

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

Minutes of May 26, 2011

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Margaret Clark, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative  
Sam Perdomo, Business/Commerce Representative  
Ron Saldana, Los Angeles County Disposal Association (Formerly GLASWMA)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Gail Farber, rep. 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 Chris Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County  
Gerry Miller, rep. by Charles Modica, City of Los Angeles  
Greig Smith, rep. by Nicole Bernson, City of Los Angeles  
Enrique Zaldivar, rep. by Karen Coca, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Carl Clark, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.  
Michael Conway, City of Long Beach  
David Kim, City of Los Angeles  
Mary Ann Lutz, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Eugene Sun, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division  
Dr. Barry Wallerstein, South Coast Air Quality Management District

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chuck Agu, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Becky Bendikson, Sunshine Canyon Landfill CAC  
James Bond, Alert One  
Chip Clements, Clements Environmentals  
Wayde Hunter, NVC/GHNNC  
Jennifer Lao, HDR  
Linda Lee, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works  
Tobie Mitchell, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works  
Paul Muellen, Alert One  
Nik Reppuhn, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works  
Coby Skye, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Jennifer Wallin, CalRecycle

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 1:08 p.m.

## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 21, 2011**

A motion was made to approve the April 21, 2011, minutes. The motion passed with one abstention from Mr. Christ Salomon.

## **III. REPORT FROM THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE (ATAS)**

Mr. Coby Skye reported the Subcommittee discussed several conferences that were held recently highlighting conversion technologies, including WasteCon, which had 6 hours of discussion and panels specifically on conversion technologies. Jacques Franco gave an update on the Biomass Collaborative Forum that focused on conversion technologies. There was an update on Phases 3 and 4 contracts from Alternative Resources, Inc. They are continuing to move forward with the project at the Calabasas Landfill and developing a web based model that will allow a quick financial evaluation of project viability, which will also help identify sites and projects in L.A. County. The Subcommittee also hopes to issue a Request for Expression of Interest for technology providers and financial institutions in the next few weeks. There was also a positive update on public outreach activities by Cerrell and Associates, who are continuing to develop outreach material to educate the public on the importance of conversion technologies. Finally there was an update from Miguel Zermeno for the City of Los Angeles' alternative technology process. The City's Board of Public Works directed staff to evaluate moving forward simultaneously with both the first and second rank companies, Green Conversion Systems, and Urbasser, respectively, with the second ranked company evaluated for the second site.

The Subcommittee recommended the Task Force send a letter to California Energy Commission in support of the AB 118 allocation plan that identifies a significant amount of funding towards the utilization of organics prior to landfill disposal for the development of biogas as alternative fuel. Ms. Betsey Landis made the motion to send the letter, and Mr. Mike Mohajer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **IV. REPORT FROM THE FACILITY AND PLAN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**

Ms. Betsey Landis made a motion to accept the subcommittee's recommendation to incorporate Active Recycling Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station into the City of Los Angeles's Nondisposal Facility Element with

minor changes and corrections. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mike Mohajer. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Landis also reported the subcommittee had a roundtable discussion about the ongoing revegetation efforts at the barren areas of the closed portion of the Sunshine Canyon City Landfill. Republic continued to search for the best ways to handle the high levels of sulfate and improve soil conditions for promoting vegetation growth. Mr. Carlos Ruiz was asked to find out whether sediments from the National Angeles Forest in County Flood Control District's facilities would be suitable for use as top soil. Mr. Ruiz is to report back next month.

Mr. Wayne Hunter asked about a vegetation survey report that was handed out to the subcommittee but not discussed. Ms. Linda Lee responded that the survey report was conducted by Wesley Colven, a County Regional Planning biologist, to assist Republic in revising the current revegetation plan. The survey contains recommendations based on vegetation work performed at other landfills in the region. Staff will invite the biologists back next month to discuss the survey results.

## **V. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Coby Skye asked for a position on the following legislative bill and referred the Task Force to the Legislative Table for a summary of to track bill activity ([see attachment](#)):

### **1. AB 812 (Williams)**

This bill would delete the requirement that the DOT or the Dept of General Services specifically request recycled concrete. This bill would require the DOT to increase the allowable amount of recycled asphalt pavement (RAP) to 50% for hot mix asphalt mixes unless the Director of Transportation determines that the use of the material is not practical, cost effective, or appropriate for a given application.

Staff recommended supporting this bill. Ms. Betsey Landis made a motion to support seconded by Mr. Mike Mohajer. The motion passed unanimously.

### **2. SB 841 (Wolk)**

This bill would make null and void indemnity obligations that require solid waste enterprises to defend and hold harmless a local agency in connection with the local agency's imposition of fees that are found by final judgment of a court to have been imposed in violation of Article XIII C or

Article XIII D of the California Constitution (Proposition 26) or that require a solid waste enterprise to refund certain fees that are found by such a final judgment to have been imposed in violation of those provisions. The bill would become operative on July 1, 2012, and would not apply retroactively.

After a brief discussion, the Task Force decided to watch this bill.

Mr. Mohajer mentioned AB 341 (Chesboro) is in appropriation suspense file and must be out by May 27.

Mr. Wayde Hunter made thanked staff for preparing the Legislative Table because it is a useful tool and requested if possible to have the table updated and posted in a more timely matter to better track the status of bills. Mr. Skye stated that there is an electronic notification that is sent out at least one week prior to the Task Force meeting that can be used to keep up with the status of bills.

## **VI. SUMMARY OF THE CALRECYCLE ORGANICS ROADMAP IV**

Ms Tobie Mitchell provided an update on the CalRecycle Organics Roadmap IV. This is the 4th in a series of annual Organics Roadmaps developed by CalRecycle with the purpose of addressing organic materials, the largest category of materials disposed in CA landfills and the focus of CalRecycle's Strategic Directive 6.1. In order to meet Strategic Directive 6.1, which calls for a reduction of 50% in the amount of organics disposed by 2020, an additional 10 mil tons of organics will have to be diverted per year – *which is more than double the current capacity in the state.*

The Task Force has commented on previous Roadmaps expressing the need to distinguish between *organics* and *compostable organics*. This version of the Roadmap attempts to make that distinction: carbon-based organics comprise 2/3 (21 mil tons) of what is disposed in landfills and of this amount compostable materials (food and vegetative materials account for more than 20%). Of the remaining organic material, much is non-compostable and/or difficult-to-recycle organic material such as wood waste, which may be suitable for mulch and in bioenergy applications.

CalRecycle identified several policy drivers (AB 32, low carbon fuel standard, AB 118) as opportunities to further redefine organic materials as resources, making them into usable products that help solve multiple environmental issues.

CalRecycle notes that traditional organics processing would need to expand by nearly 70% to handle just the compostable materials currently disposed, and it would need to more than double to handle this and the non-compostable portion.

CalRecycle discusses the need to expand organics management options through AD and thermochemical conversion technologies such as combustion, gasification, and pyrolysis. This discussion has not been included in previous Roadmaps; however, it has been a consistent comment of the Task Force.

This issue was discussed by the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee at their May 26 meeting. The Subcommittee voted to request the Task Force send a letter to CalRecycle indicating that the current Organics Roadmap IV puts a strong emphasis on composting as a materials management option, rather than the broader spectrum of more environmentally-preferred management alternatives such as conversion technologies. Mr. Mike Mohajer made the motion to send the letter seconded by Ms. Betsey Landis. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Mohajer commented that approximately 70% of the waste being landfilled in California is organic and 20% of that is compostable. That means that about 56% of waste deposited at landfills is noncompostable and why conversion technologies is important. Ms. Karen Coca also emphasized that all management options are needed for future management of waste, and Ms. Betsy agreed that all methods should be available.

## **VII. SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL GAS BENEFICIAL USE PROJECT**

Prior to the presentation of this item, Ms. Nicole Bernson indicated that the Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council voted to oppose this project unless it would result in a reduction of local pollution without the use of offset pollution credits, and asked that this issue be addressed during the presentation.

Mr. Lou Wilkinson, Vice President of Business Development for DTE Biomass Energy, Inc., gave a presentation on their proposed Sunshine Canyon Landfill Gas Beneficial Use Project ([attached](#)) to convert landfill gas into energy. The presentation covered the environment impact analyses of emissions, noise, and visual of the project as detailed in the project's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report. During the emissions portions of the presentation, questions were raised about the levels of emissions permitted versus the level of actual emissions once the project is up and running. There were also questions regarding the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (AQMD) findings.

Members of the audience, Mr. Wayde Hunter and Ms. Becky Bendikson expressed concerns about the project's potential threat to the community and asked for assurance that there would be no harm to the local residents. Mr. Wilkinson assured that the equipment will perform much better than permitted levels.

After an involved discussion, Ms. Bernson requested Mr. Wilkinson to come back and make his presentation when an AQMD representative can be present to clarify some of the questions the Task Force has. Mr. Mike Mohajer made a motion for staff to review the Draft Supplemental EIR in concert with all the other CEQA documents prepared since 1983 and prepare comments for the Task Force's consideration to send to AQMD. Ms. Linda Lee suggested amending the motion to have staff review the previous CEQA documents with a focus on previously projected emission levels from a flare system and report back to the Task Force. Ms. Cindy Chen seconded the amended motion, and it passed unanimously.

#### **VIII. ENERGY UPGRADE PRESENTATION**

Ms. Marisa Creter gave a presentation on the statewide Energy Upgrade California program for homeowners launched in January 2011. The program entails providing rebates for qualifying home repairs done to make homes more energy efficient. Benefits of program participation included rebates ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,500, utility savings, and more. Allies and partners of the program include Los Angeles County, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, other municipally owned utilities, Cities and COGs, and community colleges. More information about the program can be found at [www.energyupgradeca.org](http://www.energyupgradeca.org)

#### **IX. PRESENTATION OF THE 2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

Mr. Nik Reppuhn presented the 2009 Annual Report ([see attached](#)), an annual update to the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan, required under the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 or AB 939.

The report indicated that due to the current economic downturn, there is a significant decrease in the amount of waste disposed from years in the past. In 2009, residents and businesses in the County disposed of approximately 9 million tons of solid waste at Class III landfills and transformation facilities located in and out of the County. The amount of inert waste disposed at permitted inert waste landfills totaled approximately 87,000 tons.

Puente Hills Landfill accepts nearly half of the green waste in the county for use as ADC in 2009. Jurisdictions that currently rely on Puente Hills for diversion credit must find other solutions upon closure. San Gabriel Valley Cities generate about 274,000 tons of green waste annually, about 76% of which is managed by Puente Hills. The County is currently developing a Green Waste Management Plan by December 2012 in preparation for the closure of Puente Hills.

On April 20, 2010, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously gave the green light to three demonstration projects and initiated efforts to identify sites within the County that may be suitable for future commercial projects. The County is currently working with potential project partners on this effort.

The anticipated long term countywide disposal need is estimated to be over 165 million tons. In comparison, under current conditions there is only 142 million tons of permitted landfill capacity remaining as of the end of 2009.

The Annual Report looks at several scenarios for future waste disposal and analyzes whether there will be available capacity to meet disposal demand or when a potential shortfall will occur. The “status quo” scenario, in which there were no landfill expansions, no increased diversion rate, and no additional capacity due to alternative technology. Under this scenario, a shortfall would begin in 2014, shortly after the closure of Puente Hills. Of the seven scenarios, four scenarios provided adequate disposal capacity to meet the projected disposal need. One of those was Scenario 5, which assumes that the County’s diversion rate increases by 1% each year up to a maximum of 65%, and the capacity due to alternative technology increases to a maximum of 10,000 tons per day by 2024.

Senate Bill 1016 became effective on January 1, 2007, which changed the way compliance is measured. Instead of using a diversion rate target, SB 1016 uses a per capita disposal target, which is the 50% diversion rate equivalent disposal based on the average of per capita generation rates of the years 2003 to 2006. The new system shifts the emphasis away from numbers and towards program implementation and monitoring. Based on current projections of population, employment, and real taxable sales, it is estimated that in order to meet the per capita disposal requirements, jurisdictions in Los Angeles County would need to continue its diversion programs as well as other disposal strategies so that the diversion rate remains at or near 55% through 2024.

## **X. REPORT FROM CALRECYCLE**

Ms. Jennifer Wallin reported the following:

- Due to strict travel restrictions, Mr. Howard Levenson wasn’t able to attend as anticipated.
- AB 939 report will be available next month.
- Compost Best Management Practices and Benefits report is online. The report is from the workshop series to promote Caltrans compost and use specifications to local jurisdictions and other state agencies.

- Waste Reduction Award Program (WRAP) applications are due mid June for businesses that have done a good job with waste reduction.
- County/City Payment Program (Beverage Recycling grant) applications for cities are due at the end of May. Ms. Wallin mentioned that there are several cities do not apply. Ms. Karen Coca asked to get the names of the cities so they could be reminded to apply.

Mr. Mohajer added that he spoke with Mr. Howard Levenson, and the mandatory commercial recycling hearing will be considered with the Air Resources Board in September. Depending on the Executive Order regarding travel, Mr. Levenson will either present findings in person or will via teleconference at the August meeting. Ms. Coca added that she also received news regarding the Executive Orders that promotional items can no longer be purchased with state grant money.

## **XI. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 16, 2011, in Conference Room B.

## **XII. OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Wayde Hunter informed the Task Force that Sunshine Canyon Landfill has been cited by the Sunshine Canyon Landfill-Local Enforcement Agency for violation of the County of Los Angeles' Conditional Use Permit and the City of Los Angeles' Zoning Ordinance for receiving trash outside of the County of Los Angeles.

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

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