

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

Meeting Minutes

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>King County Staff</u>	
Taylor Atkinson, Vice Chair, Citizen Representative		Karen Herndon, SWD staff	
Jay Blazey, Manufacturer		Kinyan Lui, SWD staff	
Phillippa Kassover, Local Elected Official		Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff	
Brian Martin, Citizen Representative		Mary O’Hara, SWD staff	
Leah Tischler, Public Interest Group		Yolanda Pon, Public Health Seattle/King County	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
Wendy Weiker, Chair, Waste Industry		Dorian Waller, SWD staff	
		Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
		John Walsh, SWD staff	
<u>Guests</u>			
Phil Allen, non-member citizen		Cheryl Paston, Bellevue	
Jeanette Jurgensen, Epicenter Services		Tyler Pichette, Pacific Public Affairs	
Brad Lovaas, WA Refuse and Recycling Association		Diana Wadley, Ecology	
Kazia Mermel, Sound Cities Association			

Call to Order and Introductions

After introductions, Chair Weiker called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

Agenda and Minutes

Due to lack of quorum, September minutes were not able to be approved. Atkinson motioned to approve the agenda. Kassover seconded. The agenda approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Allen provided comments and suggestions regarding the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station project (NERTS). He began by saying that in 2021 when he first saw the sites up for selection, one stuck out to him and he provided an initial suggestion that would expand the criteria for scoring the sites. In January 2022, he provided another idea that comprised of having SWD switch the colors of the certified customer stickers so we could see the exact numbers from individuals and self-hauls based on their zip codes to determine the best location for a new transfer station in the northeast region of King County. In May 2022, he stated that SWD had evaluated another site based on unique criteria and he believes that SWD had gone back and used his original suggestion of expanding the criteria. Allen followed this by saying that SWD should now go through and evaluate all of the sites using this expanded and amended criterion so that all are assessed by the same criteria.

Wadley shared several updates and reminders beginning with HB 1799, the Organics Management Law. This HB impacts everyone, including businesses and residents and there a lot of moving parts and details, so Ecology is offering a presentation that be given by either Wadley or a colleague of Wadley's. The GovDelivery newsletter has now been established and if you subscribe, you can get updates and the latest news. Ecology hosts a search feature on a platform called BOX. If you pause at the pdf, you can see how to enable the search function to find more information on planning and waste reduction. Lastly, Wadley shared that Ecology has received interest from most people in the Puget Sound area like CBO's, nonprofits, tribal nations, etc., regarding the NextCycle WA Renew Seed Grants. Those with project ideas with the potential to support the circle economy can apply and those who receive the grants can get up to \$10,000. The application is open through Nov. 16 and closes at 5 p.m.

Wadley dropped some things in the chat including her email: Diana.wadley@ecy.wa.gov. To stay up to date on the latest organics material management news, subscribe to their [GovDelivery newsletter](#). After submitting your email, choose the Solid Waste Management Program and then choose Organic Materials to sign up. Ecology hosts a Planning and Waste Reduction Resource Library on an online platform called [BOX](#), where you can enter the front door to the library and see how to enable the search functionality for free. There is a lot of Solid Waste information, including more information about the Organics Management Law. The [NextCycle WA Renew Seed Grant](#) program is now open for applications until 5 p.m. on Nov. 16, 2022. The statewide program may provide up to \$10,000 each for reimbursable project expenses.

SWD Updates

Waller provided the SWD update.

Monthly Tonnage

Our tonnage has declined further in September 2022 in comparison to September 2021 by 4.2%. The year-to-date tonnage is now below last year's tonnage and transactions are down 9% for the year. Since mid-year, we've been below the forecast. We've seen a reduction in self-haul and believe there are a number of causes for this including the restrictions put in place and the higher interest rates, and we are still studying what else could have caused the downturn in transactions.

BNSF Railways

We believed that the threatened labor strike was avoided by a tentative deal made at the end of September, which was subject to ratification by the unions. Members of the third-largest rail union (Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division) recently rejected the proposed five-year contract 56% to 43%. Both sides have agreed to resume negotiations until at least Nov. 19, and railroads are expected to continue operating normally in the meantime. As Nov. 19 approaches, we will continue to monitor the situation and work to assess how to support regions around us if the strike happens.

Bolt Creek Fire

The fire has expanded to more than 13,000 acres with crews focusing on protecting Hwy 2 and physical structure while allowing the fire to burn north into the Wild Sky Wilderness. There continues to be intermittent road closure for downed/sometimes burning trees and to allow crews time to remove damaged trees and manage fire hot spots. The rain is here, but it could create some other issues in these communities and the state is conducting assessments on landslide risks for the winter. We brought in a drop box to Baring to give access to waste disposal and will continue to handle small community waste disposal. Although it is not fully contained, we continue to monitor the situation and will respond accordingly for waste disposal services. The lack of communication has hampered their ability to take care of their community needs and we are looking to see how we can assist in that.

Transfer station payment method removed

SWD receives \$135 million yearly, in disposal charges, with \$360K or 2%, coming from payments made by check. Of this amount, \$45K or 12.5%, are checks either fraudulent or NSF. On average, transfer stations receive 383 checks per month. Of those 383 checks, 29 per month, or 8%, are fraudulent or NSF. We've noticed a pattern and have begun to believe that this is intentional.

Due to this lower number of customers using checks, we believe there are other alternative methods which would lessen the risk of fraud to the County. We are beginning to develop a communication plan that will communicate that we are no longer accepting checks at the stations. We will continue to monitor this and wanted to get it on everyone's radar. We anticipate the impact of removing checks as an acceptable form of payment, at the Transfer Station, is minimal given that debit cards are issued when one opens a checking account. Those customers wishing to continue to pay by check, have the option of creating a customer account with Solid Waste and receiving a monthly invoice.

MSWAC Update

Kassover stated that the MSWAC agenda is almost identical but there was no update regarding the Haz Waste reorganization, which was given at MSWAC. They have a new oversight structure but doesn't know if a presentation like this would be important to the group.

Trim commented that she would like to see the Haz Waste reorganization presentation. Waller said that he can connect Trim with Josh Baldi and engage with him to come to a future meeting. This presentation seemed more of interest to the cities and did not seem to have a lot of interest when this presentation idea was given a couple months ago to SWAC, but Josh Baldi can come if that is of interest.

Re+ Updates

Ockerlander provided the Re+ updates.

Beginning with a brief background, Re+ is King County's roadmap on moving towards a circular economy and moving towards zero-waste in the landfill. This includes a consolidation of a lot of actions, multiple County plans and climate action plans. The Re+ program is launching in November with several fast start action items in the hopes of moving towards that zero-waste goal and repurposing the 70% of items that end up in the landfill that could've been repurposed.

For the Re+ circular economy grants, we received 48 project proposals from businesses, non-profits, and a university. The proposals were reviewed by evaluation teams made up of King County staff, a community representative, and one city representative from Redmond, Auburn, and Kirkland respectively. Of those 48 proposals, 14 were selected for funding, for a total of \$2.3 million. Most of the funds are dedicated to projects focused on the three priority materials for SWD – paper, plastic, and organics (including wood). The SWD communication team will announce the funding awards once all the contracts are signed, which will likely happen in November. They're planning to spotlight individual projects at key milestones, and one grantee will be featured in a video to promote Re+.

We've completed nine presentations since July and have five more scheduled through February. Since MSWAC has last met, we've given presentations to the cities of Mercer Island, Shoreline, Woodinville and Carnation. Upcoming in November, we will present to the cities of Renton and Snoqualmie. On Oct. 17, City of Shoreline was the first city to sign and approve the Re+ pledge.

During Oct. 6-7, SWD staff Adrian Tan, Hannah Scholes, and Debra Oliver along with Ockerlander herself participated in a Northwest Product Stewardship EPR Tour in New Westminster, British Columbia. This included touring a recycling and plastics facility, a private vendor bottle return facility and Metro Vancouver's newly opened transfer station.

Kassover commented that she just heard a presentation from Ecology regarding their seed grants and wanted to know the relationship between the King County Re+ grants and Ecology's seed grants. Ockerlander responded that King County is one of the sponsors of Ecology's grants so there's multiple entities, and the Re+ Circular Economy Grants will be rewarded to projects that demonstrate an impact on King County's solid waste stream through recycling, prevention reuse. While the grants are connected, they are separate items.

Kassover asked about how cities could publicize the availability of these grants to their communities and if people should apply to all. Walsh responded that the Re+ grants are open to businesses, community-based organizations, tribal governments, colleges/universities, and self-employed individuals, and will be renewed every two years. As we are at the end of the biennium, we will have another one next year at some point in the new biennium. The city grants are specific to cities and just for cities to apply to help boast city efforts in waste prevention. The seed grants are a state program and are in a different bucket of grants.

Kassover followed up by asking how we can help community members understand what option to apply to.

Walsh replied that for King County grants, the only one they can apply to is the Re+ Circular Economy Grant. For the next grant cycle, we will do a better job of communicating when it's open.

Weiker commented that we can always communicate through the SCA.

Wadley added that NextCycle WA is a partnership in which King County is a participant and funder. The NextCycle WA Renew Seed Grants are for the entire state and because King County is a funder, the King County entities can apply for equipment. It is a partnership, but it is statewide, and Wadley appreciates the feedback from Kassover. Kassover said that she will promote the NextCycle grant.

Year-end updates – NERTS, SCRTS, CHLF

CHLF

Lui provided a project re-cap and year-end update on the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Site Development Plan & Facilities Relocation.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was published on March 22, 2022, with no appeals. The King County Solid Waste Division anticipates selecting a preferred alternative and relocation option by the end of 2022. Currently, design efforts are underway for Area 9 Development and Permanent Facilities Relocation project, and interim facilities for relocation project are planned for 2023-2024. We are planning to start moving people to interim locations next year and the team is working on permitting for that. These locations will be off-site but on County property.

Upcoming schedule for the site development and facilities relocation.

- Q2 2022: A select preferred alternative will be chosen
- 2023-2024: Interim Facilities Relocation
- Q1 2025: Area 9 construction will begin
- 2025-2026: Construction for permanent facilities
- Mid-2026: Area is predicted to reach capacity and we will begin top deck filling Areas 5 and 6
 - This will buy us approx. 1.5-2 years of capacity
- Spring 2028: Area 9 will open

Atkinson wanted to know what the selected preferred alternatives are. Lui responded that in the EIS, we have three action alternatives and one no-action alternative. The first alternative includes Area 9 and going back and filling the top deck of Areas 5 and 6; the second alternative is going back to Areas 2 and 3; and the third alternative is going back to even the older areas of the landfill to fill as much as possible to maximize the landfill capacity. Some of the older areas have some engineering concerns and the cost of filling them might be different than what we are doing today, and the King County Council will take that into consideration when choosing on an alternative. Currently, DNRP and Pat McLaughlin have shared that the south-end option is the preferred alternative right now for the facilities relocation plan.

Atkinson followed up by asking how we go back to the old area. Lui replied that the old areas aren't technically closed but the option is determining how far we can go in filling some of those areas. Over the past decades, those areas have settled so we might be able to go and add more on top and some of the older areas don't have liners because they were filled in the 1960's/1970's which poses some engineering concerns. Some areas might also be near the buffer zone, and we want to keep the filling out of the zone. To keep the refuge from falling into the buffer zone, we might have to build a retaining wall. The King County Council is trying to figure out what makes the most sense with costs and engineering concerns. We hope to have a decision by the end of the year.

Weiker asked if SWAC or MSWAC will be asked to comment on those alternatives or if it will just be administrative. Lui answered that the purpose of the EIS is to get comments from the public and anyone who wants to comment on it. We

then revise the draft with these comments. We didn't receive any, so we considered the process to be complete. We will continue to receive comments and consider them, but it's unlikely that we will open the SEPA process again.

Weiker said that we are starting the long-range planning from the consultants and there's the longer-range planning from Walsh. Walsh added that we are almost wrapped up with the consultants who will look at several different long-term disposal options including waste export, waste to energy, pyrolysis, gasification and Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF), and some options for what to do when the landfill closes. They'll come to this meeting and give an introduction and see how this committee wants to weigh the scoring, and then they will evaluate options and bring them back to the committee.

Atkinson wanted to know where comments can be made. Lui responded that comments can be made on the [Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Site Development and Facilities Relocation project website](#).

Weiker commented that she and Waller and are still working on scheduling for the set up of the tours.

SCRTS

Herndon introduced herself as the Project Manager and provided an update on the South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS) project.

As you all likely know, the new station we're designing, and building will replace the current transfer station in Algona. The new station will serve the community members of Algona, Auburn, Pacific, and Federal Way. It will offer the same services currently offered, but will include additional features and services, too, including recycling services, moderate risk waste disposal for households and small businesses, sustainable building features, off-site improvements, and on-site creek enhancements. The off-site improvements will be to 11th Ave. to provide upgrades to the sewage and roadwork.

The project also includes several environmental enhancements to the site – realigning a small stream, improving the habitat through riparian plantings, and providing stormwater capture, detention and treatment for the site. There will be off-site improvements to West Valley Highway, realigning and restoring the road, and the project will include exciting public art from the Muckleshoot Tribe, as well as other community benefits. We're in final stage of permitting and expect final permitting in November.

Herndon showed the final renderings of the new station layout with views looking from the north and the from the south. She also showed a site layout and circulation image with different colored lines highlighting the self-haul, commercial, and SWD transfer trailers pathways. King County will enter the transfer station separately from commercial and self-haulers.

The project is on track to achieve the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) Living Building Challenge (LBC) Petal Certification for green building. The goal is to achieve the Energy Petal Certification, along with the place, equity and beauty petals. A key requirement for this is that the project will produce 105% of the energy it uses annually which will be accomplished through solar panels that will produce about 50% of the energy needed for the site. Over a 12-month period, there will be a report of the actual performance and there will be written confirmation of approved exceptions from ILFI.

The project has also partnered with the Local Food Initiative and Public Health of Seattle & King County to provide a solar powered pump for an immigrant farming irrigation project in south King County. In the 2023-2024 biennium, the project will partner with King County Parks to provide wayfinding improvements to the Interurban Trail. The transfer station conference room is part of the project's Equity and Social Justice efforts with the inclusion of educational and interactive exhibits that focus on environmental topics.

An important part of our Equity and Social Justice Actions is our partnership with DIRT Corps. Over the summer we partnered with them to provide restoration training and partnered with them to sponsor a cohort that

commences Oct. 15. Trainees accepted into the program have a wide range of ages from 18-56 years old and the majority of those in the program are womxn or non-binary. All of the trainees are deeply passionate about sustainability and the environment, and many are looking for career opportunities that they feel have a significant impact on the improvement of their communities.

From June 11, 2022 – July 25, 2022:

- SCRTS site plant salvage
- Restoration at Fenster Park
- Restoration/Cedar County at Countyline Levee Setback
- Training Topics: Green Jobs, Mitigation Strategies for Water Quality issues, Intro to Wetlands and GSI, Climate Change and Resiliency
- Career Panels for the trainees – completed led by interns at SWD

Upcoming schedule for the remainder of the project:

- Feb. - Oct. 2022: Building permits 100% Design Continuing Community Outreach
- Nov. - Dec. 2022: Drawings issued for Tender Bid Submittals Due
- Feb. 2023: Notice of Intent to Award Issued
- March 2023: Contract Executed for Construction
- 2023-2026: Construction with hopefully opening in mid-2026

Martin left a comment in the chat wondering when Renton will get an updated transfer facility. The current transfer station is 50 years old and wanted to know the criteria and timing of upgrading these facilities. Walsh responded that we have a capital project in our 2023-2024 budget proposal to look at what to do at Renton. This may involve modernizing it or potentially redeveloping at the site for other waste prevention and recycling needs. If the project is approved by Council, we would start planning early next year and studying various options.

NERTS

O'Hara introduced herself as the Project Manager for the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station Project.

We began the siting phase for this project in mid-2020. The County used a six-step process to evaluate and eliminate sites for alternatives in order to narrow down the number of best possible options for a final decision. As the number of possibilities narrowed, our analysis got more detailed. We are currently in the fifth step of the process – the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and EIS (or environmental review) phase.

In July 2022, we announced the three alternative sites that would move forward into the environmental review with a no-action alternative. Under the no action alternative, we'll analyze the impacts of what a no new station would bring sited in northeast King County. The other three alternatives will analyze the impacts if the station is sited at the Houghton Park & Ride, the existing Houghton transfer station and closed landfill, or the set of six parcels in Woodinville.

The three alternatives:

- 7024 116th Ave NE, Kirkland – Houghton Park & Ride
- 11724 NE 60th St, Kirkland – Houghton Transfer/Closed Landfill
- 15801 Woodinville-Redmond Rd NE, Woodinville

For a high-level overview, SEPA or the state environmental policy act, was enacted in 1971 and requires that we take a close look at how a project might impact the area around it. During the SEPA process, we will identify and analyze environmental impacts associated with our governmental decisions. The rules for the SEPA process are outlined in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). The EIS is the formal document that looks at these impacts and provides alternatives or mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize those effects.

The first step in the process is called “scoping.” During this step, our project team will invite the public, tribal governments, and other agencies to share their comments on the project and the proposed actions that are being recommended to reduce impacts. Our project team will be holding a series of scoping public meetings virtually and in-person where people can learn more about the project and submit formal scoping comments. During the scoping period, we will walk through what scoping is and how to make an official comment. There will also be an online house website so that we are able to hear from as many community members as possible.

These events and the website will give a detailed explanation of the project and we will ask for comments and feedback from the public that we can include in our EIS report. The scoping period will begin on Nov. 3, 2022 and extend to Jan. 17, 2023. During the scoping process, the community will be able to comment on the alternatives and tell us what we should be looking at during our analysis as well as any suggested mitigation measures. This is the opportunity to make sure we are evaluating the right issues and looking at items that are important to the community. After the public comment period, we will formalize the alternatives and move onto the technical analysis.

EIS Scoping Public Input Opportunities:

- EIS Scoping Online Open House Available for use by community through duration of scoping: Nov. 3
- Scoping Meeting #1 (in-person) – Dec. 1 at Lake Washington High School in Kirkland
- Scoping Meeting #2 (virtual) – Dec. 7 via Zoom
- Scoping Meeting #3 (in-person): Dec. 8 at Brightwater Center in Woodinville
- Public Input and Scoping Period – Nov. 3, 2022-Jan. 17, 2023

Once the scope is determined and the public comment period ends in January 2023, the project team will perform the technical analysis and look at the impacts of each alternative. There, we will identify significant adverse impacts for each alternative and identify possible reasonable mitigation measures. Part of our efforts during 2023 will include the EIS technical analysis where memos will be developed for each of the alternatives - traffic, environmental constraints, cultural resources, noise and water quality.

This technical analysis will be assembled in a draft EIS that will be published Fall 2023 and will be open for public comment to get feedback on that analysis. After the draft EIS, we take all the feedback and incorporate it into the documents. We will do any additional analysis that is needed and then publish the final EIS. The final EIS will be used as a decision-making tool.

During the environmental review process, we will continue to work with the community and our regional partners to share information and address any questions.

Atkinson wanted to know how the sites are selected officially and who is part of that process. O’Hara replied that in the comprehensive plan, we have an entire study area outlined and that included approximately 70,000 sites. From those sites, we used different criteria to narrow down the sites to about 205 sites and then our consulting team narrowed it down even further.

Trim asked if the committee could get an invite to attend the public meetings. Waller responded that it will be sent to Trim.

Visit the [Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station project website](#) to get access to the upcoming meetings. No registration is required to attend.

Member Comments

Waller shared his screen to show the SWAC roster members and their terms. These positions have been transmitted to King County Council and the Executive has to review it.

Atkinson commented on the landfill representative position that is always vacant and wanted to know if the radius could be expanded from one mile to five miles. Waller responded that it can't be expanded, and Atkinson wanted to know why.

Waller said that this was a compromise with the Executive because with a five-mile radius, you aren't exactly a neighbor. The radius could be extended, but we'd have to lobby to council members for more miles and the process could take about one year.

Kassover commented that when you think about the governing structure of these committees, this body is advisory to the King County Council and MSWAC is advisory to SWD. This would take an act from King County Council to change it and this body is more related to this type of work. Kassover suggested that Atkinson contact the King County Council member who represents the landfill area so they can start a conversation with the King County Council.

Waller added that Reagan Dunn is the representative councilmember for that area, and he is adamant at keeping the radius at one mile.

Atkinson asked if the landfill representative position has ever been filled and how long it's been a position. Waller responded that it's been a position for about two years and has never been filled. This position was a compromise because many of the neighbors felt like they weren't being heard but no one has stepped up to fill the position. The neighbors have even received personal calls to join.

Atkinson wondered if this lack of participation is due to people being intimidated to join. Waller said that there's an assumption that the only people on SWAC are politicians and haulers when that's not true.

Trim added that five miles is too long in terms of environmental impacts, so maybe three miles instead.

Atkinson said that expanding the radius could help someone get a community representative on this committee.

Kassover commented that maybe we should begin looking at the transit corridor where the trucks go rather than just thinking about this as circle radius from the landfill.

Martin wondered if the methodology of recruitment is what needs to be changed. This would include welcoming people who may not think they have an interest in this body of work and finding another way of recruiting because waiting for someone to volunteer seems to be a rare occurrence.

Waller responded that we've used Facebook, Instagram, newsletters, phone calls and have even attended community meetings to recruit for this. The newsletter that came from Councilmember Dunn was an act to get his constituents involved in this work. There's an assumption that this position is not being filled because something isn't being done right but it could be that we need to revisit the conversation on extending the radius. We have tried many things and that is why we have gone to SWAC to ask people to spread the word.

Weiker said that Atkinson and herself can work offline on this.

Wadley added that the City of Seattle recently did a membership push for their SWAC and even got more members than they had capacity for. There is a perception that SWAC is only politicians and haulers, so their SWAC created videos which provided a personal connection to show that the committee members can be everyday people. This video was shared on LinkedIn and showed the personal side of things and who the people are. In the chat, she added that [Seattle's SWAC](#) has their members faces online so it seems more accessible.

Weiker stated that this committee has labor and environmental groups and is not just haulers and politicians. The committee could only benefit from having a neighbor of the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill. She followed up by saying that winter is approaching, and cities aren't interested in talking about the rate restructure. The haulers are trying to have this conversation with cities and get this work done in the second quarter of the new year.

In the chat, Weiker dropped information on an upcoming [Washington State Recycling Association event](#) during May 21-23. This is an annual conference call for sessions and speakers.

The meeting adjourned at 10:56 AM.