

SWAC Advisory Committee Meeting
 July 21, 2023 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
 Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

SWAC Members Present		King County Staff	
Taylor Atkinson, Vice Chair, Citizen Representative		Eyasu Ayalew, Public Health Seattle/King County staff	
James Borsum, Labor Representative		Brian Halverson, SWD Staff	
Robin Freedman, Waste Industry		Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director	
Phillippa Kassover, Local Elected Official		Patty Liu, SWD staff	
Amy Lam, Local Elected Official		Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff	
Bill Louie, Citizen Representative		Elka Peterson Horner, King County PSB staff	
Penny Sweet, Local Elected Official		Yolanda Pon, Public Health Seattle/King County staff	
Leah Tischler, Public Interest Group		Andy Smith, SWD staff	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
Wendy Weiker, Chair, Waste Industry		Dorian Waller, SWD staff	
		John Walsh, SWD staff	
Guests			
Jeanette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting		Diana Wadley, Dept. of Ecology	
Brad Lovaas, WA Refuse and Recycling Association			

Call to Order and Introductions

After introductions, Chair Weiker called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Sweet moved to approve the minutes. Kassover seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Wadley [shared information](#) about two limited purpose landfills in Yakima that have recently closed or are supposed to close. They are sometimes referred to as Construction and Demolition (C&D) landfills. Both are on fire and are having some issues which is why they are being asked to close. These landfills do not have the same environmental protections in place as other landfills. One landfill is the Caton Landfill which has been asked to close but has not, and the ECY contact is Cole D. Provence who can be reached at cpro461@ecy.wa.gov or (509) 379-3557. The other landfill is owned by DTG Recycling, formerly known as the Anderson Landfill, and the ECY contact is Luke Lemond who can be reached at luke.lemond@ecy.wa.gov or 509-379-3961.

The yearly landfill reports to Ecology are showing that the received waste amount is increasing. DTG reported zero waste in 2020 and 2021 but have shown an increase in 2022 of 190 cubic yards of waste.

Ecology’s determine of the Business Organics Management Areas (BOMA) for the period from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024, has been made and can be found on [this map](#) (this is required under the RCW City of Seattle Solid Waste Management Plan (2022-2027)). In terms of planning, the City of Seattle’s Solid Waste Management Plan (2022-2027) has recently been approved and there this can be found on [Box](#). The overall planning and waste reduction resource library can be [found here](#). There were recommendations in the Plan to work with King County and its cities, such as with actions identified by the Responsible Recycling Task Force.

Trim wanted to know how many cities in King County have organics pick up, if they have voluntary pick up, and which cities have mandatory pick up. Wadley responded that this is related to the Compost Procurement Ordinances, so she was not sure. Ecology noticed that it is available residentially.

Weiker asked who is tracking this locally. Smith said that his team is tracking it and can bring the details back to this meeting. We are asking the cities to tell us when let Ecology know, and we can update the committee which cities have told Ecology.

Trim thought that the committee had discussed getting Wadley on the agenda, Weiker said the stature would need to be advised so it's been decided to have Wadley as a standing agenda in the meantime. Atkinson added that we would also have to talk to Ecology to have an official Ecology representative. Trim suggested that Wadley be placed as a line item so committee members can officially ask her questions. Waller said that we can add her as a standing line item and the Executive would have to approve it. It is not a problem to add her but the King County Council is busy so it may take time.

Trim made a motion to make the Ecology representative (Wadley) an ex-officio member as an official action item. Weiker asked Wadley if there is enough information to present monthly. Wadley said that it varies on how much content she has but there will most likely be enough content for every month. Waller stated that the agenda item with Wadley be a standing item moving forward.

Trim moved to make Ecology have ex-officio as an official action item. Weiker asked Wadley if she has enough information to present monthly. Wadley said that it varies on how much content she has but will most likely have content every month. Waller said that the agenda item with Wadley will be a standing item going forward.

SWD Updates

McLaughlin provided the SWD update.

Maintenance Activities at the Bioenergy Washington (BEW) Gas Purification Plant

The week of June 26, BEW notified SWD of its intent to begin maintenance at the gas purification plant that processes methane collected from the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill and turns it into natural gas.

According to BEW, the maintenance will require a shut-down of the plant for approximately two weeks in early July, and the company will not process the methane during that time. To safely manage the gas, which is produced by decomposing organic matter (food waste, plant material, etc.), SWD operations will flare it while the BEW plant is not operating. Flaring gas is a normal operational practice that is used during maintenance periods or other activities when landfill gas can't be recovered.

SWD's optimal practice and long-term goal is to recover and beneficially reuse the methane produced at the landfill, but there are times when operations must allow for maintenance activities, and to work through the challenges BEW is experiencing.

We take seriously the obligation to operate the landfill for the benefit of its residents, and in compliance with public health and environmental regulations.

We received notification on July 21 that BEW will take some landfill gas and begin producing electricity. We will continue to flare as they can only take a little bit at the beginning and will continue to share updates.

Trim said that the informal comments on landfill gas are due to Ecology today. To her understanding, liquid got into the pipes for the gas extraction landfill system, and wanted to know what the operation problems are. McLaughlin replied that he is not aware of them. We are currently in a legal dispute around their condensate. When BEW does their industrial

processes, a condensate is produced with liquids and solids in it which has been called a dangerous waste. There is a legal dispute on how this dangerous waste should be handled. This does not impact their ability to extract landfill gas. Trim followed up asking if the condensate is being generated in the operations house or is it seeping back into the pipes. McLaughlin responded that BEW condenses the gas which causes moisture to drop out and that is collected as condensate.

Kassover wanted to know what the contract is with BEW. McLaughlin answered that we were surprised by the shut down and do not know their capacity to take all the landfill gas. We are watching this situation closely and ready to communicate with them. Under the terms of our contract, they are expected to take all our gas and they are allowed to produce gas or electricity with it.

Re+ City Grants

We have a presentation with the City of Auburn in the coming week, which will mark 31 cities who have received the presentation. Of the 37 cities in the County, 22 cities have signed the Re+ pledge. We are presenting to the City of Auburn on Monday, July 24, and are hoping to get on Skykomish's agenda next month. We are very appreciative for all the support we have received from the cities with this effort. At the County, we will be brainstorming new policy directives to see what folks most are interested in moving forward with first.

We received 5 proposals for a total of \$450k. Twelve cities were represented in the application process (four of five proposals were joint city proposals). This collaboration was a huge win and speaks to the embodiment of Re+ efforts to bring communities together around our shared zero waste of resources goal.

Proposals were reviewed by a committee of SWD staff and representatives from the Re+ Community Panel. SWD has notified all applicants of their application status and will begin contract negotiations in the coming weeks. Congratulations to those receiving awards and we look forward to seeing your projects being successful.

A formal public announcement will be shared when all contracts are signed.

MSWAC Update

No updates.

Rate Restructure Check-in

Waller stated that there are some Fixed Annual Charge (FAC) Allocation and Office Hours later this month for people to check in with SWD staff. We anticipate issuing a final table the week of July 24. Cities and haulers will have ten business days to review it before it is officially published. The two office hour sessions are on July 25 from 2-3 p.m., and July 28 from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Waller said that most cities are going to or are about to go to their councils in the coming month.

Waller asked the haulers for an update.

Lam said that they approved it last week at their council meeting.

Kassover believed they were close to passing it and will check in.

Sweet stated that they self-bill so it does not impact them.

Freedman asked Waller to let her know of cities who are having issues. Redmond voted this week and it passed. All the cities have the materials, and many are putting together a timeline to take it to council. There are two cities that have asked for further discussion because they wear many hats in their cities and need more information.

Discussion: Resident participation recruitment

Waller led this discussion.

By end of September, we will have four openings for residents to represent SWAC and only one resident left on the committee. Waller wanted help to enlist people.

Atkinson asked if we need to vote for replacement of Vice Chair. Waller said they will at the end of the meeting.

Kassover commented that she is willing to do to recruitment in Lake Forest Park and wanted to know if there are geographic limits. Waller replied that he is open to residents from any part of the County and said he will send information to Kassover.

Lam wanted to know how we have recruited in the past. Waller replied that it has been posted on our website, social media, community newsletters, community papers, various focused community groups, and in higher education.

Atkinson asked if it was possible that there could be a crossover with someone from the Re+ community panel and this would allow us to get Re+ updates from the member. She also suggested that city representatives/councilmembers on SWAC mention this need for more residents on SWAC at their council meetings since those residents that attend are probably more engaged and might be interested. Liu responded that she would talk to the Subject Matter Expert on the community about having a crossover member, but they will most likely not be interested because their time on the community panel is compensated and SWAC is not.

Louie commented that Waller contacted him because he was involved with NERTS outreach and added that maybe people in other outreach groups would be interested. Atkinson echoed this.

Wadley stated that these comments on residents participating was echoed in MSWAC and it is appreciated.

Wadley said that these comments on citizens participating was echoed in MSWAC and it is appreciative. One thing that Ecology has done to help with resident participation is [compile information](#) that Seattle did when they were pushing hard to recruit people for their SWAC. The information compiled includes recruitment ads, emails, and a video. During the recruitment period, [Seattle SWAC](#) had their members play an active role in finding their replacements and they lift their members up with biography's and videos.

Trim suggested that we ask council to compensate one seat. Waller stated that we would have to ask for all the seats to be compensated but this is ingrained within Title X, so we'd have to ask Council about it. This is being worked on but will take time.

Comp Plan Subcommittee

Liu presented this information.

The purpose of the subcommittee is to help facilitate discussion around policy updates we plan to include in the Comp Plan and expedite the decision-making process to meet our deadline.

The meeting would be in between the monthly advisory meetings and would be about one to two hours. In the document that Waller sent out, there is a list of the weeks we are hoping to have the subcommittee meetings. Hopefully some of you can find some time to join the subcommittee.

Meetings are tentatively set for the weeks of:

- August 21, 2023
- September 18, 2023
- October 23, 2023
- January 1, 204
- January 22, 2024
- February 19, 2024
- March 25, 2024
- April 22, 2024
- May 27, 2024

We are asking for:

- At least six members from MSWAC with a mix of small, medium, and large cities. In the document, there is a small table at the end that has divided the MSWAC cities out by their sizes.
- At least three SWAC members, with hopes that the Chair/Vice Chair from MSWAC and SWAC join.
- One member representing a hauler or processor.
- One resident member.

If interested, please reach out to Waller by July 28. Some of the topics we will hopefully cover include:

- Language about reserving capacity at Cedar Hills or loaning out capacity to other jurisdictions that might need it
- Policies to support zero waste of resources or Re+. Most of those conversations will be around how to limit food waste going into our landfill.
- Long-term disposal – what are we going to do after Cedar Hills closes.

Atkinson wanted to know if a representative for MSWAC could represent two of the city size categories. Liu replied that someone could.

Trim wanted to know if they will be on Zoom and if anyone on MSWAC/SWAC can attend. Liu responded that it will be on Zoom and that we would like to keep it to the actual subcommittee members. Trim shared her unhappiness with there being six representatives from MSWAC and only three from SWAC and felt that these numbers should be even as it seems unbalanced. Liu replied that she will bring this information back to her team.

Freedman shared that it is strange to only have one hauler representative instead of having a representative from each hauler as only having one hauler is not presentative of all the haulers that serve the County. Liu clarified that this subcommittee is not a decision-making body. The subcommittee is just to expedite the conversations at MSWAC/SWAC and make sure that we stick to the tight timeline. Freedman added that if there is a group consensus, there seems to be value in having more members.

Walsh added that he is open to expanding the number of members. The thought process behind these numbers was that they were unsure that they would even get three subcommittee members from SWAC because of the limited amount of people on SWAC and did not want to turn it into another SWAC meeting. Part of the reason MSWAC had more representation was because they have more people attend their meetings.

Atkinson suggested that we just have one small, one medium, and one large city representative.

Freedman shared that she was not sure she could do SWAC and the subcommittee meeting and wanted to know if the hauler representative had to site on SWAC.

Kassover stated that articulating the purpose of the subcommittee is very important. The subcommittee members need to be held accountable to the larger body of view. She understood the need to narrow the topics so that the larger body can have the important discussions.

Sweet shared her concerns that if we overrepresent, the subcommittee won't get the work done. The other concern is that if there are not at least six representatives from MSWAC (mix of city staff and elected officials) they will have trouble going back to MSWAC and getting anything done. Walsh stated that we can see how many people apply and then have a conversation with the SWAC chairs.

Trim said that she is not sure the Chair/Vice Chair would be deciding how many people would be on the subcommittee because they are just supposed to facilitate the meetings. This should be a group decision. She believed that there should be six representatives from both and then try to make it a mix of representation.

McLaughlin was concerned that there would not be an appropriate mix of views. We don't want one sector to potentially overpower the other voices.

Liu stated that we will be making changes and Waller will send this information out. Since the deadline is July 28, we want to make sure we are clear in what we are asking for.

Member Comment

Kassover asked if the group is meeting in August. Waller responded that SWAC is.

Sweet wanted to know if there are driving topics and Waller said there are. Sweet shared her worry that there would be a small attendance and asked if it was possible to combine MSWAC and SWAC. Waller said he would send an email to both chairs about canceling the August MSWAC.

Trim made a motion to cancel the August meeting. Kassover seconded. The agreement was unanimous.

Trim said there are three types of stakeholder discussion meetings happening. If interested in any of them, let Trim know.

- Organics which include food waste and donation, as well as debris and items going to the landfill that are of organic origin. They are meeting twice a month – the first and third Wednesday.
- This will discuss appliance recycling.
- This meeting will be about Lightbulbs.

Waller shared that this was Atkinson's last meeting, so we will need another Vice Chair by the next meeting.

Atkinson said that she really enjoyed this group and learning Robert's Rules of Order. Being a business owner allowed her to be on this group and this committee helped her with a career change. She learned a lot about how government works and about solid waste and will be pursuing a master's degree. She thanked everyone for teaching her about how the County works.

McLaughlin gave Atkinson props for stepping forward in the Vice Chair capacity and dedicating time to this committee. He is grateful for her leadership and commitment to this group and wished her the best of luck.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.