

# King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

September 16, 2011 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

King Street Center 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

Next SWAC meeting – October 21, 2011 - 9:30-11:30

## Meeting Minutes

<b>Members</b>
Jerry Bartlett
William A. Beck
Joe Casalini
Tim Crosby
Jean Garber
Steve Gerritson
Jerry Hardebeck
Sean Kronberg
Craig Lorch
Joan McGilton
Suellen Mele
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann
Relaena Sindelar
John Taylor

<b>Others</b>
Gemma Alexander, SWD Staff
Doreen Booth, Suburban Cities Association
Debbie Cohen, SWD Staff
Jeff Gaisford, SWD Recycling and Environmental Services Manager
Preston Horne-Brine, IMC
Morgan John, SWD Staff
Kevin Kiernan, SWD Director
Josh Marx, SWD Staff
Grace Reamer, King County Council Staff
Thea Severn, SWD Planning and Communications Manager

### **Nomination and Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Sean Kronberg nominated Joe Casalini to continue to Chair the committee.

Casalini was elected chair by consensus.

Joan McGilton nominated Judy Stenberg to continue as Vice Chair for the committee.

Stenberg was elected by consensus.

### **Approve May and June Meeting Minutes; Review Agenda**

In the June minutes, SWD updates were corrected to read, “May’s tonnage was a little higher than tonnage received during the same time period in 2010.”

Also in the June minutes, Open Forum was changed to clarify that the statement regarding recyclability of circuit boards was a quote from a report rather than an undisputed fact.

By consensus, the May minutes were approved as submitted and the June minutes were approved as amended.

In order to have enough time for discussion, the Emergency Debris Planning presentation was deferred to the next meeting.

### **Updates**

#### **SWD**

SWD Director Kevin Kiernan reported that Intergovernmental Liaison Diane Yates requests all SWAC members to set up their King County email accounts. King County policy requires the use of those accounts for all SWAC business.

The Metropolitan King County Council has approved a new solid waste rate of \$109 per ton for one year, in anticipation of further revision following decisions by cities on extension of the interlocal agreements. The division will perform a new rate study in 2012. The staff report provides the division with policy direction in its preamble, which is available online [here](#).

At Council's request, the County Auditor performed an audit of the transfer station capital program. The audit considered the rate and concluded, "the SWD's financial plan is comprehensive, sound, and based on reasonable financial assumptions." Regarding the capital program, the conclusion is that "the plan was developed through an iterative and collaborative process and regional decisions on service levels have, in some cases, increased costs." This comment refers to our choice to provide services, like self-haul, which we have collectively determined to be important. The Auditor made four recommendations; the Executive concurs with all of them.

1. In its financial plan, the division should use economic assumptions adopted by King County's Forecast Council to the extent the assumptions apply.
2. The division should continue to develop Life Cycle Cost Analysis as part of its asset management program.
3. The division should work with the Executive Finance Committee to consider a new investment strategy that would reflect the long-term nature of its reserve funds.
4. The division should update the transfer system and individual facility plans in light of changes in tonnage since plans were approved in 2007.

The division already performs value engineering considering current tonnage forecasts. At Factoria, this resulted in significant reductions to the plan. For example, there will be room for two compactors, but only one will be installed at opening, providing an immediate cost savings of one million dollars while maintaining long-term flexibility. A primary goal of the division is to design for flexibility to allow the stations to meet changing conditions over their lifetime.

The division received comments from the Washington State Department of Ecology on the draft Comp Plan at the end of the 120-day review period. Their comments were minor, dealing primarily with the process for amending the plan between revisions, and with the division's definition of beneficial use. The division is addressing their comments and making some updates, and will send the final draft to Council at the beginning of 2012.

On August 17, the division held the second community meeting in Bellevue to provide an update on progress being made on the replacement of the Factoria Recycling and Transfer Station. It was well attended, and the feedback was generally good.

Construction of the Bow Lake Recycling and Transfer Station is on schedule. Erection of the main structural steel frame is almost complete. Relaela Sindelar said it would be a good marketing message for the project if the steel is locally sourced.

On Saturday, September 10, Operations Manager Dean Voelker led the annual tour of Cedar Hills for neighbors and interested citizens. Almost 30 people attended the two-hour tour.

A new appraisal of Cedar Hills is underway. It is due November 15, and will inform other important division projects. Currently, the division pays rent to the King County General Fund for the use of the Cedar Hills property, which belongs to King County. In 2004, an appraisal

determined a rent schedule. In the years since, all of the primary assumptions have changed. The new appraisal could affect rates.

ILA discussions are making progress. The group is working intensively and has engaged a facilitator to help them meet their commitment to complete the discussions by November.

#### MSWMAC

Joan McGilton reported that of the about 22 cities that routinely attend MSWMAC, 11 formed a subcommittee to work on the interlocal agreements (ILAs). That group narrowed to five cities (Auburn, Bellevue, Redmond, Lake Forest Park and Shoreline) and hired a facilitator to help them develop the draft language for a new ILA. Each city's attorney will review the draft language in the first quarter of 2012. Some cities are quite vocal about preferring shorter terms for ILAs and debt financing. Others are of the opinion that because the transfer stations are long-term facilities, they should be financed with long-term debt so that future users contribute to paying for the system. SWAC discussed the implications of long-term variations in tonnage. The region is faced with a policy choice between low rates with a high total cost and higher upfront rates with a lower total cost, similar to the choice between a 15-year mortgage and a 30-year mortgage on a home.

The committee will present alternatives and make a recommendation to MSWMAC at the end of the process.

#### **Climate Change Initiative**

SWD staff Josh Marx gave a PowerPoint presentation on King County's Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories and Measurement Framework Project. A copy of the presentation is available online [here](#). Detailed reports on the project results are being finalized, and will be available soon.

The discussion included:

- How does the lens of time affect emissions? Is one million tons of carbon today better or worse than one million tons ten years from now?
- There is a population component to this data; per capita values are available. However, since this is the first time a Consumption Inventory has been performed, it is not possible to compare values over time.
- The data is not granular enough to compare the greenhouse gas impacts of different products yet. The division has chosen to focus on food for further, more detailed research.
- Does this model include the impacts of extraction? For example, electric cars and solar panels are manufactured with rare earth elements that cannot be extracted domestically. Mining these materials may be extremely damaging and may compromise the sustainability of new technologies.
- The inventory does not provide a comparison of technologies such as landfilling or energy recovery. It provides a snapshot measuring what actually happens here now.
- The model used to develop the inventory seems like a product that could be marketed to other jurisdictions. Pieces of it are transferrable, and the consulting company that developed it does plan to apply it to other areas.

#### **Illegal Dumping**

SWD Staff Morgan John gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Community Litter Cleanup Program. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

Discussion included:

- Tonnage from illegal dumpsite cleanups has been tracked since the inception of the program in 1998. The strongest correlation to increased tonnage is to advertisement of the Illegal Dumping Hotline. The division does not seek out illegal dumpsites, but only responds to reported sites. A site may go undiscovered for years before being reported.
- The program cleans up dumping on public lands only. When dumping occurs on private property, code enforcement becomes an issue. Property owners must clean up sites on their land themselves, but victims of dumping can have disposal fees waived through a voucher program.
- There is very little investigation of responsibility for dumping on public lands. Law enforcement has limited resources, and must prioritize violent and dangerous crimes above dumping. Further, it is difficult to prove that the “owner” of the garbage was actually the dumper. The division does make an effort to track down those responsible for dumping outside of transfer stations.
- Visibility and lighting are more effective deterrents than signage, which often seems to attract new dumping. The division has worked with Roads to improve lighting at some locations. In general, however, attempts to stop dumping at a specific site just move dumpers to another, less accessible location.
- Illegal dumping has an environmental impact and financial cost that is much greater than the actual tonnage involved. The division estimates that the full cost for its cleanup program is \$2,720 per ton. Other agencies are also spending money on cleanup.
- It would be interesting for the state to collect data from all agencies to calculate the full impact of the problem.

### **Open Forum**

Jean Garber read excerpts from a Columbia University - Earth Engineering Center report called “The Importance of Landfill Gas Capture and Utilization in the U.S.” available online [here](#). She said that many statements of the benefits of thermal recycling are based on assumptions of 50 percent landfill gas capture. In the U.S., and specifically here in King County, the actual rate of capture is significantly higher than 50 percent, which dramatically reduces the climate impacts of landfilling. Garber asked that discussions of disposal technology be fact-based.

Suellen Mele said that Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation has developed a brochure to inform the public about product stewardship. She distributed copies of the brochure.

Craig Lorch said that it is possible to recycle circuit boards from compact fluorescent lights, and there are markets for those materials.