

**Clark County
Solid Waste Advisory Commission**

**Regular Meeting
Thursday May 7, 2009**

**Clark County Auto License Office
1408 Franklin Street
Vancouver, WA**

SWAC Members Present: Eldon Wogen, Richard Baker, Lisa Schmidt, Dan Kaler, Jeanne Stewart, Jack McClary, Mike Carnahan

SWAC Members Absent: Rebecca Wale, Don Ebbeson

Staff: Anita Largent, Mike Davis, Rich McConaghy, Tanya Gray, Gary Bickett, Bronson Potter, Susan Newman

Others: Mike Drumright, Peter Lyon, Scott Campbell, Derek Ranta, Wes Gavett, Hans Ouellet

I. Roll Call, Approval of Minutes, April 2, 2009:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. A motion was made and seconded to approve the April 2, 2009 minutes. The motion carried with two abstentions, Jack McClary and Mike Carnahan.

II. Updates: County Public Health, County Solid Waste, City of Vancouver Solid Waste, Department of Ecology

County Public Health:

Gary Bickett deferred to Bronson Potter, Chief Civil Deputy, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, on the subject of the Ruefner Landfill.

Bronson stated the good news is that we are getting to the end of this project. He came to discuss why SWAC must hold a public hearing. Bronson said that he studied county code and there is no provision regarding applications to defer to other permits. However, an application for permits (which is the next closest thing) has SWAC having a role in making a decision. Therefore, it is his judgment that this needs to be done. He reported that a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit has been issued and the Grading Permit has yet to be issued. He felt SWAC would find answers in the grading permit application and the conditions that have been added to it. SWAC will have the opportunity to add any other conditions they deem necessary. The outcome of the public hearing would be to defer to the other permits or not to defer.

Eldon Wogen told Bronson that when this was discussed at the April meeting, SWAC did not feel they had the legal authority to hold this public hearing. And if the PA's office is saying that we do, what is left for SWAC to do?

Bronson said that the City of Vancouver is acting on a grading permit. The proposed industrial use is a permitted use and therefore allowed under the City of Vancouver's code. A primary reason for SWAC holding a public hearing is to confirm or deny that the permit holds the conditions that are truly needed.

Q: Can SWAC recommend that this not be done? A: Yes, it would be more helpful to add to the list of conditions those things that need to be done, such as delinquency of permit fees for the last several years.

Q: When the city made their most recent approval, one decision (because it is an industrial zone) was not required a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). What about the approvals that already exist? A: The Public Health Department will make its own determination on a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). We would go through the City of Vancouver DNS and see if it is applicable.

Q: Who's the ultimate decision maker? A: The Department of Ecology is the final authority.

Q: Have we resolved the ownership issue yet? A: Bronson said that he could state who holds the title to the property at this time.

C: There is concern about long term liability; that the city of Vancouver be cleared of any potential liabilities and that the proper sources are held liable. The grading permit would be only part of what we need to see. We will also need to know about the excavation and removal of the waste and if the process they're using is adequate.

Q: What is the timing on this? A: The applicant is in the process of providing information to the city. There has been no action on the grading permit since November of 2008.

Department of Ecology: Mike Drumright and Peter Lyon

Mike apologized for being overly optimistic at last month's meeting. The grants did take a significant hit. Ecology will continue to be available to SW and will share information once they have answers regarding the full budget impact. At this point, Ecology is suggesting that we continue as is with the budget being about half of what it has been.

Clark County Solid Waste – Anita Largent

1. The reduced grant amount is bad news for the county. We are funded through 2009 which gives solid waste staff time to plan and refocus. We are beginning a review of all programs – which are the most important. As we go through this process we will keep SWAC informed.

Q: Who decides the priority? A: Staff will take the first cut at this process. SWAC will be able to review. The ultimate budget authority rests with the Board of County Commissioners.

Q: What about Compliance for Enforcement? A: Solid Waste budgets \$125,000 for enforcement that is transferred to Public Health. The reduced Ecology grants also impacts Public Health. They may lose half of that because \$50,000 of that is state and 60% of that is going away.

Q: What part of your SW budget is education? A: The majority of our programs are education programs.

2. The Board of County Commissioners has been discussing a reorganization which would lead to an Environmental Department. A planning meeting is being held next Tuesday. There is a strong possibility of Solid Waste being moved to the Environmental Department. We would still be a separate fund because we are an enterprise fund.

C: We would be very concerned if we saw money for education and compliance being used for other things.

City of Vancouver – Rich McConaghy

1. The Appliance pickup has been completed for the year.
2. The city has been having good discussions with Waste Connections. Rich will share with SWAC when he is able to.

Jeanne Stewart thanked the City of Vancouver for getting her a smaller cart and understanding different needs for different people.

III. Capital Improvements to the Material Recovery Facility Sort Line – Columbia Resource Company: Scott Campbell, Wes Gavett and Hans Ouellet, CP Manufacturing, Inc.

A presentation was given by the Hans Ouellet, CP Manufacturing, Inc. This is the company designing, manufacturing and installing the new sort line at West Van Material Recovery Facility. They used a 3D computer model to show the upgrade for the dual stream sort line. The new system will be installed around the old system. The upgrade provides the technology to separate commingled materials.

Hans went through the process from the time the material is brought into the facility and goes into the in feed (where it goes into the first stage where the bulky trash and bulky plastic is sorted out). The next stage is to remove the cardboard for later baling. After that the next stage is the smaller fraction newspaper, flat fibers, and chip board. He showed the screen separators that separate the fibers and the quality control of the fiber. There is a machine that meters the flow so that the rest of the system sees a steady flow.

Q: How many personnel are needed for this system? A: There are 23 fixed stations. There is a net increase in people but increased costs should be offset by increased materials. We are anticipating the amount of tons per hour will go up to 25 tons per hour.

Q: How does operation occur during retrofit? A: We are working with WCI to minimize the down time. We plan for less than 10 days down total.

Q: From start to finish how long will this take? A: 10 weeks is the planned time. We will not divert any material from the facility. We have talked with Public Health and Public Works and come to an agreement about this issue. The installation and setup will not affect the garbage collection and processing.

Q: How does this fit into the size of other retrofits you have done? A: Hans considers this retrofit to be average in size.

Q: Where is this project at right now and when do you anticipate it being done? A: It is in process right now and we anticipate being done by August 1st.

Q: Is there a possibility there could be future modifications to the retrofit? A: Yes that is a possibility. We have designed flexibility into this system. One of the things that we've looked is an optical sorter as the mechanics improve.

Q: How noisy is this line going to be? A: No louder or quieter than other machines. There is more noise associated with loading and unloading material.

It was suggested that the video shown tonight be used as an educational piece on the web site. It was also suggested that a press release be done this to show the public how proactive the company is being with efficiency.

IV: Canines for Cleanwater Program – Elena Cronin

Elena Cronin is an Americorps worker working with Cindy Stienbarger, Education and Outreach Program Coordinator for the Cleanwater Program. The Cleanwater Program is a sister program to Solid Waste in the Public Works Department. “*Canines for Cleanwater*” is a requirement by the stormwater permit and the program itself began in November of 2008.

The program is aimed at educating dog owners in Clark County of why it is important to clean up their dog waste. There are over 103,000 dogs in Clark County that produce over 6000 tons per year of animal waste. Pathogens travel in runoff to storm drains and streams. Many water resources in Clark County already are above EPA levels for fecal coliform.

Our message to the public is “**scoop it, bag it, trash it**”. The program is working in collaboration with other agencies such as DOGPAW, SW WA Veterinary Medicine Assn. Humane Societies for SW WA and West Columbia Gorge as well as Animal Protection and Control, and businesses: Yard Sergeant and Invisible Fence.

We have had 280 pledges signed representing 359 dogs. It’s a beginning and as the word spreads, so shall the program.

SWAC’s concern was putting it in the garbage and then burying it in a landfill. Although burying in Eastern Oregon is preferable to the burying here in Clark County.

IV: Update of Recycling Collection Program and Extended Pilot Information – Mike Davis

Mike reported that the county has had very few calls on the new program. In fact, we have received fewer calls than during the actual pilot program. There have been a few changes in cart size. The general response is to give it a try and if it really doesn’t work, we’ll provide another size cart.

Richard Baker noted that carts are being put out before they are full.

Mike added that no one predicted it would roll out as smoothly as it had. When the rural program starts rolling out, we think there will be more calls and a few more issues to handle.

Information was distributed regarding how the pilot areas had continued to perform over the past year. This is information that SWAC had requested at last month’s meeting. From February 2008 through January 2009, the pounds/customer in the pilot areas remained the same (14.2 lbs/customer during the pilot and 14.3 lbs/customer through January 2009). During this same period, the bin areas dropped from 12.4 lbs/customer to 11.6 lbs/customer. This drop can be attributed to the current economic conditions. This is positive information for the cart program; it was able to maintain while the bin tonnage dropped.

Q: Are you finding that most glass is being kept out? A: There have been no significant issues.

Q: Is there a plan in place for how it will work if there is a route that is identified as a high volume of glass? A: WCI will go through and work with the residents on an as-needed basis.

They could also use a semi-automated driver instead of automated so that carts could be checked on a periodic basis.

Q: How do we handle shredded paper? A: Place in a paper bag and put in your recycling cart.

C: This data would be good for a news release. It's good to be proactive, and maybe the opportunity is at the end of the roll-out and as the MRF is coming on line.

Mike reported that Washougal will be coming online in August and Camas is still negotiating. The rural program will roll out in September and October.

Q: How are things going at the new transfer station? A: It's going very well. The use by public customers is increasing.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. Next month's meeting is June 4, 2009.