

**King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee
October 16, 2015 - 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Center**

Meeting Minutes

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>King County Staff</u>	<u>Others</u>
April Atwood	Jamey Barker	Doreen Booth, Sound Cities Association
Jerry Bartlett	Alejandra Calderon	Karl Hufnagel, Parametrix
Elly Bunzendahl	Anna Fleming	David Della, Waste Management
Joe Casalini - absent	Jeff Gaisford	Councilmember Lambert
Gib Damman - absent	Kathy Hashagen	Ross Marzolf, Councilmember Lambert staff
Chris Eggen	Beth Humphreys	Alex Squalli, EcoMed Services
Jean Garber	Kevin Kiernan	
Stacia Jenkins	Laila McClinton	
Kim Kaminski - excused	Meg Moorehead	
Kevin Kelly - excused	Diane Yates	
Keith Livingston		
Jose Lugo		
Barbara Ristau		
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann		
Stephen Strader - excused		
Bill Ziegler		

Approve Meeting Minutes; Review Agenda

The August and September meeting minutes were approved.

Updates

SWD

In an effort to learn more about trash disposal and recycling, Mongolian Parliament Member Oyungerel Tseveddamba requested a tour of the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill. The parliament member was extremely appreciative of the tour and was impressed with SWD operations.

On October 5, SWD began a year-long yard and food waste pilot program at the Vashon Recycling and Transfer Station. The program is a partnership between SWD and Zero Waste Vashon, a nonprofit organization of Vashon residents. Yard and food waste will be carted to Cedar Grove Composting and SWD will track quantities and characterize types of materials collected at the station to help assess the feasibility of future processing. After 10 days, 6.8 tons of material was collected.

Schools in King County are recycling and reducing waste, conserving energy and water, and reducing costs with assistance from the King County Green Schools Program. During the 2014-15 school year, the program assisted 182 schools in 32 cities and unincorporated King County, and 112,535 students in those schools had opportunities to learn about and engage in waste reduction, recycling, and other conservation practices. During that same time period, the program tracked recycling data from 148 schools, and of those schools 95 percent reached recycling rates of at least 40 percent, 39 percent reached recycling rates of 50 to 59 percent, and 23 percent reached recycling rates of 60 percent or more.

MSWMAC

Chris Eggen and Stacia Jenkins gave an update from the October MSWMAC meeting:

- A resolution regarding the Transfer Plan (attached) was discussed. Several cities expressed their support and two cities expressed their opposition. Action was postponed pending discussions between the division and cities most impacted by the demand management strategies outlined in the plan.
- SWD Assistant Director Kevin Kiernan confirmed that the division intends to work with a subcommittee of MSWMAC to develop a work plan to determine how to evaluate the demand management strategies. The concerns expressed by the cities have been made clear and the division is committed to addressing them.
- In response to a question about the division's capacity to begin siting a Northeast station, Kiernan explained that while the division is an enterprise fund, it is also a county agency and its budget is proposed by the County Executive and approved by the County Council. Originally the division's budget included a project to site a Northeast transfer station then the County Council took action to remove it. It would be problematic for the division to act contrary to council action. Kiernan added that council staff members attend advisory committee meetings and have heard the concerns expressed by cities.
- When asked if the Transfer Plan Report would ever be revised to be more responsive to city comments, Kiernan explained that the report has been transmitted to the County Council and cannot be pulled back. However, the division is considering a more expansive responsive summary as part of the demand management strategy testing process.
- The three policy options for waste prevention and recycling were also discussed.

Comp Plan Work Plan: Discussion

- Beth Humphreys presented a [proposal for SWAC's review process](#) for the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Comp Plan). She outlined two possible tracks. Track 1 would include discussion of transfer station issues from November 2015 to March 2016 while Track 2 would include two months on this topic in February and March 2016. The division proposes using a consensus-based discussion model as well as a facilitator.

- Humphreys explained how the proposed schedule would align with [SWD major planning project milestones](#). She noted that many projects will inform the Comp Plan, but that they are all on separate tracks and not all projects will be complete in time to be included in the Comp Plan.
- Kiernan added that while the Transfer Demand Management Pilot Project will not be complete before the cut-off for information for the Comp Plan, the Comp Plan language will be permissive so that it would allow for proceeding with a Northeast station or with demand management strategies or with a combination of both.
- SWAC Chair Jean Garber noted that the Comp Plan should include language that identifies criteria for making decisions about the transfer station system. Kiernan explained that the division intends to identify these criteria in the Transfer Demand Management Pilot Project.
- Jenkins added that the criteria should go beyond what works for the county and include what works for the cities. She advised against passing on costs to cities that may not have sufficient resources.
- Keith Livingston commented that the proposed demand management strategies would make the system less user-friendly and may lead to increased traffic congestion.
- Bill Ziegler noted that the pilot project should include input from transfer station employees who interact with the public. Kiernan confirmed that the division is looking at scale operator staffing models and that scale operators are participating in the process.
- Garber advised that if the demand management strategies do not meet the service goals for the transfer system as a whole, they should be abandoned. She added that the strategies fail to even meet the guiding principles. She hopes the process will be transparent and objective.
- Jenkins noted that small commercial self-haulers will be impacted by the proposed strategies and should have opportunities to give their input.
- Kiernan reminded members that the advisory committees will be asked to provide feedback early on in the pilot project. He also clarified that the division is advocating that a separate Transfer Plan no longer exist after 2016, and will instead be incorporated into the Transfer Chapter in the Comp Plan.
- Jenkins expressed concern that based on the proposed schedule; MSWMAC will not have the results of the completed pilot to consider while discussing transfer station issues. Humphreys noted that the Comp Plan language will be permissive and will allow for all options, and that waiting for the results of the pilot would delay the Comp Plan until the end of 2018.
- Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann noted that the topics being discussed are interrelated and suggested a more integrated approach with discussion of all topics at each meeting. Kiernan acknowledged the concern while pointing out the difficulty of tackling multiple issues in depth in two-hour meetings. He added that the advisory committees will have the opportunity to review the complete draft plan in July and August of 2016.

- Jeff Gaisford confirmed that the construction and demolition materials management ordinance is being reviewed by the County Council and will not be revisited unless the County Council makes a request.
- Jenkins noted that the MSWMAC schedule should include discussion of recycling and resource recovery policies, and not focus solely on transfer station issues. Humphreys noted that the forthcoming MSWMAC subcommittee meeting will help inform the MSWMAC schedule, which is subject to change.
- Elly Bunzendahl expressed frustration with the political nature of these discussions and her impression that because of that SWAC may not influence or impact the ultimate outcome.
- Livingston noted that while it is a political process, SWAC plays an important role in providing an independent perspective.
- Kiernan noted that SWAC exists because of state law and King County Code. The committee provides advice on solid waste issues to the division, the County Executive, and the County Council. SWAC recommendations are an important part of the process and do have an impact regardless of the ultimate outcomes.
- Eggen noted that it may be appropriate to defer discussion of transfer station issues for the next five months.
- Schmidt-Pathmann urged the committee to keep in mind the experience and lessons learned by other countries and warned against focusing solely on financial costs.
- Members agreed to a consensus process, adding that if a consensus proves difficult to reach, SWAC members will vote on the issues.
- April Atwood requested that draft chapters be shared with SWAC members whenever they are available. This would not reintroduce multiple edits of the chapters, but would allow members to raise concerns before July of 2016.
- SWAC agreed to the proposed Comp Plan review process and favored proceeding with Track 2.

Comp Plan Waste Prevention/Recycling: Continue Discussion

SWD Recycling & Environmental Services Manager Jeff Gaisford presented [70% Recycling: A Case for Change](#). He gave an overview of three possible policy directions to guide regional waste prevention and recycling efforts.

Option A comments:

- Schmidt-Pathmann expressed his support for Option A, adding that the division should consider making even more recycling services available at transfer stations.
- Barbara Ristau noted that this option is more aggressive, but would allow for much-needed consistency in recycling throughout the region.
- Jenkins noted that cities consider Option A infeasible and asked for hauler opinions on the feasibility of this approach.
- Eggen noted that there are two ways to implement the policies outlined in Option A. One way would be for every city to implement the policies on their own. Few have shown the willingness to do this. The second way would be to include the policies in the

Comp Plan, which may make it more difficult to pass. Eggen suggested a combination of these approaches instead.

- Kiernan clarified that under its interlocal agreements (ILAs) with cities, the county is responsible for handling city garbage, not city recyclables. Under Option A, the ILAs could require cities to separate recyclables from garbage.
- Kiernan confirmed that the infrastructure at some of the older transfer stations limits the recycling services the county is able to provide. Recycling improvements are made on a station by station basis. Gaisford added that the self-haul recycling rate is currently just over 5 percent and that making separation a requirement at stations that have recycling services would more than double the rate.
- Garber expressed her appreciation for Option A because it sets a strong regional goal and encourages consistency. She added that not building a Northeast transfer station would minimize opportunities for resource recovery and recycling at transfer stations.
- Atwood expressed her support for Option A because of its clear message and increased consistency for the consumer. She noted that it would lead to more stability in the markets for recyclable goods, which would make recycling more economically feasible at the industrial level.
- Jenkins suggested that a timeline should be developed to include elements from all options. This timeline would eventually lead to Option A. Livingston agreed that a roadmap should be developed to lead to Option A, adding that Option C is a good starting point because it is within the division's control.

Option B comments:

- Eggen expressed his preference for a combination of Option B and C, assuming option A is not practical. This would establish recycling goals, give cities a menu of options, and have the county lead at the same time. He noted many MSWMAC members expressed support for both Options B and C.
- Bunzendahl noted that Option A is a prescriptive approach whereas Option B is a performance approach. Option B may show results if it includes a feedback mechanism.
- From an equity and social justice perspective, Ristau expressed a concern that Option B would unfairly penalize low-income, immigrant, and ESL populations.
- Jenkins noted that cities need strong financial incentives and repercussions to be motivated to make policy changes. Gaisford pointed out that the division has a model that could be used to calculate comprehensive costs. Garber added that there is not only a financial imperative to maximize resource recovery but also an ethical and environmental imperative.

Option C comments:

- Jerry Bartlett noted that many businesses that have organics collection continue to put organics in their garbage. He recommended studying what is driving this behavior.
- Gaisford confirmed that the county is very familiar with what cities are currently doing in terms of recycling, and that actions have been included based on this understanding.
- Schmidt-Pathmann suggested developing incentives for private capital investments.

- Gaisford noted that unincorporated areas would first need to have weekly organics pick-up, every-other-week garbage pick-up, and the cost of organics embedded in the cost of garbage before any bans or mandates are implemented.
- Bartlett expressed his appreciation for Option C because the county leads by example. He discouraged embedding the cost of organics collection in the cost of garbage collection, noting that having customers pay the true cost of collection incentivizes private entities to invest in collection. Gaisford noted rates are set by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission and are based on the true cost of service. Gaisford also clarified that the division is talking about embedding the cost of organics in the curbside garbage rate in the unincorporated areas. The division is not proposing to embed the cost of yard waste collection into the tip fee charged at transfer stations. The yard waste fee at transfer stations will remain a separate fee.
- Jenkins pointed out that the unincorporated areas are not represented on MSWMAC and asked if the county is talking to residents and business owners who would be significantly impacted in the unincorporated areas. Gaisford explained that the changes would require council action and numerous steps would involve representatives of the unincorporated areas. Kiernan added that the county council represents the unincorporated areas and that the division does reach out to Community Service Areas.
- Gaisford confirmed that the menu in Option B would include the elements listed in Option C, but that it is difficult to estimate the recycling increases that would result from Option B because we do not know what options cities would choose.
- Bunzendahl noted that it is important for the unincorporated area customers to be able to opt out of organics collection as long as they keep organics out of the garbage.

Members voted for their preferred options:

- Atwood, Bunzendahl, Ristau, and Schmidt-Pathmann voted for Option A.
- Bartlett, Eggen, and Garber voted for Option B.
- Jenkins, Livingston, Lugo, and Ziegler voted for Option C.

Open Forum

Bunzendahl recommended reading the following articles:

- [The Reign of Recycling](#)
- [An Open Letter: National Recycling Coalition's Response to Media Attacks on Recycling](#)

Schmidt-Pathmann recommended reading the following articles:

- [State Launches Effort to Redevelop Hartford's Trash-To-Energy And Recycling Plants](#)
- [Residents petition Missouri governor to declare emergency over landfill fire](#)
- [Storyfoam-Eating Mealworms Could Happily Dispose of Plastic Waste](#)
- [International Solid Waste Association Declaration on Climate Change and the Waste and Resource Management Sector](#)
- [MillerCoors sees boost in sales after switching from glass to plastic](#)
- [Does the United Nations' new global sustainability agenda mean anything for cities?](#)

Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC)

Transfer Plan Review Part 2 Final Report Motion

MSWMAC is reviewing and discussing the King County Solid Waste Division Transfer Plan Review Part 2 Final Report, including the fact that the data and analyses presented in the Final Report appear largely unchanged from the Draft Report and that many cities expressed concerns regarding the strategies presented in the Draft Report, and therefore:

MSWMAC moves that the King County Solid Waste Division undertake the following:

- Retain a new northeast transfer station in the King County Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan, and as a contingency, begin a preliminary siting process for the new facility in 2016 in order to ensure the timely closure of Houghton Transfer Station, regional equity, environmental protections, system efficiency, and minimal impacts to the local and regional transportation system. (Note: see 8/21/15 *SWAC Adopted Motion below)
- Prepare an analysis that addresses the critical concerns and issues raised by stakeholder comments on the Draft Report to ensure the policies and/or demand management strategies achieve the expected goals without negative impacts prior to including any Draft Report policies or demand management strategies in the King County Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan.
- Prepare an analysis regarding compliance with the Conditional Use Permit for the Factoria Transfer Station.

*Adopted SWAC Motion: I move that SWAC recommend Executive and Council approval of the Transfer Plan Review Part 2 Final Report, providing that: (1) building a NE recycling and transfer station has the same priority as demand management strategies in the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan update; (2) the county immediately begins the process of identifying alternative sites for a NE station, and secures a site if feasible; and (3) alternative sites for a NE station are analyzed in the same EIA, and at the same level of detail, as demand management strategies.