

Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

**Minutes of March 26, 2015, Meeting**

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Scott Beckner, Department of Resource Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)\*  
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition  
John Kaddis, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
Mark McDannel, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County  
Mike Mohajer, Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force  
Coby Skye, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works  
Rob Sherman, Republic Services  
Eugene Sun, Mayor, City of San Marino  
Jeff Yann, Hacienda Heights Improvement Association

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Brian Helmowski, CalRecycle  
Jim Stewart for Kay Martin, BioEnergy Producers Association  
Miguel Zermeno for Alex Helou, City of Los Angeles

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Larry Levin, Juniper Hills  
Ron Kent, Southern California Gas Company  
Eugene Tseng, UCLA Solid Waste Program

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tracey Anthony, Alternative Resources, Inc.  
Gabriel Arenas, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Jason W. Jones, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Jacque McMillen, Clements Environmental, Inc.

\*Designates participants over the telephone

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 15, 2015, MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the Minutes of the January 15, 2015, Meeting was made by Mr. Mike Mohajer and seconded by Mr. Wayne Hunter, and it passed unanimously.

A second motion to approve the Minutes of the February 19, 2015, Meeting was made by Mr. Mohajer and seconded by Mr. Eugene Tseng, and it passed unanimously.

**III. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY EVENTS/MEETINGS/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Coby Skye updated the Subcommittee of Public Works' ongoing efforts to advance the department's Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future (Roadmap) initiative. He commented that significant discussions have taken place centering on in vessel composting of organic material in the County and the role anaerobic digestion (AD) can share to this end of the Roadmap.

Mr. Skye described the Roadmap as being divided into the following three distinct focus areas: regional and countywide operations; County unincorporated areas; and county operations. Among the Roadmap's many long term goals for regional and countywide operations is the permitting of new AD facilities throughout the County. The plan also calls for the development of additional collection infrastructure to separate organics within the County unincorporated areas, and for selected County waste operations to be augmented with pilot organics facilities.

Mr. Skye also informed the Subcommittee that Public Works is a participant in the County Engineers Association of California Conference in Newport Beach, where Public Works Assistant Deputy Director Pat Proano provided a presentation on the County's ongoing zero waste efforts and conversion technologies.

#### **IV. RECAP ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY/CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT**

Ms. Tracey Anthony of Alternative Resource, Inc. (ARI) updated the Subcommittee on the status of the Conversion Technology Draft White Paper (White Paper). ARI and UltraSystems, a ARI subcontractor, reviewed and commented on the document's discussion of the life cycle of greenhouse gas emissions, including insight to DPW staff on comments provided in peer reviews. Upon receiving the comments from Public Works, TetraTech is expected to proceed with plans to finalize the document. ARI has completed its initial review of the White Paper and is in the process of preparing comments. UltraSystems, a subcontractor of ARI will also review and comment on the document.

Ms. Anthony updated the Subcommittee on ARI's review of the Concept Paper detailing a draft proposal for a conversion technology conference to be held at UCLA sometime in Spring or Summer 2015. Among the proposed topics for the conference would include the White Paper, legislation, jurisdictional policies, and international efforts toward CTs.

Ms. Anthony also informed the Subcommittee of a pending feasibility study for a proposed (AD) facility at the Pitchess Detention Center North (Pitchess), a County Sherriff operated detention facility in Castaic. She outlined plans for an economic feasibility study for three proposed operations, including one small-scale unit for processing the facility's organic waste, a larger unit accessible to County facilities, and a commercial-scale accessible to the facility, County facilities, and other regional entities.

Mr. Skye commented that Pitchess is a large scale facility that generates a significant volume of organic food material, as well as green organic material from its landscaping operations, that could provide onsite composting. The facility is also looking to generate reliable backup power from a more sustainable and renewable source, as the turbine it presently generates power from could potentially conflict with AB 32 requirements. Mr. Skye commented that there could also be potential for a large scale commercial CT site at Pitchess that could provide other County jurisdictions with a facility permitted to process material in compliance with AB 1826 requirements. He informed the Subcommittee that ARI would be assisting with the economic and feasibility studies of this project, and, upon review and approval, Public Works plans to move forward with a Request for Proposal.

Ms. Anthony also reported that discussions have ensued between Public Works and Clements Environmental, a subcontractor to ARI, regarding specific sites that have previously expressed interest in possibly hosting a CT project.

Extended discussion ensued centering around the State's integrated waste management hierarchy as it would pertain to AB 939 accepted methods of diversion. Mr. Skye commented on present legislative resistance to CT) as a beneficial use of material, as the State has consistently passed legislation limiting acceptable methods of diversion to recycling, composting and source reduction. He commented that these limitations can pose significant challenges to efforts to achieve diversion goals outlined in related legislation, including AB 341 and AB 1826, as the aggregate composition of waste material is heterogeneous, leaving a significant volume of it that cannot be processed through one of those three mediums.

Mr. Mohajer made several comments concurring with Mr. Skye regarding the limitations placed on diversion credit by the State, as jurisdictions bustle to meet diversion goals outlined in AB 939, new waste processing requirements legislated by 341, and organics management requirements legislated by AB 1826. He emphasized these requirements of the State were each very demanding, particularly as the State sifts through every other means of GHG reduction available, as mandated by AB 32.

The Subcommittee had previously been given an opportunity to review the revised and updated drafts of the Concept Paper and requested the document be further revised to include discussion of AB 1826 and its potential implications for CT advancement. The Subcommittee also requested the document be revised to reflect a mentioned reference to AB 341 to reflect "Statewide diversion goal" from "Statewide recycling goals." Mr. Mohajer requested the document be further revised to include discussion on CalRecycle's recent publications, "State of Recycling in California" and "State of Disposal in California," regarding the State's current position that CTs would not be an essential component to the long-term achievement of the State's recycling and diversion goals. Mr. Hunter requested minor revisions be made in the usage of specific terms within the document for purposes of concept clarity.

Further discussion ensued on the Concept Paper, and Mr. Sky commented that discussion of the document would be added as an agenda item to the next Subcommittee on April 16, 2015.

## **V. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Discussion ensued as Mr. Jim Stewart and Mr. Mohajer each commented on the various roadblocks to CT advancement in the State, providing examples of previous efforts as far back as the 1980s to advance the technology that were thwarted in the legislature. Mr. Skye commented that one obstacle to CT advancement could be found in the State's classification of certain technologies such as AD, which the State considers a form of composting. He also cited biomass conversion as not being classified as a form of diversion by the State for the purposes of AB 341. He speculated that one possible explanation for the resistance could be the absence of a clear and present need for the technology, as the remaining long-term landfill capacity for disposal in the County, and the State, is still projected to be tenable until 2080.

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.