

Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee

October 14, 2011 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
 King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Room
 Next MSWMAC meeting – November 17, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Members	
Paul Mallory	<i>Algona</i>
Bill Peloza	<i>Auburn</i>
Joan Nelson	<i>Auburn</i>
Susan Fife-Ferris	<i>Bellevue</i>
Joyce Nichols	<i>Bellevue</i>
Tom Spille	<i>Bellevue</i>
Sabrina Combs	<i>Bothell</i>
Joan McGilton	<i>Burien</i>
Barre Siebert	<i>Clyde Hill</i>
Rob Van Orsow	<i>Federal Way</i>
Gina Hungerford	<i>Kent</i>
John MacGillivray	<i>Kirkland</i>
Bob Lee	<i>Lake Forest Park</i>
Carol Simpson	<i>Newcastle</i>
Jon Spangler	<i>Redmond</i>
Linda Knight	<i>Renton</i>
Chris Eggen	<i>Shoreline</i>
Rika Cecil	<i>Shoreline</i>
Scott MacColl	<i>Shoreline</i>
Frank Iriarte	<i>Tukwila</i>
Zach Schmitz	<i>Woodinville</i>

Others
Ann Berrysmith, SWD Finance & Administration Manager
Jeff Gaisford, SWD Recycling & Environmental Services Manager
Kathy Hashagen, SWD Staff
Kevin Kiernan, SWD Director
Josh Marx, SWD Staff
Michelle Miller, SWD Staff
Thea Severn, SWD Planning & Communications Manager
Diane Yates, SWD Intergovernmental Liaison
Lisa Youngren, SWD Staff
Guests
Michael Huddleston, King County Council Staff
Laura Moser, Waste Management
Beth Mountsier, King County Council Staff
John Taylor, CleanScapes
Greg Zimmerman, City of Renton

Minutes & Agenda Review

The September MSWMAC minutes were approved as written.

Updates

SWD

Kiernan reported that in November or December SWD will be coming to MSWMAC 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.

A consensus of members in attendance agreed to change the date of the December 9th meeting. December 16th was the suggested alternate. Yates will contact members via email for a

decision on the meeting date. *(Since the meeting, Yates has contacted members to determine their preference. The December MSWMAC meeting is scheduled for the 16th.)*

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 the program began, 1800 county residents have signed up opting out of over ten thousand mailers and phone books. A good number of those residents are from the Kirkland area where the city informed the citizens about the program through newsletter articles and website postings.

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/>

SWAC:

SWAC heard about results for the audit performed by the County Auditor at the request of the Council. The results of the audit were favorable saying, “SWD’s financial plan is comprehensive, sound, and based on reasonable financial assumptions.”

SWAC expressed their continued interest in the ILA discussions. They also heard presentations on Illegal Dumping and on Climate Change.

2012 Budget

The King County Executive transmitted the budget to the King County Council on September 26th. Until the budget has been transmitted, employees of the Executive branch are directed to not discuss the content of the proposed budget.

SWD Finance and Administration Manager Ann Berrysmith provided MSWMAC with an overview of the proposed 2012 budget in relation to the approved 2011 budget. The handout is available [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 \$401K 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 has been revised to \$730K and 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 transfer station budget includes recycling at transfer stations.
- 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. Currently rent is approximately \$8.6M.
- Landfill Gas and Wastewater budget 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.

Berrysmith noted that the 2012 proposed budget includes nineteen fewer positions than the 2011 adopted budget. In response to a question Berrysmith said that the Overhead Allocation is assigned by the Executive's Budget Office. Kiernan noted that though the allocations are an estimate they are trued up to actual costs which inform the budget for the following year.

In response to a request, Kiernan said members would be provided with explanatory notes in addition to the handout provided at the meeting. Those notes are available [here](#).

Kiernan noted that though King County is disappointed with the revenue from the landfill gas to energy plant, BioEnergy Washington is required to pay the division for the gas provided whether or not they are able to process it. However, 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.

In response to a comment Kiernan noted that the "Federal Requirement of Post Closure Maintenance and Monitoring" requires that funds be collected to maintain landfills for thirty years after their closure.

Renton Transfer Station Hours Changes

The division’s goal is to optimize facility operating hours based on customer use patterns, operational efficiency, and cost. Changes to operating hours have been made at Factoria, Algona, and Bow Lake over the past several years. The division’s ability to make incremental changes in operating hours in response to decreased tonnage is limited by constraints such as shifts defined in labor agreements.

In the 2012 proposed budget SWD has proposed changes to hours at the Renton Transfer Station. These changes are expected to result in a savings to the budget of approximately \$300K. Maintaining the Renton operating hours at their current level would add about thirty six cents per ton throughout the operating system.

	Monday – Friday Current	Monday – Friday Proposed	Weekends Current	Weekends Proposed
Times	7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	closed
# of hours	10 hours per day	8 hours per day	8 hours per day	closed

From 2007 to 2010 tonnage at the Renton transfer station dropped 18% overall and 28% on weekends; a three percent greater drop than in the rest of the system. Both the Factoria and Bow Lake stations are less than nine miles away from Renton. Those stations have experienced a lesser drop in tonnage over the same period and they should be able to accommodate traffic from Renton.

Greg Zimmerman, Public Works Administrator for the City of Renton expressed disappointment in how the proposed change was communicated saying a 43% service reduction of this type should have been discussed with the impacted cities before it appeared as part of the proposed budget. Concerns included:

- the lack of involvement of the cities before the proposed budget was sent to the Executive,
- the increased likelihood for Renton residents to use weekend self haul because the City of Renton has discontinued their popular twice yearly curbside collection program as a result of the increased disposal rate and the Local Hazardous the Waste Management Plan (LHWMP) rate increase,
- the Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Management Plan says Bow Lake and Factoria station improvements would be completed and a new station built in South County before the Renton transfer station closes. The service reduction seems to be contrary to that plan,
- the difficulty of explaining service reductions at this scale to residents who are facing a 15% rate increase,
- the time needed to get through traffic to the Factoria or Bow Lake stations is greater than is implied by the distance in miles,
- the proposed change appears to have a disproportionate impact residents of Renton.

Zimmerman distributed a copy of a letter sent by the City of Renton to the division stating these and other concerns. The City of Renton does not have significant concerns about decreasing the weekday hours of operation though which hours are chosen may need to shift to meet the needs of commercial haulers. The city suggests that a closure on one weekend day is acceptable.

Kiernan noted until the proposed budget has been transmitted, employees of the Executive branch have been directed to not discuss its content. Once the budget has been transmitted to Council the deliberative process begins. A copy of the letter from the City of Renton will be immediately sent to the Executive.

King County Council Staff Michael Huddleston said that the Council gave the utility instruction to be aggressive in pursuing cost savings. There have been two hearings where the division budget was discussed, however a decision has not yet been made yet to move this portion of the budget forward as proposed. We appreciate the willingness of the City of Renton to work together to problem solve this issue.

Huddleston noted that there are several opportunities for input after the budget has been sent to the Council. MSWMAC and SWAC members are invited to call or email Michael with their ideas and input.

Comments included:

- There was concern about how traffic diverted from Renton on the weekends may impact neighboring cities. In response to a request, the division will compare the projected 2012 weekend transactions at Factoria with the number of weekend transactions at the peak of tonnage in 2007.
- Concerns were raised regarding citizens from Tukwila that were diverted from Bow Lake to Renton as a result of construction would be impacted by the change. Construction will still be underway when the hours change is proposed to occur.
- A member noted that the practice of informing cities after the proposed budget is sent to the Executive negatively impacts the partnership that MSWMAC has been working to establish. It would be better to gather input from the cities in advance of transmitting the budget. This practice will be a process issue for future changes as well.
- The Division noted that the hours of weekday operation at Renton can be shifted to meet the needs of commercial haulers.

Additional comments may be sent to Kiernan and will be forwarded to Council Staff.

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.

Comments included:

- The division will look for ways to bring cardboard recycling inside the gate to improve processing and decrease hauling costs.
- Tires are not collected for recycling at Algona because of space constraints.
- One city commented that the move away from collecting curbside materials at transfer stations is long overdue. There was no negative impact at Factoria when that service was replaced with collection of household hazardous wastes.

Unsecured Load Fee

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

This change will require an ordinance. The division would like to be able to include the opinions of advisory groups in the transmittal letter. MSWMAC agreed with the change by consensus. Comments included:

- Encouraging covered loads is a good idea. It reduces litter and decreases the costs of damage to vehicles.
- When the fees change there should be an education campaign as well.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.