

**CLARK COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**Regular Meeting  
Thursday June 4, 2009**

**Clark County Auto License Conference Room  
1408 Franklin Street  
Vancouver, WA**

**SWAC Members Present:** Lisa Schmidt, Rebecca Wale, Richard Baker, Don Ebbeson, Eldon Wogen, Mike Carnahan, Dan Kaler

**SWAC Members Absent:** Jeanne Stewart, Jack McClary

**Staff:** Anita Largent, Mike Davis, Pete Capell, Susan Newman, Gary Bickett, Rich McConaghy, Tanya Gray

**Others:** Derek Ranta

**I. Roll Call, Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of May 7, 2009 were approved with two abstentions.

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

**County Public Health – Gary Bickett**

- Gary Bickett reported that SWAC will have two letters next month. One letter is on the way from the Department of Ecology regarding the deferral on the Shorelines Permit and a letter is being drafted to Paul Christensen regarding the process. The county does not feel it can make a decision until at the minimum, financial assurance is in place. We have spoken with Jon Wagner at the City of Vancouver. The city states that the next move is the Foundations to make. The City has received updated information that the project will be mixing the material removed from the landfill with fill; instead of layering it. They are talking about adding calcium chloride to give it the ability to absorb water.

Q: Doesn't Ecology feel there's a possibility of that going into the aquifer? A: No they didn't say anything. They went ahead because of the Shorelines Permit being granted.

- During the past month, a large amount of staff time has been spent with monitoring wells on private property to make sure they are being decommissioned properly.
- Melissa Sutton has been dealing with compost issues at H&H Wood Recycling.
- Gary reported that Public Health had to lay off 3 Environmental Health Specialists.

**County Solid Waste – Anita Largent**

- Recycled Arts Festival is on June 27th and 28th from 9 am to 4 pm each day. There will be over 70 vendors along with entertainment, music, and education.

- A list of all June events was given to SWAC
- News release that the Washougal Transfer Station HHW is now collecting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat from 8 to 4. That gives us 4 sites along with mobile events.
- Copy of an article about cities in Massachusetts. This article has been included to give a different perspective to the Recycle Bank program. A representative from Recycle Bank will be here at the August meeting to discuss their program.
- Copy of Columbian article about stimulus money that county is applying for; the grant request includes \$300k for a waste to energy feasibility study.
- Just recently completed implementing the SOS food waste collection program at the Vancouver School of Arts.
- County participated in “Recyclingest” neighborhood program this year with the City of Vancouver. There were nine county neighborhoods that participated. Neighborhood representatives attending training on the proper methods of recycling; they are required to print an article for their neighborhood newsletter.

Q: Regarding the grant request for a waste to energy – would that affect the current contract with CRC? A: The scope of the study will be very comprehensive. It will take into consideration the current contract, all of our regional demographics and system requirements. It should also include the proposed biomass project and dealing with the county’s biosolids. LA just recently issued an RFP for a 300 Ton per day facility.

Q: Would the current recycling rates be impacted by burning? A: If some of the recyclables are used for energy, yes, our recycling rate would be impacted.

#### **City of Vancouver – Rich McConaghy**

- On May 18<sup>th</sup> – Solid Waste staff had a workshop with the city council and made a recommendation to move ahead with the cart recycling. The city council was agreeable and asked staff to bring back a contract for their review. The basic recommendation is for every other week service using a 96 gallon cart. The rate would remain the same at \$2.72 per month. The per ton fee \$34.43 would stay the same and the contract would extend 5 years allowing WCI to recoup the cost of seven new trucks at \$300,000 per truck. Annual inflation is currently 80% of the CPI (which includes two indexes – one for fuel and CPI).

Q: How long would the program take to roll out? A: It depends on how long it takes to get the trucks. We are estimating late in the year. We would like to order trucks as soon as possible and have all carts out by Thanksgiving.

Q: Would this be the same cart as the county? A: We have not decided on that yet. The county has 65 gallon carts in the urban service area and 95 gallon carts in the rural area made by Rehrig. The city is looking at four different cart manufacturers.

Q: Would the city participate in the cost of the trucks? A: No, we would participate in the purchase of the carts as the county did. We allotted \$2 million dollars for carts.

- The Sturgeon Festival was held last weekend at the Water Resource Education Center. WCI had a display set up highlighting the carts and the service.

**Silver Springs Organics Composting Facility: Derek Ranta, Waste Connections Inc.**

Technology problems prevented Derek from showing a power point presentation. He gave a verbal report instead to the members of SWAC.

Waste Connections Inc. (WCI) purchased Silver Springs Organics Composting Facility in March 2009. The facility is located approximately 100 miles north of Vancouver. There are four modules to the site right now and they're only utilizing one at this time and are preparing to build the second cell. Silver Springs was a family owned business and is located in the middle of open land, so there are no issues with complaints from odors. There are currently six people working at the facility. This acquisition gives WCI excess capacity; other WCI sites have overflow issues. This is not a money making issue at this time. From the time the material comes in the gate, it is 45 days until it can be sold. The primary customer is WSDOT. They use the material on their road projects and maintenance of the medians. The video of the operation is on Silver Springs' website at <http://www.silverspringsorganics.com/tech.html>.

The process uses long tubes that are filled with air (150 feet long). The tubes draw air through the piles. All the air passes through biofilters. Moisture is added. All of the material is ground and put into rows and covered with plastic. It is turned twice at 15 day intervals and after 60 days, the material is composted.

Q: Is WCI looking at going after other customers? A: That is not something we would be interested in doing.

Q: How do they manage their leachate? A: It's all on pavement that's sloped towards a leachate pond and evaporation takes care of it.

Q: Is the only material they're getting from Pierce right now? A: No, they are also getting approximately 11 or 12 percent food waste from the City of Olympia.

Q: Where is the food going from the SOS program? A: It is currently going to Metro and then to Cedar Grove. The Metro facility is at capacity and we're excited about Silver Springs providing other opportunities for this program. We should have all the schools in Clark County into the SOS program in the next year. From a planning perspective, we would like to move towards residential curbside food waste collection.

Q: Once we're completed with the MRF upgrades, is this the next project on the horizon? A: Yes. We will be looking at the best location for a reload system and we will need to have a contract amendment.

Q: Anything tied to biomass burning? A: The biomass project is for forest debris; working with DNR. Generally residential food waste and residential yard waste is not dry enough for burning.

**III. Solid Waste Program Update – Proposed Environmental Services Dept. and Budget Review of Programs and Priorities: Anita Largent and Pete Capell**

At SWAC's last meeting, we discussed a possible reorganization. The Board of County Commissioners is very interested in having an Environmental Services Department. Included in that department would be Solid Waste, Clean Water, Environmental Permitting, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Endangered Species Act, Community Development Permitting Section, Weed Management, Forestry and Legacy Lands.

Managers from these sections met with Commissioner Stuart and County Administrator Bill Barron. The discussion was to organize around functions rather than programs; functions such

as inspectors all being under one division. The type of organization would mean that components of current programs would be in different divisions within the new department.

This is a BOCC driven initiative with the vision that consolidation of environmental or natural resources programs would provide a greater level of collaboration within five different divisions and a higher level of service would be provided. The functional areas would be: 1) Finance and Administration, 2) Permitting and Compliance, 3) Operations, 4) Education and Outreach, and 5) Capital Asset Management. Solid Waste has programs and staff which perform both operations and education responsibilities. The timing of this reorganization is uncertain at this time. It is anticipated to happen later this year after the county does their readopt of budget in December. There are still many details that need to happen. SWAC will be updated as progress is made.

**Budget:** At last month's meeting, we discussed potential cutbacks on state grants. We still do not have any definitive information on those grants. To be proactive, we have been doing a review of all solid waste programs and are looking at a worst case scenario of a \$500,000 shortfall. Program reviews have been done internally with solid waste staff ranking these programs. Our next step is to review the individual budgets.

Pete Capell added that the exercise of removing \$500,000 from the budget is very significant. At one end of the spectrum, we could seek approval for a \$2 a ton increase in the tipping fee and backfill all the current programs or we could do nothing and have to cut programs from the roster.

Q: Is this just the reduction in grants? A: The "worst case scenario" also includes the drop in recycling revenues.

Q: What is the difference between Clark County and Metro's tipping fee? – A: Metro just had a rate increase. Their fee is now \$80.70 per ton, a \$10 transaction fee and a \$28 minimum charge. The comparable fees in Clark County are \$79.35 per ton, a \$10 transaction fee, and no minimum charge. The consensus of SWAC was that as long as Clark County's fees are less, it will keep tonnage from leaving our system.

Q: Does this equate to cutting people? A: At this time, there are no plans to cut people. Indirectly there are some contracts with Columbia Springs (they employ 3 people) and it is possible that this funding will be cut.

C: Pete added that he wants to make sure that if we're raising fees that we are adding value – our philosophy is the citizens we serve – what's best for the citizens. The county has eliminated 35 positions in December with more cuts coming.

The scoring matrix for the program evaluation was discussed. The list of prioritized program was reviewed. The matrix categories are: tons recovered/recycled/toxics reduced; environmental benefit; community benefit; community acceptance; board acceptance; and bang for buck. An explanation was given as to how the category scores and total were derived. The total score representation an average of everyone's score. All programs were scored on a ranking of 1-5. The next task for staff is to identify specific budget cuts. We specifically have avoided "across the board percentage" cuts – cuts should reflect the prioritization. Providing the same level of service and just cut 5% implies that we weren't doing a very good job initially.

Q: How many people did the input? A: 10 all Solid Waste staff participated.

SWAC expressed that they would like to participate in the evaluation. They can provide a counter balance with public opinion such as the public and add value to the evaluation. A copy of the evaluation matrix, description of programs and instructions will be sent to SWAC. Scored sheets should be sent back to Susan by the middle of July. These will be compiled for the August meeting.

Q: When is a recommendation needed from this commission? A: There won't be any action taken until by the Board of Commissioners until December with their budget readoption.

**IV. Update of Recycling Collection Program: Mike Davis**

Roll off has begun in the Town of Yacolt and La Center. So far, it is going well. We still have some clean up to do in the UGA; bins to be collected; cart exchanges. We have only given out eight 35 gallon carts. We have a condo association that is requesting the 35 gallon carts, so we will be distributing more.

Upgrade of the MRF is still on schedule. That project should be finished in two months. There will be a two week period (separate weeks) where the facility will not be processing any material. Material will be stockpiled during that time. We will set up a tour for SWAC in August when installation is complete.

**V. Other Business:**

After discussion, it was decided to cancel the July Meeting due to the holiday weekend. The next meeting is scheduled for August 6th.

**VI. Comments from the Public on Non-Agenda Items:**

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.