

# Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee

October 14, 2016 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.  
King Street Center 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

## Meeting Minutes

<u>Members</u>	
Bill Peloza	<i>Auburn</i>
Susan Fife-Ferris	<i>Bellevue</i>
Alison Bennett	<i>Bellevue</i>
Sabrina Combs	<i>Bothell</i>
Erin Leonhart	<i>Bothell</i>
Brian Roberts	<i>Burien</i>
Barre Seibert	<i>Clyde Hill</i>
Rob Van Orsow	<i>Federal Way</i>
Jenna Higgins	<i>Kirkland</i>
John MacGillivray	<i>Kirkland</i>
Penny Sweet	<i>Kirkland</i>
Phillippa Kassoover	<i>Lake Forest Park</i>
Casey Leyde	<i>Mercer Island</i>
Carol Simpson	<i>Newcastle</i>
Jerallyn Roetemeyer	<i>Redmond</i>
Gary Schimek	<i>Redmond</i>
Linda Knight	<i>Renton</i>
Beth Goldberg	<i>Sammamish</i>
Rika Cecil	<i>Shoreline</i>
Uki Dele	<i>Shoreline</i>

<u>King County Staff</u>
Jamey Barker, SWD staff
Alejandra Calderon, SWD staff
Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff
Kim van Ekstrom, SWD staff
Jennifer Devlin, SWD staff
Matt Hobson, SWD staff
Beth Humphreys, SWD staff
Pat McLaughlin, SWD staff
Olivia Robinson, SWD staff
Meg Moorehead, SWD staff
Christie True, DNRP Director
<u>Guests</u>
Emily Newcomer, Waste Management
Jean Garber, SWAC
Margot Keany, Republic Services
Jeff Wagner, Republic Services

## Minutes & Agenda Review

The Advisory Committee did not achieve a quorum, therefore minutes from the September meeting were not amended or approved. Penny Sweet noted that the September minutes indicated Bernie Talmas was present at the meeting, but he was only there briefly before the meeting started. His name will be removed from the attendance list. Susan Fife Ferris commented on the September minutes noting that on Page 2, last sentence in the last full paragraph - it currently states: The intent is to rebalance demand through incentivized pricing, a goal that isn't served when prices are raised everywhere. Fife-Ferris questioned the accuracy of this statement: *"This is not an accurate statement. What is the goal for the incentivized pricing? What behavior are you trying to affect? Is it to shift demand from one time to another at the same station, or to shift demand from one station to another station? Raising pricing at all stations may serve the first goal of shifting demand from one time to another at the same station, which seems to be what the County is trying to test with this demand management strategy, but that has not clearly been articulated."*

## Updates

### **SWD**

#### Upcoming annual landfill meeting and tour

SWD will hold its annual fall Cedar Hills Regional Landfill neighbor meeting and tour in October. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 25 at the Issaquah Library in Issaquah, and the tour will be held on Saturday, Oct. 15. Both events are a chance for landfill neighbors and community members to hear updates about the landfill and learn about SWD operations.

#### New web cameras installed at six busiest recycling and transfer stations

On Oct. 1, SWD launched a new project intended to help customers make a more informed decision about where and when they dispose of their waste. New web cameras at the Algona, Bow Lake, Factoria, Houghton, Renton, and Shoreline transfer stations show customers, in real time, the line of vehicles waiting to enter the stations. Camera feeds are located on SWD's website at [www.kingcounty.gov/checktheline](http://www.kingcounty.gov/checktheline). The site also features average disposal times at all SWD facilities. Disposal times measure the time it takes customers to weigh in, dispose of their waste, weigh out, and pay. SWD is performing such projects at the direction of the King County Council, which has asked SWD to study how to make the customer experience at transfer stations more productive and efficient.

#### New Assistant Division Director starting October 31st

SWD is pleased to announce it has found its new assistant division director. Roger Merritt has accepted the position and will begin his tenure on Oct. 31. Roger comes to SWD with more than 20 years of experience in the waste management industry, most recently serving as the Assistant Director of the Resource Recovery Division for Prince George's County in Maryland. Roger's arrival at the end of October means he will have about a month to cross-train with current Assistant Division Director Kevin Kiernan, who is retiring at the end of the year.

#### Final report from 2016 Threadcycle campaign

The 2016 Threadcycle Campaign ended in September, and in addition to receiving more than 22 million impressions through paid, earned, and social media, the campaign website received more than 66,000 unique visits during the three-month campaign. Additionally, the campaign enhanced its outreach to Spanish-speaking communities by holding public events and workshops, garnering more than 35,000 impressions via various media outlets. More information about Threadcycle can be found here: <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/ecoconsumer/threadcycle.asp>

### **SWAC**

SWAC Chair Jean Garber provided the update from the September SWAC meeting where SWD employees delivered a presentation on SWD's school and green school programs. SWAC also discussed SWD's proposed demand management strategies.

#### **Comp Plan Status and Timeline: Presentation**

Members of SWD's Strategy, Communications & Performance Section delivered a presentation with an updated proposal to the timeline, comp plan review process, and decision-making model. The new comp plan review process begins with an online survey of

advisory committee members in order to identify policy areas where there is wide support and those requiring more discussion. SWD added three more meetings to the review timeline for a total of eight. The proposed decision-making model consists of recurring straw polls where substantive agreement moves a policy discussion forward. It was noted that a vote for agreement is not binding in the early stages of review as there will be multiple opportunities within the review process to alter positions, particularly in consideration of feedback given by city councils. Also, in an effort to keep policy discussions organized and on target, there are proposed ground rules. The presentation is linked [here](#).

Discussion following the presentation:

- Spoken aloud, the ground rules are friendlier than what reads as restrictive on paper. The strict tone of the detailed rule descriptions was acknowledged. The detailed descriptions are intended to fully explain what the rules might mean for both committee members and the county staff. How strictly committee members are held to the ground rules or the exact wording is up to the committee.
- Votes for substantive agreement during policy discussions ought to mirror the same voting algorithm of the final comp plan approval of 75 percent and not the proposed 60 percent.
- Alternatively, substantive agreement should be majority vote – 50% plus one. One person should not be allowed to hold up the process. It was noted that this comment conflicts with a previous comment about substantive agreement. The comp plan itself will not be adopted if there is disagreement by cities representing at least 25% of the population, so discussions of policy areas should not move forward with a similar level of contention.
- The ideal of focusing on a particular policy area over two meetings might not allow enough time for committee members to work with their city councils. There needs to be a lot of flexibility built into the review process. The concern is valid, but it is hoped members understand their city's interests ahead of time and will represent those interests up front.
- The work on the revised timeline is appreciated and there looks to be room for flexibility as the process continues.
- If your city council has other political realities that may delay input on the SWD comp plan, be sure to communicate them.
- The demand management pilot schedule is not in sync with the comp plan schedule. It was noted that if the comp plan was tabled until the pilot was finished, the comp plan would not exist before 2020. Knowing that, the comp plan will be permissive of any possible outcomes of the pilot.
- There was a suggestion to bundle policy area topics together to facilitate presentation to city councils to make it easier to get their timely feedback.
- In the survey, each policy question ought to include an introductory paragraph to put the question in context of the plan. It was noted that the policy question asks for a sliding scale of agreement and the question itself is the actual policy taken from the draft 2013 comp plan as updated in 2014 and 2015. SWD staff are available if anyone would like to review the comp plan. It was then suggested that the survey questions include a link to the draft 2013 comp plan, or that a link or PDF of the draft 2013 comp plan be distributed to MSMWAC ahead of the survey.

- It was noted that for the survey there should only be one response from each jurisdiction with answers reflective of the representatives from the jurisdiction.
- Results of the survey will be shared with all Advisory Committee members. SWAC will see MSMWAC results and vice versa. Ideally, both committees will have similar levels of agreement on each topic.

### **Demand Management**

SWD Director Pat McLaughlin introduced SWD staff Alejandra Calderon who spearheaded the early demand management strategies of implementing the newly unveiled online wait time cameras at the six busiest transfer stations and the impending on-site digital signs. The signs will compare wait times at nearby transfer stations to better inform customers of their options to reduce their wait.

After an online demonstration of the cameras, McLaughlin then turned the discussion over to the nexus of the demand management pilot, the recently approved rate increase, and the proposed budget currently awaiting approval by county council. The proposed budget is \$275 million, including \$2 million for the demand management pilot. The approved rate is 12 percent higher than the current rate instead of the 14.6 percent proposed; the difference owing to council direction to draw upon cash reserves set aside for future rate stabilization. Also, the rate and budget include no decision about what will happen with Houghton. Changes to facilities, whether regarding hours or closures, will require additional council action even on an interim basis.

As a final point, McLaughlin asserted SWD will work closely with cities hosting transfer stations to work with their concerns, specifically Kirkland, Bellevue, and Shoreline.

Discussion followed:

- Can funds allocated for the demand management pilot be used to site a NE transfer station without a vote of the Council? McLaughlin replied that the Council has given their direction regarding the question of siting a new facility by specifically removing funding for that possibility. Using money for demand management for siting a new station could not occur without council direction.
- What is the balance of the cash reserves? SWD staff Matt Hobson answered that the council drew \$6 million from reserves to cover the lowered rate. The remaining balance at the end of the 2017-18 biennium will be approximately \$15.6 million. It was noted that there are two types of cash reserves – a 30-day emergency reserve and a rate stabilization reserve. King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks Director Christie True explained that land acquisition is a capital expense and has its own allocation set during the budget process. It can be borrowed against only with council approval, which will not happen in the foreseeable future. McLaughlin reminded members when the Transfer Plan was created 10 years ago the economy was different. Now there is less tonnage and fewer cities participating long-term and the direction from Council is to study alternatives to building a NE station, which is the driver behind the demand management pilot.
- There is still a need to see a complete scope of all elements of the pilot, which ought to include asking Snohomish County to track information during the pilot as they will

likely see an impact. Ideally, the scope of the pilot will be locked down over the next 60-90 days.

- Fife-Ferris noted that she had a revelation during earlier conversation that “peak hours” mean peak traffic hours to cities compared to SWD’s peak station use hours. She reiterated the need to work closely with cities to ensure correct measures are tracked.
- Traffic studies in the pilot ought to include hours beyond SWD’s peak station hours in order to consider possible impacts during rush hour. In fact, a committee member felt that an EIS needs to be part of the pilot. McLaughlin agreed that there is a need to revisit the traffic studies.
- Burien representative Brian Roberts noted that while Burien is not one of the impacted cities, he expressed a concern that removing a transfer station from the system will force higher hauler fees for citizens in that service area and breaks the principle of geographic equity. SWD should reconsider Kirkland’s earlier offer to host a transfer station there. Director True then explained the difficulty of siting a new facility while noting that all existing facilities were built atop pre-existing facilities or old landfills. We owe it to neighbors of a potential facility to study all alternatives and to thoroughly test demand management strategies.
- SWAC Chair Garber commented that the whole demand management pilot ought to require environmental review including an EIS and being aware of SEPA requirements.

#### **Member and Public Comment**

There were no comments.