

MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

May 10, 2019 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

<u>MSWMAC Members</u>	
Diana Quinn	Algona
Bill Peloza	Auburn
Joan Nelson	Auburn
Sabrina Combs	Bothell
Barre Seibert	Clyde Hill
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way
Tony Donati	Kent
Penny Sweet – Chair	Kirkland
John MacGillivray	Kirkland
Phillipa Kassover	Lake Forest Park
Asea Sandine	Mercer Island
Diana Pistoll	Maple Valley
Jeff Braun	Newcastle
Andy Rheume	Redmond
Linda Knight—Vice Chair	Renton
Andrew Zagars	Sammamish
Mason Giem	SeaTac
Autumn Salameak	Shoreline
Paula Waters	Woodinville

<u>King County Staff</u>
Camila Lagow, Public Health
Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, LHWMP
Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff
Jamey Barker, SWD Staff
Pat D. McLaughlin, SWD Director
Dorian Waller, SWD staff
Margaret Bay, SWD staff
Annie Kolb-Nelson, SWD staff
Meg Moorehead, SWD staff
Doug Chin, SWD Staff
<u>Guests</u>
Cynthia Foley, Sound Cities Association
Nick Harert, Waste Management
Elizabeth Szorad, Recology
Russel Joe, Republic Services
Jay Blazey, Cedar Grove
Karen Dawson, Cedar Grove

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting commenced with the Call to Order and Introductions.

Meeting Minutes

The April 2019 MSWAC minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Updates

Solid Waste Division director Pat McLaughlin presented the SWD update:

Comp Plan

The 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan was adopted by the King County Council on April 24, 2019. McLaughlin thanked the advisory group members for their support and testimony to the Council. Copies of the plan and supporting documents were transmitted via courier on May 16 so the 120-day review period will be consistent

for all 37 partner cities. The supporting document packet include resolutions, a transmittal letter and a briefing booklet that summarizes key points in the Comp Plan.

McLaughlin also noted that SWD staff are available for briefings, study sessions, and assistance with responses to constituent inquiries. Four briefings are scheduled already. Kasover asked if supporting documents would be electronically. McLaughlin confirmed that documents would be available electronically. Sweet asked that materials be made available on the web.

Good News/SWD Staff Updates

Recycling and Environmental Services Section Program Manager Lisa Sepanski was inducted into the Washington State Recycling Association Hall of Fame, in recognition her for her two decades of environmental leadership on electronics recycling.

Toraj Ghofrani, an engineer who manages the landfill gas system at Cedar Hills, was highlighted in Civil Engineering Magazine for his innovative work pioneering the use of high frequency soundwaves to understand the flow and characteristics of the landfill gas.

SWD was named a Call2Recycle® *2018 Leader in Sustainability*. This distinction reflects the division's commitment to battery collection and recycling, which is funded by the Hazardous Waste Management Program

It was also announced that Strategy, Communication and Performance Section Manager Meg Moorehead announced will retire at the end of June. Moorehead was instrumental leading the team that produced the *2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan*.

SWAC

Sweet noted that Cedar Grove delivered its presentation on acceptance standards at SWAC on April 19.

Responsible Recycling Task Force/Legislative Updates

Jeff Gaisford from SWD presented legislative updates related to the Task Force Recommendations Report.

The legislative session concluded on April 28, 2019.

The Plastic Packaging Stewardship study bill (HB 1204/ SSB 5397) that concerns the responsible management of plastic packaging passed the Senate and will be signed by the governor. The legislation appropriates two full-time employees and \$329,000 for Department of Ecology (Ecology) to produce a report with findings and recommendations to reduce plastic packaging in the waste stream. Ecology must submit its report to the legislature by October 2020. The study is generating a lot of interest and will be watched closely. More updates about the progress will be shared at MSWAC in the coming year.

The Reusable Bag Bill (HB 1205/SBB 5323) that would have banned thin single-use plastic bags did not come to the House floor for a vote and failed as a result. Knight asked why it stalled since it made it to the Rules Committee. Gaisford responded that the 8 cent per bag fee likely had an impact on the legislation's passage.

The Composability Labeling Bill (HB 1569) passed and will be signed into law by the governor, authorizing the state's attorney general and local governments to pursue false or misleading environmental claims and "greenwashing" for plastic products that are labeled compostable or biodegradable when they are not.

The Recycling Development Center Bill (HB 1543/SB 5545) passed and was signed into law by the governor. The new law allocates 4.6 full time employees and \$1.45 million dollars to research, incentivize and develop new markets and expand existing markets for recycled commodities and recycling facilities.

The Paint Product Stewardship Bill (HB 1652) passed after eight years of attempts. Washington now join eight states plus the District of Columbia in giving consumers an option for environmentally responsible disposal of unwanted and unused oil-based and latex paint. All paint producers selling paint in Washington must participate in the program. The plan is to have a paint recycling facility in place by October 2020.

Commercial Food Waste Reduction Grants

Since 2016, the Solid Waste Division has launched two rounds of grants to fund projects aimed at reducing edible and non-edible food waste generated by the commercial sector within King County, excluding Seattle.

A third round of grants will launch in June for projects lasting through 2020. Both private sector and public entities are eligible to apply for funding of \$30,000 to \$50,000 per project. The project must be based in King County and outside the cities of Seattle and Milton. Grantee awards will be announced in September.

Seven grant projects have been completed and are [summarized on the web](#). To date, two grants went to cities (Auburn and Federal Way).

South County Recycling and Transfer Station Update

Project manager Doug Chin presented an update on the [South County Recycling and Transfer Station](#) project. The new facility is being designed to serve approximately 286,000 people in Algona, Auburn, Federal Way, Pacific and nearby unincorporated areas.

The site is located off the West Valley Highway next to the current Algona Transfer station and features a steep hillside, two wetlands, and a stream. Services will include disposal of garbage and recycling, and the collection of scrap metal, yard waste, and hazardous waste including oil based paints and motor oils. King County only operates one other transfer station, Factoria that accepts hazardous waste.

The project will also include relocation of a stream that enters the site from the west and flows to the north end of the site, and an improvement to the West Valley Highway that will straighten a curve that currently limits site distance. Design will include several green features as part of the Living Building Challenge and Petal certification, which is similar to LEED green building standards. Roof runoff will be captured in cisterns and reused on site. The project team is working collaboratively with City of Algona and 4Culture to install public art.

The project is the early preliminary design stage, and the team is now focused on traffic modeling and the preparation of environmental and sustainability reports.

Community engagement activities to date have included a Design Advisory Group that has met twice, with a third meeting scheduled for May 30. Project displays at are installed at city halls and libraries, and an [online open house](#) with content in English, Spanish, Russian and Korean is available through June 2 and being promoted through paid social media advertising. Mailers were sent to over 3,000 community members inviting them on tours of the Factoria Transfer Station, which is similar in size and service levels to the future South County station. The project team also recently hosted a community meeting at a senior center. Presentations to cities are scheduled in Algona on May 13 and Auburn on May 28

Comments on the online open house reflect community values and priorities. A hundred percent of online open house participants said they will use the new facility. Top concerns among commenters are traffic, including backups from the station onto the West Valley Highway, and station ease of use.

Employment and job opportunities associated with construction and operation are cited as the most desirable community benefit. Others value environmental education features.

Construction will begin in 2021 after final design and permitting. Construction is expected to take two years, and the new station is scheduled to start operating in 2023.

Pistoll asked about the percentage of commenters who expressed interest in walking or biking trails and whether there is room for these features. Chin noted that these features may be located along the frontage road, but we're looking into addressing all the comments to see what can be accommodated.

Peloza commented that during the project siting, he favored keeping the new facility near the current facility, as the community expectation for a transfer station in that area was already established. He complimented the City of Algona Mayor David Hill and the City Council for their work on the siting process.

Kassover asked for details about stream relocation and which consultants and experts will assist with this. Chin replied that the project team will work closely with state Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and the Army Corps of Engineers. Relocating the stream will actually improve its quality as opposed to leaving it in its current location.

Rheume asked whether hazardous waste will be located onsite and how costs will be managed. Gaisford replied that SWD will pay for the construction and that the Hazardous Waste Program will pay for the management of the materials, similar to Factoria. Operation will be six days a week. Donati confirmed the new facility will take the place of the Waste Mobile.

Knight expressed appreciation for the predictable location and ongoing service that the new facility will afford, and how important it will be for safe removal of residential hazardous waste.

Giem asked whether there will eventually be hazardous waste collection at all the stations and whether it's possible. Gaisford said that service levels at the stations are evaluated every five years. The Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station will include services now met by the Waste Mobile for many communities in that portion of the service area.

Cedar Grove – Partnering with Municipalities to Power the Puget Sound's Organics Recycling Infrastructure

Cedar Grove Director of Public Affairs Karen Dawson and General Counsel Jay Blazey presented on waste acceptance standards and issues related to compost quality.

Cedar Grove partnerships begin at the curb with residential and commercial customers who contribute food waste that is then returned to the communities as compost. Cedar Grove compost is distributed to farms and community gardens, and is used by cities to protect water quality through stormwater filtration.

Contamination is a problem. The presentation showed pictures of contaminants that came into one of Cedar Grove's facilities just in the course of 90 minutes. Contamination included produce still in plastic bags and netting, a bag of garbage, and assorted plastics and other non-organic waste.

Dawson noted it had been a long time since Cedar Grove communicated with city partners about its waste item acceptance lists. There are a few items of note that have become a problem, such as shredded paper that comes

with a lot of plastic, which is one of the highest contaminants they see. Dawson acknowledged the challenges as contracts are with the haulers, and many haulers say they accept shredded paper which is a decision made without the consultation of Cedar Grove.

The presentation listed the number of items Cedar Grove does not take, and noted that there are differences between City of Seattle and other cities because Cedar Grove has a contractual agreement with Seattle.

Another problematic item is tea bags, because many brands have plastic components. Some types of coffee machine pods that are marketed as compostable, when in reality they aren't, end up contaminating compost.

Waters asked if paper cups, such as coffee cups, are compostable and Blazey responded that many are lined with plastic and that these items are a main contaminant.

There is a lot of confusion among customers who think anything that says "biodegradable" is acceptable in the compost bin. There is a large difference between commercial and residential customers because Cedar Grove has a direct relationship with businesses to purchase the right products for composting.

King County is taking a leadership role in helping to standardize region wide organics disposal, similar to what the Responsible Recycling Task Force is doing.

Knight said that some cups are accepted in the recycle bin if they are empty, clean, and dry. She also commented that City of Seattle has a takeout food ordinance that directs restaurants and fast food places to have compostable or recyclable packaging.

Waters suggested clarifying the list by saying paper coffee cups so as not to be confused with ceramic mugs. Kassover noted that Lake Forest Park passed a single-use plastic ordinance that requires food restaurants to use compostable products for take-out, and asked whether it's not applicable.

Blazey commented that it's confusing to consumers who take their items home, that these items are not compostable residentially. There needs to be a solution and some type of a clarification on a "middle ground".

Giem stated that this is so much more complicated because Cedar Grove specified the compostable products they will accept, and that's why Sea Tac put these items on their acceptable waste list.

Knight suggested a meeting of the minds, but there are many items that aren't compostable, and ended up on the accepted list. Not all compostable products are compostable in a system. She cited the controlled environments such as businesses that are working directly with Cedar Grove and noted that the region is in an "in-between" period.

Gaisford commented that issues of organics contamination was a big topic of debate at the Organics Task Force in April, and that SWD is developing a work program that will be the topic of discussion. Gaisford noted that SWD will be coming back to MSWAC in July to report on the summit and that this would be an ideal time for a conversation.

From Cedar Grove's perspective, it's a partnership and they're approaching MSWAC to note there's a problem they didn't foresee. Cedar Grove never accepted residential food packaging, so nothing has changed. But Cedar Grove's approved compostable materials are only commercially available. The goal is to have a sustainable organics recycling system, and while the public is well-intentioned, they are putting items in the bins that were marketed as compostable but weren't.

Pistoll asked if Cedar Grove has studied commercial loads. Blazey noted that even with the controls in place, there is still anecdotally lots of contamination. Gaisford noted that a study will be completed in June that will be shared. Cedar Grove extended an invitation to MSWAC members to visit a facility to see the trucks unload.

Unlined, food-soiled paper is OK, but it's the food that has the value. The paper itself adds no nutrient value to the compost. Cedar Grove wants very, very specific items. They do not want to be a landfill.

Searcy asked about sod. Dawson noted that Cedar Grove has never taken sod because much of it comes with plastic netting but also the soil attached also causes problems. He asked about gravel pieces as well. Blazey replied that de minimis is that standard, and Searcy replied that explaining why a material isn't accepted or causes problems helps people better understand what to do or not do.

A few members mentioned how Taco Time has made substantial investments in putting food in packaging that's compostable at their restaurants. Dawson noted that the problem is listing fast food packaging as accepted in the bins because there are only very specific brands that Cedar Grove accepts.

Pistoll wanted clarification about the compostable packaging as a policy. We're informally saying Taco Time waste is OK in the residential bins. It's not a perfect solution.

Dawson noted that cities are one of the toughest customers because they want a clean compost product, and that organics markets are evolving in much the same way mixed recycling is changing.

Nelson received one of King County's waste reduction grants to do package recycling and asked how they work with business, especially in cities or areas without a mandate, or in areas with culture or language barriers. Dawson said she would connect Nelson directly with the teams doing outreach to discuss which techniques are successful.

Dawson noted that waste loads coming into Cedar Grove are sometimes rejected when commercial customers don't adhere to standards, and that occasionally commercial operations will proactively call Cedar Grove to inquire about load quality.

Sweet suggested the public message should be framed around what makes good compost, and unfortunately that's not the message customers are getting, but it would really advance broader understanding.

Blazey commented that plastic is the No. 1 contaminant, and Cedar Grove receives a staggering amount of it. Each week, Cedar Grove removes the equivalent of 30 pickup truck loads of plastic, which is taken to the landfill. Better screening is removing more plastic, making and making higher quality compost that is selling well.

Waters asked about the organic compost labeling, and the differentiation between labels. Blazey said that Cedar Grove is labeled and registered as acceptable for growing organic food. Cedar Grove sells two different products and that it's important to look for the organic certification seal.

Kasover expressed concern about cities that passed compostable container requirements for restaurants when the restaurants may be buying or using products that aren't actually compostable.

Dawson suggested that people Google the Cedar Grove [accepted list](#), which is one of the most popular pages on the Cedar Grove website.

Member Comment

There was no member comment.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:58