

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of March 17, 2011 Meeting

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bahman Hajjaliakbar, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Gerardo Villalobos, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Charles Modica, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Martin Aiyetiwa, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Becky Bendikson, City/County Sunshine Canyon Landfill Community Advisory
Committee
Russell Bukoff, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council
Linda Lee, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Nick Morrell, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Emiko Thompson, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 17, 2011

A motion to approve the Minutes of the February 17, 2011, meeting was unanimously approved.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Mr. Gerardo Villalobos provided an update on the recent landslide event in January 2011 and odor complaints at the Landfill. As a result of the landslide, Public Works issued a letter on January 31, 2011, requesting Republic Services (Republic), the Landfill operator, to submit grading plans for the proposed cell development. According to Republic, the grading plans would necessitate an amendment to the Joint Technical Document (JTD). The Sunshine Canyon City/County Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) is awaiting the amendment documents.

Mr. Villalobos reported that the LEA, Public Works, and South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) agreed to coordinate the distribution of information in order not to duplicate efforts.

Regarding odor nuisance at the Landfill, odor complaints have risen during the last 18 months. In 2008, there were 55 complaints; 300 in 2009; and 600 in 2010. In February 2011, 173 complaints were made to AQMD. As a result, AQMD issued enforcement orders to the Landfill operator.

In response to the odor issues, the LEA is developing new inspection procedures to increase the number of surveys at complaint locations; characterize odor, strength of odor, wind/climactic conditions, etc.; issue Notices of Violation, if necessary; and use a geographical information system to map odor complaints. The LEA has also purchased a thermal imagery unit to detect landfill gas releases, hired a consultant to assist in identifying potential sources of odor as well as developing possible mitigation measures, and began working with local experts, e.g., County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (CSD) and the University of California academic staff to develop solutions to the problem.

In addition, a Subcommittee of the Sunshine Canyon Landfill Technical Advisory Committee was formed to specifically address the odor issues.

Mr. Villalobos also discussed a March 15, 2011, letter from the LEA to Mr. Kurt Bratton in regard to the major maintenance failure of the landfill gas collection system where as many as 54 wells had been non-functioning for several weeks. The LEA will be meeting with the Landfill operator today to discuss this issue and request among other things, to report such occurrences in the future, provide details on the extent of the problem, and provide a timetable by which the repair and maintenance of the landfill gas collection system will be completed.

Mr. Mike Mohajer inquired if the LEA was aware of the number of wells that were non-functioning. Mr. Villalobos indicated that the LEA had knowledge about some of the wells, and that the wells were routinely being repaired. However, the LEA did not know the extent of the problem until the Landfill operator informed the Sunshine Canyon Community Advisory Committee at their March 3, 2011, meeting. Mr. Mohajer commented that he was surprised to find out the LEA was not fully informed even when they have full-time inspectors at the Landfill. Mr. Mohajer further inquired as to why the word "requests" was used in the LEA letter rather than "require." In response, Mr. Villalobos stated that since the letter was written by the LEA, he would have to ask Mr. Wayne Tsuda, the Program Manager of the LEA.

During public comment period, Mr. Wayde Hunter expressed the opinion that the JTD needs to be revised to account for recent changes due to the landslide and other occurrences at the Landfill.

The Subcommittee inquired what will happen if the Landfill operator fails to mitigate the gas well failure. Mr. Villalobos stated that if the problem continues, the Landfill operator may be given more time to respond or be issued a violation. The Subcommittee then commented on the second to the last paragraph of the letter which reads: "Future instances of failure to report special occurrences may result in further enforcement action," and asked Mr. Villalobos to inform the Landfill operator of the enforcement actions that may be taken when he meets with them.

Mr. Christopher Salomon further asked if the LEA has issued any Notices of Violation to the Landfill operator and asked Mr. Villalobos to provide a summary of actions at the next Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Martin Aiyetiwa then provided additional information to what has already been presented. Mr. Aiyetiwa reported that the Landfill operator met with CSD and Public Works on March 16, 2011 at Puente Hills Landfill to gain knowledge of CSD's best management practices for controlling odor and landfill gas. During the meeting, the Landfill operator committed to hiring additional personnel and making some immediate operational changes. The Landfill operator is expected to submit a revised odor mitigation plan by the end of March detailing the changes. Per Subcommittee's request, the plans will be forwarded to the Subcommittee along with copies of the revised gas collection system outlined in the JTD.

Mr. Mohajer commented that the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning had indicated in April of 2010 that a request for proposal to hire a joint City/County independent mitigation monitor would go out within the month. Since that time, the independent monitor has yet to be retained. Mr. Mohajer made a motion to recommend the Task Force to send a letter to Regional Planning asking for a status report on the matter. The motion was approved, with one vote in opposition by Mr. Salomon.

Mr. Mohajer inquired if the green waste processing area, originally located in the landslide area, will be moved. Mr. Villalobos indicated that the green waste processing area will be moved to the back of the Landfill on the County side and will be addressed in the amended JTD. Mr. Mohajer would also like staff to report on what the impact to diversion credit has been since the landslide incident.

IV. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

V. NEXT MEETING DATE

To be announced at a later date.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.