

MSWMAC Advisory Committee Meeting
 May 11, 2018 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
 King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

<u>MSWMAC Members</u>	
Joan Nelson	Auburn
Bill Peloza	Auburn
Alison Bennett	Bellevue
Sarah Ogier	Bellevue
Sabrina Combs	Bothell
Emily Warnock	Bothell
Robin Tischmak	Burien
Barre Seibert	Clyde Hill
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way
Micah Bonkowski	Issaquah
Tony Donati	Kent
Penny Sweet – Chair	Kirkland
Jenna McInnins	Kirkland
John MacGillivray	Kirkland
Phillippa Kassover	Lake Forest Park
Diana Pistoll	Maple Valley
Jason Kintner	Mercer Island
Carol Simpson	Newcastle
Gary Schimek	Redmond
Linda Knight – Vice Chair	Renton
Maia Knox	Sammamish
Alex Herzog	Woodinville
Paula Waters	Woodinville

<u>King County Staff</u>
Jamey Barker, SWD staff
William Chen, SWD staff
Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff
Kathy Hashagen, SWD staff
Beth Humphreys, SWD staff
Ross Marzolf, Council staff
Laila McClinton, SWD staff
Pat D. McLaughlin, SWD Director
Meg Moorehead, SWD staff
Yolanda Pon, Seattle-KC Public Health
Terra Rose, Council staff
Eben Sutton, SWD staff
Katherine Taylor, DNRP staff
Christie True, DNRP Director
Kim van Ekstrom, SWD staff
Dorian Waller, SWD staff
John Walsh, SWD staff
<u>Guests</u>
Cynthia Foley, Sound Cities Association
Laura Moser, Waste Management
Emily Newcomer, Waste Management
Janet Prichard, Republic Services
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann, NEOMER
Jeff Wagner, Republic Services

Minutes

Seibert asked that the spelling of his name on page four be corrected. With that correction, the April minutes were approved unanimously.

MSWMAC discussed the idea of not having printed copies of materials available at the meeting if they were distributed electronically within the agreed upon time limit. Peloza moved that hard copies not be provided at MSWMAC meeting. Seibert seconded the motion. Simpson noted that the change would place a hardship on small cities with limited resources. Waller suggested that hard copies could be provided to cities that contacted him 48 hours in advance of the meetings. The motion was amended to that effect and passed unanimously.

Updates

Solid Waste Division (SWD)

SWD Director Pat D. McLaughlin gave the following SWD updates:

ILA

The Town of Yarrow Point has signed the 37th and final interlocal agreement (ILA). All the ILAs are now extended to 2040.

SCA

McLaughlin participated in the Recycling Revisited forum at the Sound Cities Association (SCA). The focus of the forum was China's "National Sword" policy and how stakeholders such as the Solid Waste Division, haulers, and cities can work together to address the policy locally.

Factoria tour

The City of Algona toured the Factoria Transfer Station with SWD staff to "preview" design features and services the new South County Recycling and Transfer Station may incorporate once operational.

Green Schools

The King County Green Schools Program, which helps K-12 schools and school districts engage students and employees in learning about and practicing resource conservation, recognized eight schools this month for increasing recycling, conserving energy and water, and reducing food waste and paper use.

Schools from 35 King County cities and unincorporated areas are reducing waste, increasing recycling, conserving resources, and cutting costs with help from the King County Green Schools Program. The program provides hand-on help and the tools that schools need, such as recycling containers, signs, and guidance for school teams to make improvements.

The program has served a growing number of schools each year – from 70 schools in 2008 to 270 schools currently, which is 54 percent of all K-12 schools in King County outside the City of Seattle. Contact Jeff Gaisford for additional information.

Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

SWAC discussed the same topics as MSWMAC last month but there was a more in-depth discussion regarding China Sword. It was remarked that Ken Marshall, a representative of Local 174 has joined the committee and brings a valuable perspective.

China Sword (Responsible Recycling Task Force)

SWAC & MSWMAC formed an ad hoc committee called the Responsible Recycling Task Force. Members include representatives from ten cities, the three major haulers in the region (Recology, Republic, Waste Management) and SWAC members representing marketing and Labor and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC). The task force has two goals. The first is to help identify near, medium and long-term actions in response to

reduction in export markets for mixed recyclable materials due to China's National Sword. The second is to help establish commitment across the region to responsible recycling and domestic sorting and/or processing of curbside recyclables. The outcome of the task force is expected to be a report with recommendations for future actions.

The task force will meet monthly through October. They will prioritize materials that have value and stable markets, discuss how to collect materials in ways that don't damage other valuable commodities, work with haulers and Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to make sure that materials can be sorted effectively before adding them to the list, and how discuss to aim for "market-ready" bales vs. "mixed" bales.

They will focus on quality vs. quantity, regional policy alignment, harmonized messaging, and how to pay for recycling. They will also discuss domestic processing and markets and the demand for recyclable materials. They stated that recycling is not free and that measuring "real recycling" means measuring what gets sent to the end markets, not what gets put in the bin.

At their meeting, committee members heard from haulers about MRFs and markets. They learned that transportation is an issue and markets are not as large in India as they are in China. Additionally, they discussed communications and proposed a sub-group to create a tool kit and public information campaign. The City of Seattle and the Solid Waste Division said they would commit resources to the campaign.

The next two meetings are scheduled for June 1 and June 18. At those meetings they expect to discuss communications and immediate issues. [Copies of meeting notes](#) have been distributed to MSWMAC members.

In response to a question Moorehead noted that the division has not noticed an increase of tonnage disposed due to China Sword. McLaughlin said division staff have not reported bales of contaminated materials being disposed at transfer stations. Knight said that according to recycling publications, materials must be certified before they are shipped to China. Materials that are not acceptable are rejected at that point.

'19 – '20 rates

Chen presented information about the preliminary rate proposal. It is likely that the Executive will transmit the proposal to the King County Council in June. To meet the UTC's deadline and mesh with city rate updates, Council should act by end of September. If approved, the rate would take effect in January 2019.

The basic fee of \$134.59 per ton has been in place since 2017. The preliminary proposed rate of \$140.82 would go into effect in 2019. This 4.6% increase is lower than what was projected in the last rate proposal, lower than inflation and in the middle of the range of fees for other local jurisdictions. It would be an increase of about \$0.34 per month for a single-family curbside customer based on a \$22 monthly fee.

The proposed rate would pay for inflation and other increased costs of current services, comp plan driven projects, investing in infrastructure, meeting increased demand and County goals including piloting a low-income discount.

A member asked what percentage of the increase in basic fee per ton as it appears in the preliminary proposed rate is to pay the Central Rate. Staff were unable to answer the question during the meeting. *Note: since the meeting staff provided the following information. 17% of the increased cost of current services as it appears in the preliminary proposed rate is in response to increases in the central rate for King County services.*

In response to questions staff said:

- The increased cost of basic services adds funds for stricter enforcement of self-haul recycling at transfer stations including an additional staff person to assist with education and enforcement.
- The rate did not incorporate what might happen if the recycled materials markets collapsed. However, if materials were brought to stations they would be charged the tipping fee which would cover the cost of service.
- Providing a low-income discount is anticipated to add two cents per ton to other customers. The City of Seattle also offers a low-income rate but at the curbside, not at transfer stations. The division would not ask for identification to determine that the low-income customer was a King County resident.

Comp Plan

Disposal after 2028

The public review draft plan had three options: build additional capacity at Cedar Hills, export via rail to an out of county landfill, and build a waste to energy (WTE) facility in King County. All three are viable. Since the public review draft plan was released additional cities have signed ILA. That combined with a burgeoning economy and increasing population have resulted in a higher tonnage forecast. All three of the long-term disposal options are affected by the updated forecast.

Waste to Energy is a viable technology. In addition to decreasing the volume of materials to be disposed it produces electricity to off-set some of its costs. However, it is more expensive per ton and has higher greenhouse gas impacts than other options. Though Waste to Energy is a proven technology the updated forecast means that a 5000 ton per day facility would be needed. Facilities that large are being constructed in China and Dubai but are not yet in operation and there are risks associated with upsizing technologies. Siting a Waste to Energy facility in King County could be challenging.

Waste export has a higher cost per ton than landfilling. It is a viable option but there are risks associated with rail capacity.

The division anticipates the Executive will recommend adding capacity to the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill. The advantage of that choice includes the lowest cost per ton, most favorable Greenhouse Gas Emissions, managing the waste locally and taking advantage of the division's experience in operating and managing landfills. This option garners as much value

as possible from an existing local asset. Unlike the current comp plan, the public review draft comp plan doesn't say what will happen when the expanded Cedar Hills ultimately is filled so that technological advances can be considered in that decision.

With any option, 2028 is approaching quickly. A disposal option must be in place when existing capacity is full. With the higher tonnage forecast, the proposed landfill expansion is expected to last through 2038. If recycling rates improve, the landfill could last through 2040 but if more tons are disposed in response to the China Sword landfill life could be shortened by between one and nine (*note: later corrected to 6*) months.

In response to a question about materials impacted by China Sword, Gaisford said that cardboard makes up almost half the tons, waste paper is most of the rest and plastics are in single digits. Because plastic contaminates paper and vice versa keeping plastics separate is important in preventing contamination.

As required by the ILA the division will be consulting with cities at least seven years in advance of closing Cedar Hills about the next disposal method. Pistoll asked that future MSWMAC members learn about disposal options a year before a decision is needed to allow for informed choices. McLaughlin said the division intends to continue to monitor disposal technologies.

MacGillivray said the ILA requires that cities direct any unmarketable recyclable materials to Cedar Hills. McLaughlin agreed and said a communication has been sent to the haulers as well as the cities reiterating that requirement. Moorehead noted that a policy will be added to the draft comp plan saying that an additional landfill will not be sited in King County. This policy is in the current comp plan. The division thought the policy had been codified elsewhere but learned it was not.

Transfer Services

The public review draft plan had three options: Keep Houghton "As-Is," site and build a new Northeast area facility or use a combination of facilities.

In the 2007 transfer plan, regional partners agreed to a system design that included new stations at Shoreline, Bow Lake, Factoria, Algona and a new NE county station to replace Houghton. All those stations are completed or underway except Houghton. The public review draft comp plan reconsidered whether Houghton needed to be updated. As with long term disposal, the circumstances have changed. Now there are 37 cities in the system through 2040 and a projection of higher tonnage and increased population. The Northeast portion of King County is one of the fastest growing areas.

Each of the three options carries risks. Houghton "As Is" has limited recycling, little flexibility for the future and host city opposition. The combo option would mean two siting processes, result in fewer recycling options and may result in potential host city opposition. The cost for a new station would be less than a dollar a month on single family curbside bill, with both operating and capital costs included. Kirkland has offered to be a host city for a new station but under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) the door must stay open for other locations.

The division anticipates the Executive will recommend building a new Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station (NERTS.) This option provides a better level of service, maximizes recycling, creates equity among urban services system wide and is consistent with the long standing regional plan.

Schimek said Redmond appreciated McLaughlin calling in advance of the MSWMAC meeting to share the anticipated Executive decision. The call and conversation was honest and forthright. But Redmond is disappointed that the messaging about a Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station has been inconsistent and mixed. He read an excerpt from an email and said Redmond believes that the King County Solid Waste Division didn't hold to its commitment of starting and completing a process to determine needs for future services.

McLaughlin acknowledged that the approach has evolved since the referenced email was sent. At that point it seemed likely that the county wouldn't reach a level of insight to make a recommendation in the plan. But circumstances have changed – both updated population/tonnage projections and input from the public. Though some things have changed, the division continues to want to dialogue with the Northeast cities about the station. The division stands by our commitment to engage with Redmond and others.

MacGillivray said that the Kirkland City Council has an interest in having a new transfer station and its amenities in Kirkland as long as it complies with the land use plan. It is a benefit to the community. For example, a station in Kirkland would result in the city not having to pay \$60K per year for special recycling events. In addition, when the County surveyed customers at Houghton the customers said they liked having the station nearby. Sweet said neighbors of the current station have been concerned with traffic impacts. The public review draft comp plan says that Houghton would close when new capacity is made available. Combs notes that the Seattle North Transfer Station has become, “a huge community hangout” and suggests that a new station be designed to encourage community aspects.

True reported that in conversation the Executive said there have been many opportunities in the past five years to re-evaluate the transfer system plan. With the tonnage changes it is important to move forward.

Draft EIS Responsiveness Summary

The Draft EIS Responsiveness Summary was out for public review at the same time as the draft comp plan. Comments were received from five commenters four of which also commented on the comp plan.

There were over 220 individual comments that fell into 4 categories:

- Request for further explanation, clarification or more information – for example requests for more language about odor near transfer stations
- Statements/comments about subject matter – for example suggestions about how forecasting is done
- Questions about accuracy of conclusions – for example questions about whether methane gas is non-toxic

- Margin notes for example underlines and circles around phrases. Unless the meaning was clear the division largely did not address those comments.

Waters noted that though methane is considered non-toxic by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration it is a greenhouse gas. Humphreys responded that greenhouse gas is discussed in another section of the EIS.

The Final EIS is expected to be completed in late June or early July and will be preceded by a notice of availability and a seven day appeal period.

On May 7th, the division received comments from the Department of Ecology on the public review draft of the comp plan. The comments were positive and could be categorized as:

- Procedural items for example the need to include a letter from DOE and the UTC.
- Content items to address for example the need to update the section dealing with the former coordinated prevention grants which needs to change in response to legislative changes.
- Highly recommended changes for example updates to the UTC cost assessment, tonnage numbers and recycling data.
- Things that would be nice for example suggestions for defining more terms.

DOE's positive response is a good sign as it appears that they are pleased with the draft. Generally, their comments on the final comp plan are constrained to the areas where they provided comments on the draft. The division intends to incorporate the suggested changes from DOE in the final plan to facilitate a smooth final approval from DOE.

In response to a question Humphreys said that the DOE comment asked if both the Waste Export and Waste to Energy options could be impacted by rail service disruptions and capacity issues. Both options would be impacted but volume would be different as Waste Export would transport all of the regional system's waste. Waste to Energy requires that approximately 25% of the original tonnage be transported in the form of ash and bypass waste. *Note: since the meeting SWD staff added the following clarification. Waste to Energy reduces the original volume of waste by 90%. As a result 10% of the original waste volume is transported in the form of ash.*

Sweet asked if the final comp plan will include the Executive's recommendations on the disposal and transfer options presented in the public review draft plan. Moorehead responded that it will focus on the Executive's recommendations but will keep explanations of the other options.

Moorehead said SWD is working to get the revisions to the comp plan completed. SWD is working to make the revised text available for review the week of May 14. Unfortunately, to keep to the deadline the time to respond is limited. Input from committee members must be received not later than the close of business May 25 (*note: after the meeting the deadline was extended to close of business May 29*).

McLaughlin noted that MSWMAC has the option of weighing in on the plan. That action would have the greatest impact on the process if it were completed by the July meeting.

Sweet said MSWMAC will talk about possible next steps and suggested that members discuss it with their cities to inform the discussion at the next MSWMAC meeting.

Member and Public Comment

Janet Prichard, Republic Services thanked MSWMAC and the division for all their work. She shared two comments about the presentation related to China Sword. The first was to remind MSWMAC that “we love cardboard.” While some other materials recycling facilities have an issue for brown paper, Republic has asked for disposal of mixed paper only and no other materials. The second is to note that while King County and Republic Services are working through a simple misunderstanding, Republic Services continues to comply with all applicable laws and permits so cities meet the requirements of the ILAs.

Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann shared comments with the committee.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by: Kathy Hashagen