

Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of January 21, 2010

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
900 South Fremont Avenue  
Alhambra, California

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative  
Mary Ann Lutz, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative  
Ron Saldana, Los Angeles County Disposal Association (Formerly GLASWMA)  
Eugene Sun, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Gail Farber, represented by Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Dr. Jonathan Fielding, rep. by Cindy Chen, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Stephen Maguin, rep. by Charles Boehmke, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County  
Gerry Miller, represented by Charles Modica, City of Los Angeles  
Greig Smith, represented by Nicole Bernson, City of Los Angeles  
Enrique Zaldivar, represented by Karen Coca, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Carl Clark, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.  
Margaret Clark, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Michael Conway, City of Long Beach  
David Kim, City of Los Angeles  
Sam Perdomo, Business/Commerce Representative  
Steve Tye, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Dr. Barry Wallerstein, South Coast Air Quality Management District

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chuk Agu, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Martins Aiyetiwa, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
John Bodenchak, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Russell Bukoff, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Suk Chong, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Massood Eftekhari, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Christine Frias, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Rogelio Gamiño, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Nilda Gemeniano, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Phillip Gharibians, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Bahman Hajialiakbar, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Wayde Hunter, NVC/GHNNC  
Armine Kesablyan, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Sevak Khatchadorian, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Linda Lee, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Pat Proano, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Coby Skye, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works  
Gerry Villalobos, Sunshine Canyon Landfill County LEA

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2009**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of December 17, 2009. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Cindy Chen was absent at the time the vote was taken.

**III. REPORT FROM THE FACILITY AND PLAN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**

Ms. Betsey Landis reported that the Subcommittee met earlier in the day and began reviewing the Draft Five-Year Report on the Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan. She stated that the Subcommittee will e-mail staff with comments on the report and will continue the discussion at the next Subcommittee meeting.

**IV. REPORT FROM THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE**

Mr. Coby Skye reported that as part of the Subcommittee's outreach efforts, staff is participating in the Pacific Biomass Conference and the Verde Exchange Conference. He also reported that staff expects to submit contract proposals for Phases III and IV of the conversion technology project to the Board of Supervisors in late February or early March. Mr. Skye stated that the Subcommittee heard a presentation by Powerhouse Energy on a high temperature gasification process that can utilize municipal solid waste (MSW) as feedstock.

**V. UPDATE ON AB 222, CONVERSION TECHNOLOGIES AND BIOREFINERY FACILITIES**

Mr. Mike Mohajer reported that at the Task Force meeting of October 2009, members reviewed the proposed amendments to AB 222 and voted to send letters to all mayors in Los Angeles County seeking support for the proposed amendments. The requested letters have been drafted but the bill's author has not yet introduced the proposed amendments to the legislature. Mr. Mohajer stated that the letters will be sent out upon introduction of the proposed amendments by the author.

## **VI. EIR FOR ORDINANCES TO BAN PLASTIC CARRYOUT BAGS IN L. A. COUNTY**

Ms. Nilda Gemeniano provided a presentation on the EIR for ordinances to ban plastic carryout bags in L. A. County ([see attachment](#)). Ms. Gemeniano stated that in April 2007, the County Board of Supervisors (Supervisors) instructed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to investigate the issue of plastic and paper carryout bag consumption, and the impact an ordinance banning such products would have in the County. In August 2007, the Department of Public Works released a report which indicated that plastic carryout bags contribute significantly to litter, have a negative effect on marine wildlife and the environment, and contribute to costs for litter abatement, cleanup and education which cost public agencies in the State an estimated \$375 million annually. In January 2008, the Supervisors adopted a voluntary Single Use Bag Reduction and Recycling program to educate businesses and shoppers about the importance of using reusable bags.

The goals of the proposed ordinance include litter reduction, blight prevention, coastal waterways and wildlife protection, sustainability, and landfill reduction. The Supervisors have instructed County Counsel to prepare a draft ordinance for consideration by July 2010. Ms. Gemeniano stated that the proposed ordinance would ban the issuance of plastic carryout bags by large supermarkets and retail stores in the unincorporated areas of the County, and an environmental review in compliance with CEQA would be completed prior to consideration of the draft ordinance by the Supervisors.

Ms. Gemeniano stated that a public scoping process to provide information on the necessary scope or content of the EIR began on December 1, 2009 and closed on January 4, 2010. She stated that the County plans to host community workshops during the 45-day comment period after the release of the draft EIR which can occur as early as April 2010. The final EIR will be presented to the Supervisors in late summer 2010.

## **VII. UPDATE ON PHARMACEUTICAL AND SHARPS MANAGEMENT, AND EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (AB 283)**

Ms. Armine Kesablian stated that at the request of the Task Force, staff obtained information on the County's purchasing of sharps and pharmaceuticals and evaluated the County's ability to use its purchasing power to encourage pharmaceutical companies to assist with the cost of properly managing home-generated sharps waste and unused or expired medications.

Ms. Kesablian stated that the Departments of Health Services (DHS) and Public Health (DPH) spend over \$180 million annually to purchase

pharmaceuticals ([see attachment](#)). Both departments obtain these products from one main supplier, which does not offer a take back program. DHS and DPH use a third party vendor to dispose of unused or expired medications; DHS estimates costs of \$250,000 annually for this service. Annual sharps purchases amount to approximately \$175,000 for DHS's LAC+USC network and \$1 million for DPH's 14 clinics. As with pharmaceuticals, DHS and DPH rely on one main supplier which does not offer a take back program.

Ms. Kesablian stated that in October 2009, the County Board of Supervisors approved a motion requesting that the Departments of Health Services, Public Health, Fire, and Community and Senior Services work with the Department of Public Works and utilize existing County facilities as a way to expand the number of venues for convenient collection of home-generated sharps waste. She stated that staff plans to consider opportunities for partnerships with the private sector as a part of the implementation of the motion.

A motion was made to send a letter to County Board of Supervisors expressing the Task Force's appreciation for the October motion, requesting that efforts toward producer responsibility be expanded to include unwanted and expired pharmaceuticals, and recommending that DHS and DPH study the possibility of using the County's purchasing power to negotiate the take back of unwanted pharmaceuticals and sharps waste. The motion passed with Mr. Carlos Ruiz abstaining.

#### **VIII. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED BUDGET AND POLICY CHANGES TO CALIFORNIA'S BOTTLE BILL**

Mr. Phillip Gharibians provided a presentation ([see attachment](#)) on the proposed budget and policy change to California's bottle bill. He stated that in 1986 the California Beverage Container Recycling Program was established to provide a comprehensive and convenient beverage recycling program and to facilitate the development of California's recycling infrastructure. The deposit paid by consumers, known as the California Redemption Value (CRV), is the backbone of the program.

Mr. Gharibians noted that since fiscal year 2002, approximately \$566 million has been borrowed from the Beverage Container Recycling Fund (Fund) to supplement the State's general fund. Proportional reductions in the Fund have resulted in the closure of approximately 160 recycling centers since July 2009, and insufficient funds for programs such as grants to local conservation corps, city/county payment programs, and market development grants. The County of Los Angeles receives approximately \$300,000 annually as a participant in the City/County payment program, but as of 2010, the funding for this program has been proportionately reduced by approximately 90 percent to just under \$30,000.

Mr. Gharibians stated that proposed changes to the Public Resource Code (PRC) contained in the Governor's 2010-2011 proposed budget could result in a lack of incentives for convenience zone recyclers to locate near supermarkets, a reduction in recycling rates in unincorporated areas, and an increase in recyclables disposed at landfills. Other potential negative impacts of the proposed changes to the PRC include the elimination of community grants, reduction of collection receptacles, and a decrease in community outreach and capabilities to promote environmental awareness.

A motion was made to send a letter of opposition to the Governor regarding the proposed changes to the bottle bill that could result in increased fees for California residents, a reduction or elimination of funding to local government managed programs, and a reduction in convenient recycling locations for California consumers. The motion passed with Mr. Mohajer abstaining.

**IX. PRESENTATION ON STATUS OF REVEGETATION EFFORTS AT SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL**

Ms. Linda Lee and Mr. Gerry Villalobos provided a presentation ([see attachment](#)) on the revegetation efforts at Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL). Ms. Lee stated that the Finding of Conformance (FOC) requires that the landfill operator (BFI) submits quarterly status reports to the Task Force on the progress of the site's landscaping activities and revegetation of permanent slope areas. The County's conditional use permit (CUP) requires BFI to apply hydroseed vegetation in areas projected to be inactive for 180 days, submit a vegetation plan to the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) and the Department of Regional Planning (DRP), vegetate final hill slopes, and hire an independent expert to study soil properties and recommend appropriate types of plants that may be used for revegetation.

Ms. Lee stated that in 2007, BFI submitted a master plan that detailed the soil sampling methodologies and if necessary soil amendments, hydroseeding to take place between October and February, container plants to be planted between November and March, irrigation to be installed between the first winter and spring, and the hydroseeded areas to be subsequently monitored for a three-year period. She stated that in 2008, BFI applied soil amendments, hydroseeding, and compost to various interim and permanent slopes. In 2009, sage mitigation and two-pass and three-pass hydroseeding were completed and greenwaste mulch was added to stabilize the surface.

Ms. Lee noted that BFI is in compliance with the FOC by submitting quarterly vegetation status reports. However, in a letter dated December 7, 2009, DRP expressed concerns over BFI's lack of attention to a number of problems identified in the 3rd quarter 2009 report, including sparse cover of plants from

seedlings and seed mix, stunted growth and dieback of container plants, minimal native plant cover and evidence of stress, lack of improvement in amount of weed coverage, malfunctioning irrigation systems, and lack of improvement on erosion and toxic soils. She stated that staff had invited BFI to this meeting; however, BFI declined attendance indicating that they are preparing a response to DRP's concerns and updating its 4th quarter report.

Mr. Villalobos stated that he conducted an assessment of the site, which focused mainly on the County side of SCL, where he was able to observe irrigation lines, and a mix of sparse and improved vegetation. He noted, however, that access to the revegetation areas was limited to the perimeter road and the main haul road due to inclement weather. The Task Force instructed staff to invite BFI along with their consultant Chambers, and Department of Regional Planning with their biology expert to provide an update on the revegetation efforts at SCL and for the Local Enforcement Agency to provide the status on the closed section of the old City Landfill at the next meeting.

## **X. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Sevak Khatchadorian provided updates on the following Legislative Bills ([see attachment](#)):

### **1. AB 118—introduced by Logue**

This bill would suspend the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) until the state unemployment rate is 5.5% or lower for four consecutive calendar quarters. Mr. Khatchadorian stated that the bill was heard at the Assembly Natural Resource Committee and failed to pass.

### **2. AB 1004—introduced by Portantino**

This bill corresponds with AB 274 which chaptered the solid waste postclosure and corrective action trust fund. AB 1004 would extend deadlines imposed by the Trust Fund, and would require the Department to begin its annual reporting after January 1, 2016. Mr. Khatchadorian stated that staff will review the bill in detail and provide the Task Force with an update at the following meeting.

### **3. AB 68 and AB 87—introduced by Brownley and Davis, respectively**

Mr. Khatchadorian stated that these bills were heard and held at the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Both bills will expire if not passed by the Appropriations Committee by January 22.

Mr. Khatchadorian noted the following key dates for the 2010 legislative calendar:

- January 31 is the last day for each house to pass bills introduced in 2009
- February 19 is the last day to introduce new bills
- June 4 is the last day to pass bills out of their house of origin
- August 31 is the last day to pass bills in the legislature
- September 30 is the last day for the Governor to sign or veto bills

**XI. REPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCE RECOVERY AND RECYCLING**

No action. Item postponed until the next meeting.

**XII. UPDATE ON COURT DECISION REGARDING LAWSUIT BROUGHT AGAINST REGIONAL WATER BOARD**

No action. Item postponed until the next meeting.

**XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2010, at 1 p.m.

**XIV. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Christine Frias announced that the Go Green Expo will take place from January 22 to 24 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. There was no further public comment. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.