

**King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee**  
**October 16, 2020 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting (Zoom)**

Draft Meeting Minutes

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>
Kevin Kelly—Chair
Gib Dammann
Phillipa Kassoover
James Borsum
Penny Sweet
April Atwood-Vice Chair
Ken Marshall
Heather Trim
Robin Freedman
Karen Dawson

<b><u>King County Staff</u></b>
Margaret Bay
Hilary Leonard
Pat McLaughlin
Jeff Gaisford
Dorian Waller
Rory O'Rourke
John Walsh

<b><u>Others</u></b>
Wendy Weiker, Republic Services
Hannah Scoles
Elizabeth Szorad
Jackie Wheeler, SCA
Lane Covington
Natalie Caulkins

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting commenced with the Call to Order and Introductions.

**Minutes**

Minutes of the September SWAC meeting were approved as presented.

**Public Comments**

Trim commented that Zero Waste Washington is working on a Zero Waste Hackathon and hosting a Waste Summit on November 30. So far 16 students have signed up for the Hackathon and the team projects cover a range of topics. They're still looking for judges, mentors and coaches to work with the teams. Also looking to highlight cutting-edge technology and zero waste processes at the conference. Reach out if you're interested in taking part.

**Updates**

SWD Director Pat McLaughlin provided the SWD update:

**Tonnage and Transactions Covid-19 impacts**

With state and countywide social distancing actions still in place, SWD has seen a tonnage decrease of 1.2% year-to-date and a 5% increase in transactions year-to-date.

**2021-2022 Biennial Budget**

We deferred our rate increase to 2021, but we still need to get budgetary authority for the coming 2 years. Our biennial budget was transmitted to the King County Council in late September. We did a budget roundtable this week with Council and it went well. We will likely be asked to study evolving technology in respect to renewable jet fuel from municipal solid waste. Otherwise, our budget will likely be adopted in mid-November unchanged and fully funded.

### **Vashon Organics Processing Feasibility Study**

We've partnered with HDR Inc. and Zero Waste Vashon to evaluate small-scale organics management options for the Vashon/Maury Island community. The project will illustrate costs and benefits of an on-island organics processing facility. The feasibility study report is expected to be completed by February 2021 and will recommend a management strategy for the island's organics stream. Once released, we'll hold a virtual community meeting to present the report, address questions, and discuss potential next steps.

### **Department of Local Services Town Halls**

SWD continues to participate in the Department of Local Services' (DLS) virtual town halls. There are two more virtual townhalls scheduled, one for Vashon and one for Snoqualmie Valley.

Trim asked for more details on the jet fuel study and whether burning waste to create fuel is part of it. McLaughlin responded that SWD has been tracking jet fuel for some time and there's a conference later this month to present a recent study. We'll share more as we gather more information.

Marshall asked for an update on flow control. McLaughlin answered that right now our haulers are complying with our request to send residuals back to King County. The City of Seattle has stepped forward and asserted a similar, but opposing, request to haulers. Haulers are in the middle and we're working to resolve the conflict.

Kassover asked for an update on the recyclable materials being transported to Tacoma. Marshall answered that he's happy to inform that Republic Services has stopped using DTG.

### **MSWAC Update**

Sweet reported that the same agenda was discussed at MSWAC but with slightly different discussion.

### **PMO—Priority Projects Update**

Project Management Office Interim Manager, Margaret Bay Presented:

#### **Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Site Development Plan**

The Site Development Plan looks at how we will develop Cedar Hills. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was issued on September 16 and we're currently in the 45-day public comment period, which ends October 30. The DEIS looks at 4 action alternatives for site development, including a no action option.

The final EIS is due out the first quarter of 2021, at which point we'll select our preferred alternative and relocation option. From 2021 to 2023 we'll begin the design and permitting followed by preparing the site for Area 9 construction in summer 2023. We're hoping to sign a new lease for our interim facilities at the end of December. Staff will begin using the facility in summer 2021.

#### **South County Recycling and Transfer Station Project (SCRSTS)**

We've completed the 30% design phase that sets the scope, schedule and budget on SCRSTS. Elements of the project include our Equity and Social Justice and sustainability work. We're centering community-driven suggestions and aspire to reach the Living Building Challenge's petal certification. We're also engaging with our own employees to collect feedback on design and equipment needs. March 2021 through August 2021 we'll begin the permitting and final design process. We expect to begin construction at the end of next year. Construction is expected to wrap on SCRSTS in 2024.

## **Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station**

The current Houghton Transfer Station is 50 years old, well past its service life. Our focus right now is on siting and programming for the new station. We're building out the siting criteria with the consultants. We have a list of 16 potential sites that we are honing those down to 5 sites. We're also working with the Core Cities and their communities throughout the siting process. We've had 12 meetings to date to discuss project elements including site screening criteria.

Our goal is to comply with the Growth Management Act and avoid geohazards, environmentally sensitive areas, and negative community impacts. For community outreach, we have a subcommittee that has conducted stakeholder interviews. We also started recruiting for a siting advisory committee with an emphasis on recruiting representatives from underserved and underrepresented communities. The Siting Advisory Committee convened on October 14. We are building a siting process that is transparent, inclusive and authentic.

Our next steps are to continue meeting with the Core Cities and the Department of Local Services. We'll take the 16 sites and apply the functional criteria to assess all the elements of each site and narrow our list to 5, which will then be ranked by the siting advisory committee. We're also conducting non-site-specific programming with SWD staff looking at transfer station functionality.

Kassover asked how traffic issues and access will be accounted for when assessing each site. Bay answered that those issues are considered in the functional criteria. For example, a site cannot exceed a 30 min drive from freeways to be considered accessible.

Marshall commented that siting in Sammamish would not be accessible for drivers. Haulers would likely go to the Factoria transfer station instead. Bay responded that the City of Sammamish has shared the traffic issues in their area, but we also want to take in consideration their needs in this process because their residents will use the station as well.

Dammann asked whether constructing 2 transfer stations to cover such a large area was considered. Walsh responded that it was one of the options put forth in the Comp Plan, but constructing one station was selected as the best option.

## **Multi-Family Recycling**

### **Waste Management Multifamily Outreach**

Hannah Scholes, Manager of Education and Outreach presented:

We've been studying contamination in multifamily recycling for years in partnership with the cities. Our research led us to the 3 C's of best management practices: convenience, capacity, and clarify. We created WM eConnect to meet with our customers remotely during this time. We walk the property manager through the 3 C's and discuss the issues of relevant to their property. We've developed some informational videos on recycling best practices and COVID-19 disposal protocols. The program has received a lot of positive feedback from property managers. We're flexible around technology capabilities and needs. We're finding that COVID-19 pushes recycling down on people's list of priorities.

Another way we're communicating is through social media. It's a great way to target messaging to our various communities and promote contamination reduction education. Each time a property is serviced, we use

cameras on our trucks and a manual check by the driver to check for contamination. When contamination is identified, we send out a message to the property manager via email. We have tools available to help cut down on contamination, including slotted lids to discourage bagged recycling and tote bags for residents to collect loose recyclables.

### **Multifamily Outreach Tactics During Covid-19**

Natalie Caulkins, Republic Services Recycling Coordinator presented:

COVID-19 has significantly impacted our outreach to property managers. We start our outreach by contacting the property managers to educate around the 4 C's. We have one additional "C" for color. We try to change out any recycling containers that are not blue.

This summer we translated our recycling guides into more languages because we know many multifamily complexes are multilingual. We now have 12 languages available, including English. When I speak with property managers I ask if they have virtual meetings with their residents. I'll join the meeting to do an interactive presentation on proper recycling. We'll also ask property managers whether they have a newsletter or a bulletin board for monthly recycling tips.

We've begun reaching out to schools and teachers to help provide at-home learning activities that meet education standards. We developed a variety of activities for different age groups for free.

Kassover asked about how cameras are used to monitor contamination. Caulkins responded that drivers have cellphones/voice recorders to document contamination. When they see contamination, they take a picture and create a voice recording with the date and address to alert us to contact the property manager.

### **Recology's Multifamily Recycling Efforts**

Elizabeth Szora presented:

Our recycling program for multifamily starts with curbside pickup. The collected materials go to our MRF where we separate the materials and send them to end markets. Contamination is a big issue, especially for multifamily properties.

We use consistent education and feedback. We work closely with the cities to create recycling contamination plans. Outreach staff do a visual audit the day before collection. If contamination is present, determined by the threshold for contamination set by the city, we create a report. We send the property manager a letter with the contamination report.

This process is done on a consistent basis. Once a site reaches three instances of contamination, we have the capability to charge a fee. The fee ranges from \$10 to \$25. Sites that reach 3 instances of contamination are hot listed and we continue to do frequent visits to influence behavioral change. We have both a carrot with contamination education and a stick with the fee.

We have seen improved diversion rates in cities where we've done the program the longest. Relationships are key to this work. We're increasing engagement with property managers and creating a history or reports to track progress. We rely on our cities to support our work and to back us when a resident calls about being charged a contamination fee.

Since COVID-19, we have made all our paper education available digitally. We offer residents tote bags, do pre- and post-audits to track contamination, and we provide a flyer with a QR code linked to a suite of customized videos. The videos focus on common contamination found onsite at the property and how to use the recycling tote.

Marshall asked whether the slotted lids deter people from recycling items like glass and aluminum cans and why garbage and recycling containers aren't kept in separate areas. Separating the containers could help prevent people from mixing recyclables with garbage when one of the containers is full. This happens a lot at the beginning and end of the month when residents tend to move-in and move-out. There should be extra pickups to manage the spike in waste.

Scoles responded that the slotted lids have a notch for cardboard and a notch in the middle to make it easy for people to dump a batch of recyclables. When a lid is installed, it's accompanied by a lot of education on using the lid. We've looked at behavior before and after the lid is installed and have found the amount of recycling doesn't differ. We would rather have people throw bagged recycling in the garbage because the plastic bags are such a big contamination issue. We've also found that separating the garbage and recycling containers causes more contamination issues because people throw all their materials in whichever bin is located closest to them. Caulkins agreed that their research showed the same. Lids have helped reduce bagged recyclables. Szorad added that she's heard similar feedback from their drivers. It helps that drivers are involved in siting the contamination because they know their feedback has an impact.

Dammann asked about the effectiveness of codes and regulations in helping new multifamily properties consider the 3 C's when building. Gaisford answered that King County Code has requirements for the unincorporated areas. The work haulers do with individual properties is important to help ensure that the right size recycling is present at the multifamily complexes.

Szorad added that Recology doesn't service unincorporated areas, but it's great when architect firms reach out and ask for input with new builds. Of course, that's not always the case. It would be great if firms had a checklist that included contacting the hauler. On several occasions we have found errors in how the setup was designed. Caulkins and Scoles agreed that a requirement in the permitting process to consult the hauler would be helpful.

Trim asked whether they had considered designing the recycling tote to look more like a bin. Gaisford responded that the design has evolved over the years, but the current graphics seems to help enforce education on acceptable materials. The handle on the bottom helps differentiate the tote from a grocery bag.

Marshall asked about the goal is the future of multifamily recycling. Szorad responded that their goal is to eliminate contamination. There will be challenges, but we are fortunate to have a contamination program to encourage behavioral change and remove barriers for property managers. The program has helped property managers understand why contamination is such a problem and they're listening to us more as they recognize the value in our services. Scoles responded that their goal to get to 100% clean recycling. There is incremental change and the longer these programs are around, the bigger the impact. Caulkins added that their goal is to minimize contamination and the most effective method is through relationship building and partnerships. It takes time, both with residents and with our city partners.

Atwood commented that there needs to be support for including haulers' needs in the permitting process for new construction and asked how SWAC can best support that effort. Gaisford responded that it has been a

few years since works been done on developing model code language. SWAC and MSWAC can look at our codes and ensure that they're up to date. The other piece is ensuring the requirements are being met. Sometimes the space for containers is there, but attention isn't paid to the turn radius for haulers.

**Member Comment**

No member comments.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 10:55am

DRAFT