

King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee
February 18, 2022 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Meeting Minutes

Members Present		King County Staff	
April Atwood – Marketing Industry		Mai Bui, SWD staff	
Taylor Atkinson, Vice Chair, Citizen Representative		Emily Coleman, SWD staff	
James Borsum, Labor Representative		Brian Halverson, SWD staff	
Karen Dawson, Manufacturer		Kathy Hashagen, SWD staff	
Robin Freedman, Waste Industry		Patty Liu, SWD staff	
Phillippa Kassover, Local Elected Official		Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director	
Ken Marshall, Labor Representative		Rory O’Rourke, Public Health Seattle/King County	
Stephen Schmidt, Citizen Representative		Yolanda Pon, Public Health Seattle/King County	
Penny Sweet, Local Elected Official		Hannah Scholes, SWD staff	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Andy Smith, SWD staff	
Wendy Weiker – Chair, Waste Industry		Adrian Tan, SWD staff	
		Dorian Waller, SWD staff	
		John Walsh, SWD staff	
Guests			
Henry Allen		Alaysa Clark	
Albert Foster		Kazia Mermel, Sound Cities Association	

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 January 2022 minutes. Freedman seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

SWD Updates

McLaughlin provided the SWD update:

Tonnage Report

- We received roughly 8,500 tons more last month than in January 2021. We believe this is due to garbage being pushed from December (snow disrupted collection) into January.

Re+ Community Panel

- SWD received 35 applications from people interested in serving on a 10-member Re+ community panel that’s being formed to help King County reduce waste and address the impacts of climate change at the neighborhood level.
- The application process is complete and targeted individuals with lived experience in communities most impacted by climate change, and environmental and racial inequities. The first virtual meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, March 2.

Juno

Early this month we visited an Advanced Materials Recovery Facility (AMRF) run by Georgia Pacific using a technology called [Juno](#). The facility in Toledo, Oregon processes 100,000 tons per year. The process recovers 60% of the materials from an unsorted municipal solid waste (MSW) stream. We anticipate testing the technology with our own waste to see what kind of recovery can be achieved. Trim requested that SWAC have a tour of the facility in the summer. McLaughlin will approach Georgia Pacific with that request. Members asked if the facility

had plans to avoid shredded micro-plastics which could eventually enter the food stream. McLaughlin said they have plans for a digester to be attached to the system. The intent is to create energy rather than to create a soil amendment.

Schmidt suggested members read a Time magazine article about Finland talking about their recycling efforts. The article is available [here](#). Finland is apparently leading the EU in reuse, recycling and other efforts.

In response to Marshall's request McLaughlin discussed siting for the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station (NERTS.) Initially, three sites had been identified and we were ready to begin the SEPA process. The Siting Advisory Group identified a fourth set of parcels to consider. The Core Cities group suggested a fifth site that had been evaluated previously for consideration. We are planning to finalize the internal analysis of those sites this month. We will share the results with the Core Cities in March and initiate the SEPA process. Marshall said that the site on 124th in Kirkland is no longer available as it is in the process of being developed.

MSWAC Update

The MSWAC agenda mirrored the SWAC meeting.

Regarding recent legislation discussed at the Regional Policy Committee that would create a Waste To Energy Advisory Committee, a SWAC motion is underway. Sweet asked that members interested in participating in crafting a response to the King County Council and the Regional Policy Committee 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. The position representing education/marketing also needs replacement as April has reached the end of her second term. One application for the waste management industry representative is in process.

2022 Legislative Update

Tan and Scholes briefed MSWAC on the 69th session of the Washington State Legislature. The 60-day session runs through March 11, 2022.

The following legislation did not move further forward during this legislative session

- SB 5697 - RENEW Act (includes EPR for packaging and paper products)
- SB5658 - Truth in labelling and recycled content
- HB 1810 - Right to repair
- HB 1801 - Repairability index
- SB5492 - EPR for wind turbine blades
- HB 1869 - EPR for batteries

The following bills continue to move forward.

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.
- HB1663 would be more stringent and carry more significant consequences than the EPA requirements for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

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

Some amendments are being considered.

Members discussed the viability of business voluntarily changing to plant-based containers and serving ware. Kassoover noted that often local government is responding to community request.

Those involved are still working through an implementation plan regarding the “buy back” of finished compost. We believe the division will be supporting cities with draft ordinance language.

Assuming the bill passes without changes, the following businesses will need to arrange for materials management services for organic waste.

- (i) Beginning January 1, **2024, a business that generates at least eight cubic yards of organic material waste per week** must arrange for organic materials management services specifically for organic material waste;
- (ii) Beginning January 1, **2025, a business that generates at least four cubic yards of organic material waste per week** must arrange for organic materials management services specifically for organic material waste; and
- (iii) Beginning January 1, **2026, a business that generates at least four cubic yards of solid waste per week** shall arrange for organic materials management services specifically for organic material waste.

Re+

Liu asked the committee to provide feedback on the Re+ introduction briefing document. She thanked those that had already provided feedback saying many of the issues identified would be addressed in further fast start items. Send further feedback to Liu at PLiu@kingcounty.gov. Patty will work with Dorian to get the document out to members.

The Re+ community Panel is a diverse group of community members that live, work, and volunteer in King County who will help guide SWD in the equitable implementation of Re+. There are 10 panel members with lived experience as a frontline community member. The goal of the panel is to make sure we are not making historical mistakes that have negative impacts on those communities when implementing Re+.

In response to a question Liu said multi-family housing was not used as a screen for committee members but that it can be discussed during the meetings. The first meeting is planned for March 2nd where they will work on team cohesion and agreement. At their March 16 they will begin discussions Re+.

[NextCycle Washington](#) is a statewide effort to nurture processes that incorporate waste prevention, repair, reuse, recycling, and/or composting. The support for that work comes in the form of technical assistance and an accelerator. NextCycle Washington is incorporating feedback received at a recent public meeting. About 95 people attended and more feedback is being collected via survey. There are two tracks that will launch in June. The first is prevention and reuse, the second is recycling.

The simple, online application process for the competitive Re+ Circular Economy Grants will launch at the beginning of the 2nd quarter. These grants support local business or community projects that prevent or divert organics, plastic, and paper from the King County waste stream.

We are also beginning to develop grant programs for cities and schools. The grant request process is online and there will be a pre-proposal meeting to provide training in completing the process. These grants are intended for businesses and community groups. A partnership with a city would also work, but the city would not be the main applicant. Closer to the launch there will be resources that economic development staff in cities could share with local businesses or new businesses in the area.

A member suggested that this information be shared with the Sound Cities Association and K4C. Freedman asked that the information be shared with haulers. Haulers work with businesses that would be interested in the grants. Resources will be available at [NextCycle Washington](#).

Trim noted the synergy between these grants and [PreCycle Innovation Challenge](#). She suggested that pre-cycle winners could move into the NextCycle and asked members to spread the word about the PreCycle Challenge.

The Re+ briefing with the Executive's office went well. We have the full support of the Executive. The next step is to get involvement from the communities. We are working on a communications plan for that purpose.

Briefing documents for Fast Start Actions are expected in March. The Re+ Plan Draft will be done in April with a Final done in May. Re+ is planned to be launched in June. Hopefully you'll see briefing documents on the fast start items at your next meeting.

Preliminary Rate Proposal

The objective of the presentation was to review the yard waste rate path and the early Re+ budget for 2023-2024, discuss effort to find savings and introduce de-coupled rates. In addition, members heard about the extended bonding subcommittee and preview upcoming rate briefings.

In 2020, the general opinion was to move the yard waste fee toward cost recovery quickly. After reviewing the projected rate increases through 2025, members expressed no comment concerning continuing on that path.

The yard waste rate has not increased for eight to nine years. During that time, disposal fees subsidized yard waste costs. The intent was to impact customer behavior through lower rates. The proposed new rates are still lower than disposal costs but move toward reflecting the actual cost of service for yard waste. And, as we move toward less garbage through Re+ there will be less money. Though there is no requirement to recover costs, it is best practice.

The Re+ budget is being developed but is expected to be approximately \$7M in this biennium and the next. Members heard the types of things that will be included.

The division is reviewing how funds allotted to the division are allocated throughout the organization. Changes in processes occur over time and COVID changed how we do business. This process will align the funds to the function and will also include reviewing the budget by work group, looking for potential savings. We will do this before we go further in the budget process.

In the new model that is focused on cost of service, historic assumptions may shift. For example, historically self-haul fees were the same as basic fees. Regional direct fees were 85% of the basic fee and special waste fees were 120%. When we look more closely at cost of service, the relationship between those different types of fees and the basic fee may change.

The MSWAC Extended Bonding Sub-Committee reviewed the potential impact of extending the Interlocal Agreements (ILA's) from 2040 to 2060 to allow us to issue longer terms bonds and keep the rates lower. After considering many aspects including timing, increased interest costs and more the sub-committee recommended deferring the decision on extending ILAs until the long-term disposal option is closer to being decided.

This month, we will continue to collect data and information. There will be a rates update in March. In April we will have a draft letter of support for you to consider and we will brief the Executive. In May we will transmit the legislation to the Executive. In June, the Executive will consider transmitting the legislation to Council.

Halverson reminded members that we hope to know if the new rate structure will be approved by the end of March. If Council approves it, discussions on how to implement the change with haulers could begin.

Rates are increasing faster than inflation largely due to debt service for capital projects. The rate is the amount paid per ton for disposal. Curbside customer fees have two components: the disposal rate and service which is generally the larger component. For that reason, though the curbside fee will increase, it is not expected to increase by the same percentage as the disposal rate.

It might be interesting to have a special meeting talking about how curbside rates are determined. Haulers are agnostic to the KC rates, because it is a pass-through to the rate payers. Consider inviting the WUTC (Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission) as well as haulers. Links to hauler information follow.

Republic's contract and UTC service areas: <https://www.republicservices.com/municipality/washington>

Here is the WM PNW site: <https://www.wmnorthwest.com/index.html>

Here is Recology's service territory in WA: <https://www.recology.com/>

We met with haulers and cities last year about modifying contracts and were told six months was enough time to prepare for the rate restructure. We are hopeful that the restructure will pass Council in March and will send more information when it has done so. We are happy to help people understand the mechanics of the rate restructure and would be happy to facilitate the conversation. But, how the rate restructure is implemented is between the cities and the haulers who are the parties to their contract. There is a small risk that the rate restructure won't happen, but we don't expect significant alterations to what was sent to Council.

Member Comments

Atkinson mentioned [Clynk](#) in relation to the NextCycle grant. Clynk is a recycling firm like Ridwell that uses drop-off locations made of old shipping containers throughout Maine

Atkinson and Weiker are drafting a letter to the Regional Policy Committee regarding the legislation about a potential waste to energy advisory committee. Kassover asked that the letter emphasize that SWAC has representation of citizens while MSWAC represents communities. Waller will share the draft of a similar letter from MSWAC

Members discussed the difficulties inherent to asking the division to forward articles to members. Even when it is prefaced that the article is sent at the request of another member and the member is named, it seems to imply SWD approval of the content. One way to avoid that difficulty in future is if members shared messages among themselves.

The meeting adjourned at 11:24.