

# King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

January 15, 2021 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

## Meeting Minutes

<b>Members Present</b>
<i>April Atwood, Marketing - Vice Chair</i>
<i>James Borsum, Labor</i>
<i>Gib Dammann, Interested Citizen</i>
<i>Karen Dawson, Manufacturing</i>
<i>Robin Freedman, Waste Mgmt Industry</i>
<i>Phillipa Kassover, MSWMAC</i>
<i>Kevin Kelly, Waste Mgmt Industry - Chair</i>
<i>Ken Marshall, Labor</i>
<i>Penny Sweet, Local Elected Official</i>
<i>Heather Trim, Recycling Industry</i>

<b>King County Staff</b>
<i>Lane Covington, KCC</i>
<i>Jenny Devlin, SWD staff</i>
<i>Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff</i>
<i>Brian Halverson, SWD staff</i>
<i>Jacqueline Latour, SWD staff</i>
<i>Kinyan Lui, SWD staff</i>
<i>Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director</i>
<i>John Walsh, SWD</i>

<b>Others</b>
<i>Wendy Weiker, Republic Services</i>
<i>Jackie Wheeler, Sound Cities Assoc.</i>

## Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Kelly called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

## Minutes

Sweet made a motion to approve the October minutes, seconded by Kassover, and approved unanimously. Sweet made another motion to approve the November minutes, seconded by Dammann, and approved unanimously. The December minutes were not made available for review or approval.

## Public Comments

No public comment.

## Updates

SWD Director Pat McLaughlin provides the SWD update:

## Tonnage and Transactions Covid-19 impacts

- 2020 tonnage: Pandemic and lockdowns coupled with financial support packages for the US economy of up to \$7 trillion were upending business as usual. But total garbage generation (disposed) in King County went down only for the initial months of the lockdown and recovered afterwards: We ended 2020 with 871,600 tons, about 3,000 tons more than 2019.
- If we take a look “under the hood” we see that we lost about 31,000 tons(-5%) from commercially collected tons (mainly non-residential tons) and increased self-haul tonnage by about 9,000 tons (+5%) deliveries. Regional Direct tons increased by almost 25,000 tons (+329%).

## NERTS

- Each of the top sites were evaluated by the project consultant team in the areas of appropriate site characteristics, negative environmental characteristics, nearby sensitive receptors, ESJ concerns, geotechnical concerns, and notable traffic impacts.
- Top four sites are in Kirkland, Redmond, and Woodinville.
  - Existing transfer station/landfill site
  - Nearby Park & Ride
  - Willows & 124th (Redmond)
  - Winsome Trading (Woodinville)
- No sites are located within Redmond's CARA. Two of the four sites are County/State owned and supported by a willing host city (Kirkland). One site has an existing operating private business (distribution warehouse). The Park & Ride site presents an opportunity for a significantly smaller operational footprint but also carries a fair amount of development challenges. Kirkland, Redmond, and Woodinville recently collaborated on their own evaluation and ranking of the 15 candidate sites. As it turns out, the County's proposed top four are recognized by the cities group as being within their top five sites. The difference is the cities rank Aerojet/Rocketdyne ahead of the County's choice of Winsome Trading.

### **Plastic and Paper E-Tour**

- The e-tour took place on January 5th. We want to thank representatives from AMP Robotics, Georgia Pacific Juno Technology, rPlanet, and Terracycle Loop for participating in the tour. We anticipate this tour will further inform the committee about plastic and paper industry practices nationwide.

### **MSWMAC Update**

MSWMAC Chair Sweet said the previous week's MSWMAC meeting followed the same agenda as today's SWAC meeting.

### **State legislation**

SWD's Recycling and Environmental Services section manager, Jeff Gaisford presented the [legislative update](#) for the upcoming session beginning January 11th through April 15th.

Trim clarified the Right to Repair bill is now HB1212, and the bill proposed to address food waste would not be a ban on organic materials in landfills, but a conversation-starter among stakeholders about creating a significant reduction based on 2021 levels.

Gaisford said legislative updates will be emailed regularly to committee members in between scheduled meetings. McLaughlin said while Waller is on parental leave for a few months, Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, is on loan from Hazardous Waste, to backfill Waller's duties.

Trim added to Gaisford list of legislative bills HB1139 about lead in drinking water that may affect plastic water bottles. Trim explained that the multi-year Extended Producer Responsibility bill will be part of another bill being drafted that may include other topics such as a Styrofoam ban, recycled content, and opt-in for food service products such as napkins and disposable utensils.

## 2021 Rates

SWD's Strategy, Communications, and Performance manager, John Walsh opened his presentation on SWD rates with a reminder that SWD did not implement a rate increase this year. Then Walsh introduced SWD's Strategic Planning Manager Brian Halverson who had updates to share since the last time he presented this information before the budget was transmitted and approved by council.

Halverson showed a graph with different Basic Fee tonnage forecasts made over 2020. Based on updated data that was better than anticipated, the newest forecast shows SWD's financial recovery won't be as slow as originally feared.

Walsh presented graphs showing SWD entering a period of high expenditures due to upcoming capital projects. He anticipated SWD will spend half a billion through 2026 because of the investment in updating the system to modern standards and maximizing capacity at the landfill as recommended in the comprehensive plan. Walsh said every million dollars of expenditures adds another \$1 per ton to the fee. In 2020, capital debt service is \$13.5M a year, in 2026, it will go up another \$25.8M. Walsh noted although SWD's expenses will be increasing, this spending is expected to generate 1,400 jobs.

Walsh notes SWD's pursuit of environmental excellence adds costs, such as the \$7M currently allocated per biennium toward achieving zero waste of resources. Walsh cautioned the \$7M could go higher, depending on the plans and types of facilities the task force might recommend SWD build. Walsh said to reach carbon neutrality, SWD may invest in electrifying the truck fleet with funds from selling landfill gas. Walsh said SWD will continue to invest in improvements to help meet regulatory compliance, such as installing additional aerators in the leachate lagoon.

Walsh said SWD found \$40M in savings this biennium, by switching from cash financing to debt service for landfill capital projects, and several employees identified savings such as skipping the waste characterization studies this year and the potential shift to five-day operations which is currently under negotiation with the labor unions. Walsh said SWD saves money this year with the lack of raises and less expensive central services such as IT and facilities management, but it will be difficult to find \$40M in savings every year.

Halverson presented three options for the rate increase scenarios. The first is to not seek an increase in 2022 which would be the fourth year without a rate increase, the moderate increase shows a 5.1% increase in 2022 to smooth the impact of the bigger increases in 2023 and 2024, and a final option is the model that was included in the 2021 budget proposal, assuming a higher increase in 2022, but making for smaller increases the following two years. The next slide shows the impact to curbside bills of each option.

Walsh said the new rate restructure will be introduced in 2023 which may impact the dollars shown in these three models, but not radically as the restructure strives to be revenue neutral. Halverson agreed, the revenue will be the same but there will be different impacts on the tipping fee.

Walsh asked for input or preferences from committee members about these three scenarios.

Sweet said these were all big topics and everyone is in a state of absolute flux. She said she would like to take the gradual approach, but unsure if that is the most sustainable approach, she wants to wait and see a little longer.

Kassover said she will repeat what she said at last week's MSWMAC meeting, that without the ability to have certainty over economic recovery and the pace of growth, cities have to stay flexible, which she assumes would be along the gradual path.

Dammann says he sees the logic in taking a gradual path. He pointed out that the track record in 2020 appears to show tonnage is not going to decline dramatically, so our budget should not adjust dramatically from what we have seen in 2020. He noted waste continues to go on relatively as usual.

Walsh continued with his presentation with a review of several pending decisions that will affect the rates. The official tonnage forecast will come out in February with updated projections based on new data about sales, jobs, and the potential of another federal stimulus. He noted other unknown variables include the price of the sale of the surplus Eastgate property and costs associated with moving landfill support facilities to an interim location during the construction of Area 9. Walsh said there is a potential to save about \$3M a year if SWD switches to five-day operations. He said past discussions about increasing recycling fees on yard and wood waste, and mattresses and bedframes to help make those programs more cost-effective will be rekindled in next month's meetings.

Walsh then presented the rate proposal/restructure timeline. The rate proposal will be under discussion with the committees until March when it is transmitted to the executive office who will then transmit it to council in June, so they can adopt it by September, so cities and haulers are prepared for the increase in January. The rate restructure work will be brought back to the committees in the summer, for pre-approval, then work can begin on the next rate proposal.

Kelly said he appreciates SWD laying out the timeline this way, and the work of SWD to keep the committees informed and included in the discussion. Kelly said he anticipates more questions and feedback as things are developed.

### **CHRL Site development and facilities relocation**

SWD Capital Project Manager, Kinyan Lui presented an update on the CHRL Site Development and Relocation Project. Lui said her team issued a draft EIS in November 2020 and received over 70 written comments. Her team is responding to comments and discussing the results with the attorney's office. She said they are in the middle of conducting other studies about air, noise, odor, and traffic in preparation of writing the final EIS.

The facility relocation process includes three options, two at the landfill - one in the north and one in the south end, and an off-site location near the current Renton transfer station. Lui said the Renton-option received the least amount of support in the public comments. Looking ahead, they anticipate having the final EIS ready in June with the final location announced then.

Marshall asked for clarification on where at the landfill is north and south. Lui said both sites are in the CHRL footprint, north option is closer to where the north flare station is located, and the south option is near the boundary line.

Lui showed a slide with the project timeline. After the final EIS is published in Q2, the project begins design and permitting with the goal to begin construction in spring 2023. She anticipates it will take up to two and a half construction seasons to complete Area 9, which is when Area 8 expected to reach capacity in May 2026.

### **Member Comments**

Dawson said she is co-coordinating a SWANA Evergreen Technical Session scheduled for Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. about Closing the Loop on Compost: Partners, Policy, Processing & Applications. Topics will include Sustainable Organics Management: The Importance of Putting the Right Partners & Policy in Plan, Compost & Stormwater. More details to come.

Dawson asked if there would be any more community meetings about the landfill since they were canceled in spring and fall. She asked if there was a plan to engage with people living near the landfill. McLaughlin said there were early hopes we would get through this pandemic quickly and re-engage, but now it is clear we need to take advantage of technology, especially since there is a lot of news going on.

Kelly asked McLaughlin if he knew what might appear on the meeting agenda next month. Walsh said definitely rates. McLaughlin said discussions will include State legislation, rates, and flow control. Committee elections are scheduled for September.

Marshall said he was curious about how much land is at existing Houghton location. McLaughlin said he estimates it might be sitting on about 10 acres, but he did not know the acreage of the closed landfill next door. He said there was potential to consider including parts of landfill but it is not developable space.

Kelly said the September election is a good time to remember thinking about becoming a chair or vice chair and to be sure to let SWD know if you know of any candidates for the committee.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40.