

**King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee**  
**January 21, 2022 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting (Zoom)**

**Meeting Minutes**

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>		<b><u>King County Staff</u></b>	
April Atwood – Marketing Industry		Mai Bui, SWD staff	
Taylor Atkinson, Citizen Representative		Emily Coleman, SWD staff	
James Borsum, Labor Representative		Jeff Gaisford, SWD staff	
Karen Dawson, Manufacturing Industry		Brian Halverson, SWD staff	
Robin Freedman, Waste Industry		Kathy Hashagen, SWD staff	
Phillippa Kassover, Cities Representative		Patty Lui, SWD staff	
Bill Louie, Citizen Representative		Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director	
Ken Marshall, Labor Representative		Rory O’Rourke, Public Health Seattle/King County	
Brian Martin, Citizen Representative		Hannah Scholes, SWD staff	
Stephen Schmidt, Citizen Representative		Adrian Tan, SWD staff	
Penny Sweet, Elected Representative		Dorian Waller, SWD staff	
Leah Tischler, Public Interest Group		John Walsh, SWD staff	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry			
Wendy Weiker – Chair, Waste Industry			
<b><u>Guests</u></b>			
Phil Allen, Citizen		Gib Damman, Zero Waste Vashon	
Kazia Mermel, Sound Cities Association		Kyle Potter	

**Call to Order and Introductions**

Chair Weiker called the meeting to order with introductions at 9:31 a.m.

**Agenda and Minutes**

Sweet moved to approve the agenda. Marshall seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously. Kassover moved to approve the December 2021 joint MSWAC/SWAC meeting minutes. Sweet seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Allen shared two ideas about the siting process for NERTS. At a previous meeting he heard Sweet say it is important that people understand that a new facility is being built for them rather than being done to them. Regarding NERTS, he believes people are feeling that it’s a “to” rather than a “for.” He thinks it’s important to adjust that thinking.

The first idea is to close the Houghton Transfer Stations for a time. Then determine where the complaints are coming from. Those complaints would show the location of the demand. Another idea is to change the color of the sticker of certified customers and collect the zip codes when that change occurs. Then use the zip code information to determine the number and weight of loads coming from various areas.

The first idea is most frustrating. The second is more transparent. In both cases, share the data with the communities involved so they can see who the facility would serve and how it is being done for their community.

## **SWD Updates**

McLaughlin provided the SWD update:

### **Weather Events**

SWD persevered through the recent weather events. We appreciate the consistent communications received from haulers as they dealt with similar issues.

### **Republic Strike**

Picketing at Republic Services facilities in Snohomish and King Counties related to a labor dispute in San Diego is over. The picketing came at a time when commercial haulers are recovering the recent snowstorm.

### **Tonnage Report**

Preliminary end of year tonnage is 880,766 tons, which up by almost 2% from 2020 (+16,000 tons). December 2021 snow events reduced tonnage by almost 9,400 tons (13.3%) compared to December 2020.

### **Mattress Recycling**

New mattress recycling fees went into effect at all stations Jan 1. SWD added mattress recycling services to Bow Lake, Enumclaw, Factoria, Shoreline and Vashon. But regardless of where they come in the system, there is a \$30 handling fee per piece in effect at all SWD locations.

### **February Officer Elections**

In February you will elect officers (Chair and Vice-Chair). Please reach out to Dorian if you are interested in serving.

### **Legislation**

Wednesday the 12th, the Regional Policy Committee (RPC) discussed Ordinance 2021-0267: establishing an advisory committee to make recommendations about how the county's regional solid waste system could make the transition to using waste to energy technology. Mayor Baccus of Auburn and Mayor Berney of Redmond provided comments in opposition. Mayor Sweet told the RPC in advance of the meeting that the SWD advisory committees have been evaluating long term disposal options for a long time. There are already two committees advising the King County Council on Solid Waste issues. Another committee is not needed.

The [2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan](#) (Comp Plan) calls for us to maximize capacity at Cedar Hills and divert materials that could be recycled. Ultimately, we will focus on long term disposal, but the current focus is on diversion. Both SWAC and MSWAC advise the division on solid waste matters.

Dawson asked if there were any health code violations because organics collection was delayed McLaughlin said he was not aware of any violations. Weiker said to call your hauler with collection concerns.

In response to a question, McLaughlin said the City of Seattle had filed for a Declaratory Judgement to resolve the dispute about residuals through the courts. King County would prefer to resolve it through binding arbitration and has made a request to City of Seattle to reconsider their approach.

## **MSWAC Update**

Kassover moved, “that this committee communicate with the King County Council that we are ready and able to provide advice on the next generation of disposal for King County.” Sweet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Sweet asked that members interested in participating in crafting a response to Council and the RPC contact her. Weiker, Atwood, Schmidt, and Atkinson expressed interest.

## **Update - Recruitment**

There are four vacant positions in SWAC representing Agriculture, the Waste Industry, landfill neighbors, and citizens. One application for the waste management industry representative is in process. ([check this Dorian – I missed it.](#))

## **2022 Legislative Update**

Tan and Scholes briefed MSWAC on the 69th session of the Washington State Legislature. It is a “short” 60-day session that began on Monday, January 10, 2022, and runs through March 11, 2022.

## **[SB 5697](#) The RENEW Act – including EPR for packaging and paper products**

---

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) system for consumer packaging and paper products will require corporations to pay for the costs of residential recycling in WA. It will:

- Provide sustainable financing to recycling, saving money for local governments and residents
- Create a harmonized list of material collected from residents across the state, reducing confusion
- Provide access to recycling services to all residents across the state
- Increase reuse and recycling rates; and
- Ensure that materials are recycled responsibly

Kassover testified in favor of this bill citing the story of her grandson donating money to an environmental organization. She believes it to be essential but is not confident that it will pass.

## **[SB 5658](#) Truth in labelling and recycled content requirements**

---

It will:

require accurate claims about recyclability on products and packaging

- add recycled content requirements for plastic tubs, thermoform plastic containers and single-use plastic cups.

SB5658 is a competing bill with SB5697. It includes some pieces of the EPR bill but not the full suite of complementary actions.

## **[HB 1810](#) Right to Repair**

---

It will:

- Require manufacturers of digital electronic products (i.e., those with a screen) to provide owners and independent repair businesses with access to parts, tools and specifications.

## **[HB 1801](#) Repairability Index**

---

It will:

- Require manufacturers of digital electronic equipment to provide a repairability score for the purposes of diagnosis and consumer information.

### **HB 1663 Landfill methane gas reduction**

---

It will:

- Require landfills to install a gas collection and control system and/or submit an annual report based on their size and amount of methane emissions.

### **SB 5492 EPR for wind turbine blades**

---

It will:

- Establish an extended producer responsibility program for recycling wind turbine blades.

Turbine blades have a lifespan of 25 to 30 years. The first wind turbines in Washington began operation early in the century so we can expect they will need to be replaced. There is a company in Bothell that specializes in recycling composites from blades.

### **HB 1799 Organic materials management.**

---

It will:

- Require changes to divert organic material from landfills and reduce methane emissions such as:
  - Providing organics collection services to certain populations
  - Local governments must buy back finished compost from processors
  - Some businesses must separate organic waste
  - Reducing legal liability for food donations
  - Establishing the Washington Center for Sustainable Food Management
  - Update compostable products labelling
  - Creating a compost reimbursement program for farming operations

### **HB 1896 Providing for responsible environmental management of batteries**

---

It will:

- Establish an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for batteries that requires battery producers to fund and organize the collection and reuse and recycling of batteries in WA.

### **Other bills**

---

- HB 1686 - Allowing the labeling of biodegradable products that are supported by recognized national or international test methods
- HB 1830 - Exempting certain reusable packing materials from sales and use tax
- SB 5837 - Removing plastic bags as an option for use at retail establishments
- SB 5717 – Concerning compost products

### **Re+**

Lui asked the committee to provide feedback on the Re+ introduction briefing document once it's been distributed to members. It provides an understanding of what Re+ is. She would welcome comments about where that goal was achieved and ideas for improvement.

Today is the last day to apply for the Re+ Community Panel. We are looking for a diverse group of community leaders from across King County to shape how Re+ implements initiatives and strategies. If you

know of anyone that would be interested in creating a more just and waste free King County, please forward contact Liu or Waller for the information.

The Consultant Work Order RFP is on track to be signed in 2022 and will focus on mixed waste processing. In response to Trim's request, Lui will send a copy of the RFP to committee members.

NextCycle Washington soft launch will occur later this month. There will be an open forum meeting in February. The Codesign process which reflects community priorities completes in March.

Shortly, we will also ask you to spread the word about the LinkUp Circular Economy Grants. These grants support local business/community projects to prevent or divert organics, plastic, and paper. There will be a simple online application process and grantees are expected to be announced in the second quarter of 2022.

### **Preliminary Rate Proposal**

The objective of the presentation was to help attendees understand the preliminary 2023-24 rate proposal. That includes a preview of the rate and remaining assumptions/decisions needed. It also includes a timeline.

The assumptions used in creating the preliminary rate proposal included updated tonnage, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) cash flow, inflation impacts, and budget adds. The tonnage forecast includes the impact of Re+.

- Tonnage: There are two scenarios; one with lower diversion of recyclable materials and one assuming a higher rate of diversion. The preliminary proposed rate is based on the diversion with a lower diversion rate. Remember that a higher diversion rate results in higher rate per ton.
- CIP cash flow: Capital costs will raise the rate by approximately \$39 per ton by 2028 assuming the South County Recycling and Transfer Station, the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station, and landfill development projects continue on schedule.
- Inflation rate: We used a 4% inflation factor in the preliminary proposed rate. Ultimately, we will use the rate provided by the King County Office of Economic and Financial Analysis.
- Budget adds: This is based on historical averages.

With the proposed rate restructure, commercial haulers would pay a fixed annual charge in addition to a per-ton tipping fee. Self-haul tip fees are higher than the commercial fee because they don't pay the fixed annual charge. Halverson reminded attendees that there will be two smaller rate increase – one each year, instead of one larger one as has been done historically.

SWD has robust CIP spending over the next few years. The projected rate over time includes those expenses and debt service as well as adjustments for inflation. CIP spending supports essential public facilities. We get community input for those facilities from advisory groups like SWAC and Design Advisory Groups in the communities where the facilities are located.

Schmidt suggested that the facilities be put on the ballot and be voted on by the public like the 911 system. He said it would help the public feel the impact of their lifestyle choices rather than burying the expense in a rate increase. McLaughlin said it has been done through rates because these are essential public facilities that are required to meet regulatory requirements but he will inquire for more information.

Pending decisions that may affect projected rates include a yard waste increase to \$115 per ton, an update to the capital spending plan, a final tonnage forecast and decisions on budget saving and additions.

Council will consider the rate restructure in the first quarter of 2022. We will update the rate model and proposal and discuss it with advisory committees through May. In June the rate is transmitted to Council. Rates are planned to be adopted in September and the communication about new rates is sent in October. Waller will send members a link when the rate restructure will be before Council.

Schmidt suggested that information about utilities like the sewer rate and solid waste rate should be included in Council messages. He expressed concern about multi-family recycling and contamination. Marshall agreed contamination in multi-family is a long-standing issue and new ideas would be welcome.

Atkinson suggested a tutorial video for SWAC orientation. McLaughlin said materials created for the NERTS project could be helpful in that effort.

SWAC discussed the difficulties encountered by citizens to determine what should be recycled and how. Kassover said the EPR bill should help to address that challenge by asking producers to better design their products for recycling. She said we need to change the origin of items, not the end cycle. Atkinson reminded SWAC members that the single-use serviceware law went into effect Jan 1. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Reducing-recycling-waste/Waste-reduction-programs/Plastics/2021-plastic-pollution-laws/Food-serviceware>

### **Member Comments**

The Seattle Good Business Network and Zero Waste Washington received a grant from the Department of Ecology to fund a PreCycle Innovation Challenge for university teams and business start-ups this spring. Participants would be encouraged to proceed into the NextCycle process. They are looking for mentors and judges. Contact [healthier@zerowastewashington.org](mailto:healthier@zerowastewashington.org) for more information.

Weikers commended the cities' public works departments for clearing the roads after the recent snow event saying that haulers couldn't pick up without their efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 11:24.