

MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

August 13, 2021 - 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

<u>MSWMAC Members</u>	
Joan Nelson	Auburn
Jon Gire	Bellevue
Emily Warnock	Bothell
Robin Tischmak	Burien
Steve Friedman	Clyde Hill
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way
Brian Husmillo	Issaquah
Tony Donati	Kent
John MacGillivray	Kirkland
Toby Nixon	Kirkland
Penny Sweet, Chair	Kirkland
Phillippa Kassover	Lake Forest Park
Amy Shaw	Maple Valley
Jeff Brauns	Newcastle
Earnest Thompson	Normandy Park
Micah Bonkowski	Redmond
Linda Knight, Vice Chair	Renton
Rori Kirkpatrick	Sammamish
Bethany Wolbrecht-Dunn	Shoreline
Diana Hart	Woodinville
Rachel Best-Campbell	Woodinville

<u>King County Staff</u>
Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, SWD staff
Emily Coleman, SWD staff
Jenny Devlin, SWD staff
Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff
Brian Halverson, SWD staff
Annie Kolb-Nelson, SWD staff
Andrea Lai, SWD staff
Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director
Michell Mouton, Hazardous Waste Management Program
Terra Rose, King County Council staff
Andy Smith, SWD staff
Adrian Tan, SWD staff
Theresa Place Thurlow, SWD staff
Dorian Waller, SWD staff
John Walsh, SWD staff
Dave Ward, Hazardous Waste Management Program
<u>Guests</u>
Natalie Caulkins, Republic Services
Jina Kim, Interested Resident
Laura Moser, Waste Management
Russell Joe, Republic Services
Diana Wadley, Washington State Dept. Of Ecology
Wendy Weiker, Republic Services

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Sweet called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

SWD Update

McLaughlin provided the SWD update:

Customer verification

As discussed, the Solid Waste Division now requires customers to show proof of residence or business within King County's service area when disposing of their waste and recycling at King County recycling and transfer stations. This is to preserve critical waste disposal services and reduce time waiting in lines for

King County service area customers. There has been a 25% increase in customer transactions this year, of which 6% is estimated to come from people outside of service area.

Tonnage

Reflective of a more active economy, tonnage of waste disposed at our facilities remains strong running about 2% above the forecast and about 5% more than last year. The division would rather see an increase in tonnage of recycling.

South County Recycling & Transfer Station (SCRTS)

The Algona Planning Commission convened last week to review the division's request for a special use permit which resulted in a recommendation to Algona's city council for approval at their next meeting on September 13th. SWD is hosting a virtual Open House to promote design elements of the station and receive public input on August 25th from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Bow Lake Intersection Improvement

The division is nearing completion of the intersection marking project with Tukwila. New curbing and signage will be installed by end of the month.

Flow Control

There will be no city representation during the arbitration process with the City of Seattle and the two hauling companies, Recology and Republic Services. The division will be seeking letters of support from our regional city partners.

King County Legislative Update

The division's 2022 rate proposal is scheduled to be reviewed by the Budget and Fiscal Management Committee on August 17th. It is on track for adoption in September allowing time for the cities and haulers to adjust their systems.

County Councilmembers Dunn and Lambert are proposing an ordinance to establish an advisory committee to make recommendations about how our regional solid waste system could transition to Waste to Energy. The matter has been referred to Regional Policy Committee for consideration. The division will provide updates to existing advisory committees.

Legislation to update existing Construction and Demolition (C&D) is at Council but has not yet been assigned to a Council committee for review. SWD staff continue to check-in with Council staff as to when this legislation will move forward. The Green Building Ordinance is with the Executive office with an anticipated review by Council on August 26th.

Northeast Recycling & Transfer Station (NRTS)

The division is pausing the site selection process for NRTS due to broad concerns about the process. SWD staff will first work with the staff from the core cities of Redmond, Kirkland, Woodinville, and Sammamish to ensure there are no unresolved questions. Then the division will work to achieve understanding with

the Siting Advisory Committee and prepare a public technical forum about the siting process. It is expected meetings with the staff of core cities will begin within the next couple of weeks.

SWAC Update

SWAC members requested an update about the County's lease with the recycled glass processor, Ardagh. The lease scheduled to expire this month, the lease was extended through March 1, 2022 to allow time to negotiate a lengthier lease agreement.

Meeting Minutes

Knight moved to approve the July meeting minutes; Thompson seconded. The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

SWAC Membership Update

Waller said there are openings on SWAC for representation from a landfill neighbor, the waste disposal industry, and marketing and education sectors. He asked for help with recruitment and will send more information to MSWAC members.

Re+

Smith's presentation began with a list of seven specific actions needed from SWD's partner cities if they were to support for Re+ efforts in 2021: get involved in statewide recycling conversations, provide comments on actions and briefing, get word out on the innovation platform, align city programs/grants to Re+ priorities, publicly support the Re+ launch, consider how to expand and deepen recycling subscription, participate in MSWAC discussions.

The Re+ plan includes "fast-start" action items which are priority topics to be discussed and resolved now because future decisions depend on these actions. Three fast-start action items will be discussed today: single family organics collection changes, a statewide food organics effort with stakeholders, and extended producer responsibility (EPR) for residential packaging and paper products (PPP). Next month's fast-start action item will be about processing infrastructure.

Lai presented three reasons why reducing food waste is a RE+ fast action. First, according to a recent waste characterization study, food waste is nearly 16% of the landfilled material by weight. Since 70% of our landfilled material is recoverable or potentially recoverable as our primary target, food waste represents about 1/5 of that material. Second, food waste is already identified as a priority in other county efforts, as part of the Pacific Coast Collaborative's Food Waste Working Group and in King County's Sustainable Climate Action Plan, where there is a goal to eliminate landfilling of food waste by 2030. Finally, food waste reduction is a priority because there is collection and processing infrastructure already in place. King County residents and businesses can opt into services, and our regional composting system is well established.

This infrastructure exists on top of work the County and cities have already done to support food waste diversion such as curb-side collection, outreach programs, cart tagging, embedded rates, and technical assistance to overcome barriers for multifamily residences and commercial customers.

All these existing efforts focus on driving voluntary behavior change which leaves room for improvement particularly with multifamily residences and commercial customers. Yard waste appears to be easier than food waste to divert, likely due to the yuck factor of collecting rotting food or the prevalence of landscaping companies and haulers who collect yard waste. Single-family residences and commercial customers are the biggest contributors to food waste.

To increase food waste diversion, we have education and outreach programs, but success is limited to only to those who already subscribe. We need to reach those who are not currently brought in, perhaps via incentives like embedded rates.

Based on hauler reports, there are over 50,000 single-family households with curbside service who do not subscribe to organics collection. While a portion of these households may be managing their food and yard waste in other ways – such as the garbage disposal, per Zoom Chat - these non-subscribers represent an opportunity for more diversion.

Based on SWD's analysis, we estimate there a potential to divert up to 50% of the 2019 baseline using strong policy actions such as embedding organic collection for all single-family residents, or a minimum service level, or ban commercial food waste from disposal. Data about food-soiled paper was not factored into this model but is something to think about.

Coleman presented on the fast-start action about the statewide gathering of organics stakeholders who have met three times to discuss issues related to organics recycling, reducing greenhouse gasses (GHG), and mitigating climate change. They are looking at how to increase collection and processing capacity, building markets, and financing. They will continue to meet every other Thursday afternoon through the end of the year with a plan for policy action in 2022. There is plenty of time to participate and engage; including members of the public. The goal is to create action and policies at state level to offer regional harmonized approach. If these efforts are unsuccessful, efforts will focus on the local level.

The path at local level would include changing contracts for minimum service levels and possibly providing technical assistance programs to help people who aren't diverting food waste. At the county level, we would explore how separation requirements might work at transfer stations and how we can support implementation for cities. At the city level, food source-separation requirements would need to be considered to meet the Re+ goals.

Discussion followed as to the merit of paying for a service that goes unused such as single-family residents who compost their own food scraps, or multi-family residents paying for yard waste collection when they don't have yards. Some cities have a high rate of voluntary subscription to recycling services and note embedded rates might not be a politically popular. Also, since cities vary in proportions of customer classes, or have opted for weekly organics collection, it may make sense to write food separation ordinances at the city level; similar to ordinances requiring food service providers to offer compostable or recyclable take-out containers or banning the practice of giving away single-use serving ware.

The discussion shifted toward echoing comments in the Zoom Chat regarding the confusion over local organics composting technologies and the need for business owners and consumers to be more aware of

what paper and take-out products are locally compostable and which belong in the garbage. It was noted only one representative from the food service industry appeared on the list of statewide organics participant organizations. Food vendors at a local farmers market were using take out containers made of compostable sugar cane, which is not suitable for composting; yet the similarly appearing World Centric brand of take-out containers sold at Costco is acceptable. Cedar Grove provides a list of compostable materials acceptable for their technology: <https://cedar-grove.com/compostable/residentially-accepted-items>

Tan presented on the fast-start topic regarding residential packaging and paper products (PPP), 40% of which is landfilled, and 60% already collected for recycling. One-third of all waste is PPP. About a half of the PPP sent to the landfill is paper, 40% plastic and 10% metal and glass. Paper, glass & metal have decent recycling rates around 70% (all very recyclable material – paper & metal have significant value), but plastic is only 22% with varying value. There is potential for increasing recycling rates overall and specifically for all materials.

If we had an EPR program for PPP, the amount of potentially divertible material is estimated at 41,735 tons – or almost 50% of PPP that goes to landfill. EPR could set a foundation for better system. It would divert half of what goes to landfill and improve plastic and other categories recycling rates.

A statewide EPR for PPP policy would have mandated reuse and recycling targets that producers would be obligated to achieve. British Columbia reported 85% recovery rate through their EPR program in 2020. A 75% recycling rate in Washington State by 2030 is feasible. We would more than halve the amount of paper going to landfill, and more than double recycling rates for plastics.

The Responsible Recycling Task Force recommends a statewide EPR policy for recycling and this was also a primary recommendation of the Plastic Packaging Study performed for the WA Department of Ecology. EPR has succeeded starting 30 years ago in Germany and now common throughout the world. It can be designed differently to suit context and will increase recycle rates dramatically, provide access to residence at no cost. It also shifts costs from rate payers to producers, providing sustainable funding for recycling programs. Last, it creates link of end-of-life waste management to producers to design products to be more reusable and recyclable.

The task force studied impacts of an EPR model for local governments, haulers, processors, residents and other stakeholders, particularly to estimate and quantify the benefits and costs, and different types such as deposit system like a bottle bill. They used data from waste characterization studies and MRF studies.

The study discovered households would save \$90 – 120 per year on recycling costs. There would be an increase curbside access from 89% across state to 100%, create between 650 - 950 local green jobs, reduce GHG. Increase revenue for waste management service providers/haulers processors.

Tan suggested cities support the effort by engaging with stakeholders, participate in discussions, implement regional recycling services. The County will provide data and resources. The Northwest Product Stewardship Council is also a good resource. As an alternative to the statewide policy, there is an effort to coordinate locally through the Regional Recycling Strategy where they coordinate and plan at a

regional 'MRF shed' level. There is a sense regional level action would have limited impact and would not provide sustainable funding so the recommendation is to act at the state level.

The discussion started with a concern the concept was not bold or fast enough, although an EPR program would not preclude industry innovation and we as local agencies can encourage pioneers and small businesses such as Ridwell who collect a variety of recyclable materials from residential subscribers.

In response to a concern about the appetite for and likelihood of a statewide EPR program, McLaughlin said SWD has identified a statewide EPR program as viable legislative priority and will recommend it to the County Executive with dedicated resources during the legislative session. This work would be more effective when the cities are aligned with the effort. There is great momentum in the northwest region with Oregon taking recent action, and other states such as Maine. This is the time to push the right ideas and right partnerships forward. Wadley wrote in Zoom Chat: *ECY is supportive in general of EPR, but as noted by Adrian, it is complex and would need to be done carefully. Yes, WA looking closely at this.*

Caulkins noted in Zoom Chat: *The haulers have a good sense of where the existing markets are, where the recycling loop is completed, and where there are opportunities for market development. Including haulers in these discussions is crucial to getting the desired results.*

Smith added to the Zoom Chat: *This discussion has been great and I think is vital is relayed through the stakeholder process. More information can found here: <https://organicsworkgroup.org/> ... if you want to be invited to participated, please email me and I'll connect you with the meeting organizers andysmith@kingcounty.gov*

2023-24 Rate Restructure

Halverson recapped the two rate restructure options ahead of launching a poll vote. He noted the target revenue is neutral and stays the same for both systems when fully implemented. About 18-20% of SWD's revenue comes from this fee which is invoiced to billing agency. Some city/hauler contracts may need to be amended depending on how the fee is passed through to residences.

The difference between the two rate structures is the calculation of the share of the revenue requirement each billing entity pays. Under an Account Fee each billing entity is assigned a share based on number and type of customer accounts in their service area. The Fixed Charge is based on projected share of total tons using existing hauling data; it is reasonably stable and year-end balance reconciliation would not be difficult.

Discussion points following the recap included clarification over Account Free rates for container sizes for commercial customers, if both restructure options preserve status quo for costs to residential communities, and how the Fixed Charge may incentivize cities to offer waste reduction programs to reduce their annual charge, noting cities ought to ensure contract language requires haulers to start with empty trucks when they start routes in a new city.

Polling results:

<u>Fixed Charge</u> Enumclaw	<u>Account Fee</u> (no votes)	<u>No Preference</u> Burien	<u>Abstain</u> Auburn
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Federal Way Issaquah Kirkland Lake Forest Park Normandy Park Renton Sammamish Shoreline Woodinville			Bellevue Bothell Clyde Hill Kent Maple Valley Newcastle Redmond
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A draft report from the rate consultants is under review, with next steps for final proposal to be submitted for review in September, then the legislative package will go to Executive Office in October, ideally with letters of support from the cities, then to County Council in November. Given the number of abstentions, SWD staff will contact city staff to learn what other information may be needed to make a decision.

Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan Update

This presentation is postponed until next meeting when Walsh will be seeking feedback on a high-level timeline to have the Comp Plan updated and approved by 2026. Would appreciate feedback before next meeting.

Seeking City Support

Ahead of September's meeting, SWD is interested in what an expression of city support might look like for four topics: Rate restructure, Re+ Plan Actions, Extended Bond Term Financing, Extending Interlocal Agreements. Options could include amending ILAs, providing letters of support, signing proclamations, passing resolution or ordinance. Committee members should review the emailed information packets emailed and provide feedback.

Member Comment

Van Orsow announced Federal Way is hiring two education and outreach positions.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:19 p.m.