

King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)
March 15, 2019 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Center

Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present	King County Staff	Others
April Atwood – Vice Chair	Meg Moorehead	Janet Pritchard, Republic
Elly Bunzendahl	Lisa Sepanski	Cynthia Foley, Sound Cities Association
Gib Dammann	Pat McLaughlin	
Karen Dawson	Hilary Leonard	
Phillippa Kassover	Dorian Waller	
Joe Casalini	Pat McLaughlin	
Keith Livingston	Annie Kolb-Nelson	
Barbara Ristau	Andy Smith	
Stephen Strader	Kinley Deller	

Minutes

Minutes of the February SWAC meeting were unanimously approved.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Updates

Solid Waste Division (SWD)

SWD Director Pat McLaughlin provided SWD updates:

Comp Plan

The Regional Policy Committee (RPC) approved the Comp Plan on February 27th. On March 4th the Committee of the Whole (COW) began deliberating The Plan, but did not take action. It is possible the King County Council will pick up the Plan in the meantime. Council has a public hearing scheduled for March 20th at the New Life Church in Renton. SWD will be there and anticipate some community members will also attend. SWD remains optimistic that the Council will take action on The Plan before the end of second quarter, perhaps early April, at which point we would commence the city adoption process.

Organics Summit

The Two-Day Summit convened on March 6th. More than 60 participants from around the region participated. During breakout sessions there was lots of engaging discussion focused on wasted resources, contamination, processing capacity, and end markets. Ultimately, we hope to identify and prioritize actions to enhance and expand local organics recycling. As anticipated,

we were not able to cover everything in one day. The second day of the summit will be on April 17th should result in some near-term action plans.

Cleanup LIFT

As part of 2019-2020 budget we were authorized to create a low-income discount, known as Cleanup LIFT. The new discount launched in January and enables an estimated 300,000 low-income residents to save money at county-operated recycling and garbage transfer stations. In January 227 transactions utilizing the discount were logged.

South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS)

The design work for SCRTS continues. We already had our second design advisory committee meeting. The City of Algona continues to work with 4 Culture to coordinate opportunities for public art at the station. We are committed to meeting the requirements of the Living Building Challenge to achieve a Petal Certification, which is the most ambitious green building certification we have ever pursued. The next major milestone is reaching the 30 percent design phase by the end of the summer, at which point we will create a baseline for the budget and schedule.

Local Media

As the Comp Plan progresses forward, more local media has shown interest in covering future disposal options and recycling. There are two interviews scheduled in the next few days—one with KCPQ and one with the [Seattle Times](#). We will let you know when the ensuing stories are published.

Casalini asked if there has there been a decrease in illegal dumping since Cleanup LIFT launched. Pat responded that it is still early to tell, but there's a possibility we will see a decrease in illegal dumping over time.

Kassover inquired about the topics for each of the media interviews. McLaughlin responded The Seattle Times indicated interest in specific options for the future of regional waste disposal including Waste to Energy options and KCPQ is likely to be a more general interest story.

Kassover commented that her colleagues have noticed the frequent attendance of homeowners from around Cedar Hills at their meetings with elected officials. McLaughlin responded that the interest of neighbors in participating is part of the reason the Council changed the venue for the upcoming meeting. SWD conducts outreach with our neighbors as much as possible and hope they will participate in upcoming meetings. SWD does not, however, always agree with some of their characterizations and we have been trying to bring a balance to the dialog with data and context.

Dawson asked if the community meeting next week will be facilitated. Moorehead responded it is likely to take the format of a standard council meeting with timed public comment.

Dawson commented that she has noticed a visible accumulation of waste on private properties off of Highway 169. She inquired if anything can be done if it appears the accumulation is hazardous waste. McLaughlin suggested reaching out to Public Health as a starting point. Dawson said she would look into it and report back on what she finds out.

MSWAC

Kassover noted that the March agenda for MSWAC mirrors the one for SWAC.

C&D Ordinance

Kinley Deller presented a Construction and Demolition (C&D) Ordinance Update.

C&D makes up about a third of all solid waste produced in King County. SWD has broadened our focus from just overseeing disposal to ensuring that C&D materials are recycled to the greatest extent feasible. The program started in 2015 with ordinance 18166. There are three main components of the ordinance: banning readily recyclable materials for landfills, designating additional facilities where C&D can be processed, and rule enforcement. Banned materials include wood, cardboard, metal, gypsum, concrete, bricks, and asphalt paving.

As part of the ordinance we can only take incidental loads to county-operated transfer stations. That is judged by whether or not the vehicle transporting the load has a tipping mechanism. If it does not the vehicle is allowed to come through.

We have a contract in place with the Sheriff's Office to ensure rules are followed by jobsites, haulers, C&D facilities, and landfills. They monitor the transfer of materials from the job sites to the facilities. At the moment we are using the Sheriff on an as needed basis but we would like to have a full time Sheriff in the future.

SWD works closely with other cities and our many stakeholders to coordinate on a regional level, especially with the City of Seattle. There are regular quarterly meetings among the industry stakeholders. Government stakeholders meet on a bimonthly basis. There has been lots of discussion with Snohomish and Tacoma to synchronize our policies. We're working with cities on adopting a simplified code template that supports C&D recycling and deconstruction.

Tracking from 2018 shows we're going in the right direction. Our results indicate more materials are being pulled out of the waste stream. The amount of C&D collected at transfer stations went down while the amount at material recovery facilities increased. The program brought in \$841, 000 in fees and is solvent.

In 2019 SWD is considering updates to the ordinance to better influence what happens at jobsites. Additionally we are updating building and enforcement codes, developing grants for new markets, looking into hiring a full time sheriff, exploring additional collection options in rural areas, and working with cities to provide education on the ordinance.

Livingston asked about the sparsity of facilities located in the South Sound as compared to the North. Deller answered that the initial contract only covered Waste Management and DTG facilities. There is still a lack of service in many areas, especially the eastside which currently has none. Livingston noted that the eastside is more sparsely populated whereas the South has a high concentration of companies that could use the facilities if it was convenient. By having fewer facilities in the South there's potential more materials are ending up in the waste system.

Livingston asked about the outreach to the likely users of the facilities. Deller responded that an initial batch of flyers were sent out to 11,000 contractors. Since 2016 flyers have been distributed to each permitting center, county-operated transfer stations, private transfer stations, and jobsites. A new flyer is being developed that conveys the information in a more pictorial fashion.

Livingston asked if there is collaboration across boundaries as far as how the Sheriff conducts business. Deller confirmed that we have authority everywhere except the City of Seattle and Milton.

Strader asked if the 2018 data reflected an impact from China Sword. Deller answered that across a couple of the banned materials there could have been an impact.

Dawson inquired how individual consumers learn what to do with construction and demolition debris such as the material generated during the recent snow storm. Deller responded that there's more work to be done with outreach in the future. Currently there is info at transfer stations and on our website.

Kassover asked for clarification on how the code updates will be less burdensome for cities. Deller responded that the code language is shorter, contains fewer requirements for the cities to track, and the flyers provided to customers are being redesigned.

Bunzendahl commented that larger construction sites often putting garbage into comingled bins rather than meeting the requirement for a two bin system onsite. Deller responded that it's a known issue that has been building over time and SWD is actively working to address it.

Casalini added that it is a tough market for C&D recycling right now. Putting materials in the comingled is cheaper for consumers, which makes it difficult for haulers following regulations to compete. There are bad actors illicitly taking in C&D and sneaking it out for disposal in Eastern Washington. Deller responded that SWD is working with other counties in the surrounding area to address this issue. According to the 90/10 rule set by the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) loads of solid waste that consist of less than 90% recyclables by volume must be transported by a registered hauler. The 90/10 rule does not, however, apply to self-haulers.

Bunzendahl asked if there are additional success stories cities can use to push for new C&D code. Deller answered that the Regional Code Collaboration group is one avenue that cities have for working on common code together. The group helped shape the original C&D code language and SWD is seeking their help again to figure out the next iteration of C&D policy. Shoreline and Issaquah are two examples of cities leading the way in updating C&D policy. The City of Seattle has also collected a lot of solid data but they have not had the resources to process it yet.

Responsible Recycling Task Force Recommendations

Lisa Sepanski presented on the state legislative updates and Task Force Recommendations Report.

All of the bills we recommended in our report are still alive. They may not be in their original form, but all of them have moved forward. The final day of session is April 28th.

HB 1204 did not pass out of committee but it could be reintroduced next year. SSB 5397 is still alive in the senate. It was changed into a slimmed down study bill that would require The Department of Ecology to hire a contractor to look at the management and disposal of plastic packaging in the state. If this bill passes it's similar to Action 1A of the Task Force recommendations and we would want to speak with Ecology about collaborating.

HB 1205 has survived with a few changes including a reduction in the required plastic thickness from 4 mils to 2.8 mils and a reduction in the fee amount from 10 cents to 8 cents. Compostable bags will need to be tinted green or brown. The next hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 18th.

HB 1543 is focused on researching and incentivizing new markets for paper and plastic. It passed the house with a bipartisan vote. There was a hearing yesterday.

The Paint Stewardship bill HB 1652 moved out of the Senate. There was a hearing yesterday and an executive session is to come next.

HB 1795 that pushed for a standardized list for recyclables died in policy committee.

The Task Force recommendations we will focus on today are the actions under goal 2, to develop local recycling infrastructure and goal 3, to harmonize recycling programs and messaging.

Action Item 2A—conduct pilot programs to encourage development of domestic recycling infrastructure. Work on this will begin around June. We're going to explore pilot project ideas to increase markets for recyclable materials in partnership with cities and haulers. If the Recycling Development Center bill passes it could help with this effort.

Action Item 2B—expanding the Wrap Recycling Action Program (WRAP). We are working with the City of Seattle and WRAP program to provide good alternatives to curbside recycling of plastic bag and film. Seattle has already done some work on this. We will have preliminary data to present to SWAC in May.

Dawson asked if the strategy is to ensure there are film/plastic recycling options or to find upstream alternatives to these materials. Sepanski noted that they are aware the American Chemistry Council does put on a show in touting the recyclability of their products. SWD is strategizing next steps based on survey data. We certainly do not want plastic film going into curbside bins.

Action Item 2C—development of markets for paper, plastic, and compost. In our workplace we've identified resources through the King County Linkup program and Seattle will be supplying some funding as well.

Action Item 3A –harmonize our messaging and criteria around recycling materials. SWD is the lead on this and has already started work. We need a good list of criteria that can be used to analyze what works for our regional system. More to come to MSWAC later this year.

Action Item 3B—continue the work of the Communication Consortium to unify messaging about curbside recycling. Bus ads will begin running the Recycle Right media campaign in March and again in May and June. The consortium will create a communication plan around removing plastic bags and film that will be shared with you.

Action Item 3C—Develop a system to coordinate with the City of Seattle.

Member Comment

Strader asked why The City of Seattle is not currently part of the ILA. McLaughlin responded that he cannot pinpoint why the systems separated but it is likely they will remain that way until a big regional decision, such as constructing an incinerator or exporting waste, justifies combining. That said, it makes sense in the current moment for us to be collaborating in areas such as recycling policies and programs.

Bunzendahl asked how the contract timelines overlap between Seattle and cities within the County. McLaughlin responded that collection contracts are decided between cities and haulers and often run for 10 years. The ILA contracts are synchronized and include a commitment to participation through 2040.

Casalini commented that he appreciates the types of relationships haulers have with the cities and with King County. We enjoy a good relationship and they understand what we can and can't do based on markets. We have had meetings with the City of Seattle about what can be added to recycling bins. It's really the hauler and jurisdiction that decide together.

Dammann commented that in order to reach the goal of unifying messaging we must unify services. Sepanski responded that SWD is collaborating with Seattle to create a list of criteria to addresses exactly this issue. That way, when contracts are renewed there is a list of materials that we can ask to be included.

Dawson added that the Organics Summit discussed some of these same questions and issues. Every city has its own contract with haulers so compostable and recyclable materials differ. The cities have concerns that citizens work and live in different cities where they receive different messaging around recycling. The Responsible Recycling Taskforce is in part focused on dealing with this very challenge.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:15am.