed several years but the Dept. Of Ecology has run into some blocks and is requesting a delay in implementation so they can convene an advisory group and work through several issues.

- They're having trouble getting all the manufacturers to register and come up with a product stewardship plan for solar panels. This will make it so producers can't sell their products into the state which will threaten our clean energy markets.
- Amending safe medication return (state agency request)
  - Interested in securing growth and securing funding for the program.
- Electric vehicle (EV) battery recycling
  - We have a current product stewardship bill for batteries going into effect, but it does not include large format vehicle batteries. There was a study done and this law would address that category.
- Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerant gases recycling
- Fast fashion
  - We've heard that there might be a bill related to this.

New bills:

- Organics Management (building on 2024 bill)
  - Representative Doglio has been convening an interested/impacted parties' group on this. The topics have been carbon sequestration, operator training, food waste tracking, food waste in schools, C&D materials, bin colors, multi-family source separations, food/date labeling and permitting. All the meeting notes are online.
- Mattress EPR
- Solid Waste Collection Tax (to be confirmed)
  - There may be some adjustments proposed to the solid waste collection tax.
  - A lot of counties have a funding structure that is based on the amount of garbage disposed so as we make these goals to reduce garbage, there is concern for funding county solid waste programs.

Gire asked for clarification on the EPR bill and wanted to know what will be taken from the Minnesota bill to refresh the Washington EPR bill compared to what we have seen in previous years. Scholes replied that there are very technical details, and it will work very similar to how it was before. One example – there is an advisory council that will be made up of representatives from the different interested/affected parties that will review how the plan is put together and how it works. The members of their advisory council are slightly different following Minnesota's model rather than Washington. Both had advisory councils, but it is slightly different this time. There are a couple minor changes to definitions and the overall structure of the bill. It is 80-90 pages now rather than 100+. The one thing that was in Minnesota's bill that has not been adopted by Washington yet is shared funding – rather than the producers taking 100% of the cost of the system, it has a ramp up to 90%. It starts lower and goes up over the course of a few years. Washington has not adopted that change and there is still 100% funding in the draft language.

Williams said that some of these issues, like EPR, are on city's agendas and wanted to know if they could get talking points to share with their elected officials if they want to testify on some of these bills. Scholes responded that Blum and she will coordinate on that. The other thing that we have been doing is making sure that lobbyists from the cities and counties are in touch.

We will keep everyone updated.

**Member Comment**

Weiker thanked Knight for her years of service and work on solid waste issues for the cities and counties.

Knight said that she has been working in solid waste/waste prevention for over 35 years – including the year at the City of Seattle. She joined these committees when curbside recycling was in its infancy in 1990, when the City of Renton had just passed its curbside recycling bill and started a new contract. She worked with amazing staff and felt like they built

awesome relationships. Knight shared that she is ready to let other people take the reins and will be watching from the sidelines.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.