

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

September 21, 2023

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dorcas (Dee) Hanson-Lugo, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Genevieve Osmena, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sam Shammass, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

OTHERS PRESENT:

Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Kate Downey, Republic Services
Josephine Chen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Darren Kwan, Los Angeles County Public Works
Karlo Manalo, Los Angeles County Public Works
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Gladys Rietze, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Saucillo, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mike Mohajer called the meeting to order at 11:16 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 17, 2023, MEETING

Mr. Sam Shammass made a motion to approve August 17, 2023, minutes and Ms. Genevieve Osmena seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

In reference to page 5, paragraph 3, of the August 17, 2023 minutes, Mr. Mike Mohajer informed that he attended the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Stipulated Order of Abatement (SOA) Hearing on September 6, 2023, and that most of the residents disagreed that the air purifiers provided by Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) work for the current odors. Mr. Mohajer further commented that the purifiers are only to collect particular matter, and not odor.

Mr. Mohajer also noted the discussion reflected on page 7 of the August 17, 2023, minutes regarding the letter the Task Force approved to send to Regional Planning. He stated the same discussion may be addressed at this Subcommittee meeting regarding the status of the letter and the authority of the Director.

The FPRS members were notified by staff that Mr. Cassulo was unable to attend the FPRS meeting due to the amount of work at CCL as pertained to the ongoing odors.

III. UPDATE ON CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL

Mr. Karlo Manalo, staff to the Task Force, provided the following update:

Odor Complaints and Notices of Violation (NOV)

The AQMD agreed to provide odor complaint and NOV data on a quarterly basis. CCL was issued 29 NOVs in August 2023, 28 from AQMD, all of which are air quality—related, and 1 NOV from the Regional Planning for not meeting Conditions 12 and 63 of the Landfill's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) relating to nuisance caused by the Landfill. As of August 31, 2023, of this calendar year, CCL was issued 59 NOVs.

Task Force Request for CCL to Submit a Report regarding NOV's Received

- CCL submitted their [Twenty-Ninth Monthly Update](#) dated August 31, 2023. The update addressed the April 19, 2021, letter's requirements, and updates on implementation of Conditions 68 (status of air quality monitoring for surrounding communities), 77 (relocation of the site entrance from Henry Mayo Drive to Wolcott Drive), and 79 (schedule of the Street Improvement project), as well as the SOA from AQMD.
- CCL submitted a report to Public Works pursuant to Condition 69 of the Landfill's CUP after being issued their fourth NOV from AQMD related to air quality. Public Works submitted a letter request for additional information, to which the Landfill Operator responded with additional information requested in a letter dated [August 18, 2023](#). The Landfill Operator submitted a [supplemental report](#) pursuant to Condition 69 for the NOV's received from July 24 to August 23, 2023. In the most recent Supplemental Condition 69 Report, the Landfill Operator reiterated that the alleged odors are most likely due to a large and unexpected increase in the production of landfill gas at the Landfill.
- The Landfill is currently operating its landfill gas processing systems under a variance with AQMD, which requires the Landfill Operator under the oversight of AQMD, to expedite the treatment of landfill gas in its landfill gas treatment system, maximize use of newer and more efficient flares, regularly sample and analyze the landfill gas and surface emissions and report the results to AQMD on a monthly basis, and continue to investigate potential systems for treating the landfill gas.
- The Landfill Operator provided several corrective actions taken to mitigate the reaction and odors emanating from the Landfill, which include:
 - Continuing all actions listed in the July 27, 2023 Condition 69 Report, which was reported at last month's Subcommittee meeting;
 - Increasing the flaring capacity by installing new flares to handle the increasing quantity of landfill gas at CCL;
 - Installing a portable thermal oxidizer for additional control capacity in the short-term;
 - Expanding the landfill gas well system by installing deep trench collectors, additional leachate extraction pumps and vertical dual extraction wells to collect both landfill gas and leachate;
 - Increasing liquids extraction and removal capabilities;
 - Installing geosynthetic cover over the reaction area;
 - Distributing air filtration devised to local residents;
 - Enhancing and expanding the community air monitoring in accordance with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health's recommendation; and

- Developing a root cause analysis and investigating potential landfill gas treatment options.

Odor Mitigation Efforts

Public Works, along with other regulatory agencies, are collaboratively reviewing the information provided by the Landfill Operator from their Condition 69 Report submittals and are working with the Landfill Operator to obtain additional information to further understand the odor issue and possibly devise solutions and/or additional mitigation measures to address the odors. Public Works retained an independent environmental health specialist to review CCL's submittal and to advise the CCL Technical Advisory Committee on the matter. Public Works also approved the foundation plans for the new flare system and is currently waiting for approvals from AQMD and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for building permit issuance for the flare. Public Works staff will continue to monitor the odors at the Landfill.

Mr. Mohajer requested that Mr. Manalo's updates be provided in writing and be included into the minutes.

Ms. Osmena asked if staff knew what the status was for EPA's approval of the flare. Mr. Manalo responded there was no update.

Mr. Mohajer had several questions and comments regarding CCL's [Twenty-Ninth Monthly Update](#):

- What the normal concentration of dimethyl sulfide (DMS) was since CCL noted that DMS levels were higher than normal.
- CCL's update stated a permit application was sent to AQMD in 2020 for a new flare and CCL is awaiting approval, suggesting to the reader that the delay is due to AQMD. There was no mention that CCL did not specify the urgency on their application submittal to AQMD.
- Note any comment received during the 30-day public comment period that may be of concern to the Board or other County agencies.
- SOA that the AQMD issued to CCL was not noted.

Mr. Mohajer mentioned that the Board passed a motion instructing the Office of Emergency Management, in collaboration with various agencies, to report back to the Board with a report on the cause of odors at CCL. Mr. Mohajer also indicated that the AQMD's SOA requires CCL to form a committee known as the DMS Committee to investigate, among other things, DMS formation in CCL and emission. SOA specifically requires the members' expertise on the subject matter

(including one with medical expertise to evaluate the health impact on the community) be verified and approved by AQMD. Mr. Mohajer further mentioned that the signature page with attorneys' signatures on the SOA was missing, as well as the site map. Lastly, Mr. Mohajer requested staff to investigate the duties of the DMS Committee vs. those of the CCL's Technical Advisory Committee and report back to the Task Force.

Update on August 8, 2023 and September 12, 2023 Board Motions

On [August 8, 2023](#), the Board introduced a read-in motion directing the County Office of Emergency Management in collaboration with Public Health, Public Works, and Regional Planning and in consultation with AQMD and California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, to report back to the Board in writing within 30 days of (1) identifying the underlying cause of odors emanating from the Landfill; (2) a summary of the County's review of the odor mitigation provided by the Landfill Operator in conjunction with state regulatory agencies; (3) a summary of resource deployed by the Landfill Operator and the County to address ongoing impacts to residents surrounding the Landfill; and (4) a report on independent actions to ensure appropriate oversight of the Landfill Mitigation Plan to eliminate the generation of odors from the Landfill. The County Office of Emergency Management has provided a report to the Board dated [September 12, 2023](#), detailing the County's response to each requested information from the read-in motion.

On September 12, 2023, the Board made three interrelated motions to: (1) authorize the Director of Regional Planning to accept funding from the CCL for administration of the CCL Grant Relief Programs; (2) authorize the Executive Office of the Board to enter into an agreement with Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) and transfer up to \$2.5 million from the Community Benefit Fund to LACDA; and (3) authorize the Executive Director of LACDA to execute an agreement with National Development Council, a non-profit organization, for assistance with administration of the Grant Programs. These motions were carried unanimously.

Mr. Manalo advised that the official September 12, 2023, Board Motion was not yet available, but that it would be disseminated to the FPRS once it becomes available.

Update on AQMD's Order for Abatement

Mr. Ramon Herman, staff to the Task Force, provided the following update on SOA:

On September 6, 2023, a hearing on SOA was held by AQMD regarding the noxious odors emanating from the CCL. Much of the discussion during the hearing was regarding the chemical reaction occurring within the Landfill mass and the impacts on the Landfill and the surrounding communities.

CCL's position was that the northwestern portion of the Landfill was exhibiting characteristics of an Elevated Temperature Landfill or Subsurface Reaction. Following were a few of the characteristics mentioned:

- Increase in gas wellhead temperature.
- Copious amounts of liquids/leachate.
- Increase in Landfill gas produced.
- Pronounced settlement over a broad area.
- Change in gas composition with increased presence of hydrogen and DMS.

The SOA was unanimously approved and adopted by the AQMD Hearing Board. The SOA included short-term actions to lessen odors and odor impacts and longer-term actions to determine how to slow down and stop the reaction. The following are some actions that the Landfill Operator must comply with:

- Landfill Operator must submit a monthly written report on Landfill operations, progress of the status of the Landfill Gas Flares, Landfill Gas Treatment System, and efforts to resolve total sulfur concentration in the Landfill Gas.
- Landfill Operator must organize the DMS Committee consisting of subject matter experts to aid in the investigation, impact assessment, and remediation of the ongoing Landfill reaction and resultant odors.
- Expand Gas well system at CCL.
- Increase Landfill Gas control capacity at CCL.
- Install geosynthetics cover over the western portions of the Landfill to limit the migration of Landfill Gas, submit completed design for cover, and provide monthly updates.
- Expand and enhance its current ambient air monitoring program to include DMS and other constituents of Landfill Gas.
- Maintain and update on a weekly basis a dedicated page for presenting information discussing odor mitigation at CCL.
- The Hearing Board also directed the Landfill Operator to return for a status hearing on January 16, 2024, to report on the implementation status of the SOA.

Mr. Mohajer requested that next month's update include a tabulated table with SOA items, deadline, and status.

Remediation Plan for Perimeter Monitoring Well GP-13

Mr. Manalo reported that on August 29, 2023, CCL detected methane concentrations more than the regulatory standard of five percent methane, by volume, in air at a perimeter gas monitoring well (GP-13) located in the northwestern area of the Landfill. Subsequent readings were taken by the Landfill on August 30 and 31, 2023, and followed by an inspection by the Los Angeles County Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) on September 1, 2023, all of which confirmed the initial exceedance.

As required by Title 27 California Code of Regulations, a [60-day remediation plan](#) was submitted to the County LEA on September 8, 2023, following this methane concentration exceedance event. The plan indicated that the Landfill Operator adjusted the overall system to improve vacuum distribution across the Landfill to attempt remediation of the potential landfill gas migration around the well. The plan also indicated that the Landfill Operator installed 21 vertical landfill gas extraction wells and proposed 16 additional wells. Furthermore, over 3,800 feet of above and below-grade header and lateral piping are being installed at the site.

Mr. Mohajer asked how the well was located compared to the Post Office on one side and industrial buildings on the other side. Mr. Manalo responded that the monitoring well was away from those structures and was located on the northwest portion of the Landfill.

Mr. Mohajer noted that the northwest portion of the Landfill was permitted again to operate as a Class I and II landfill with most of the material being called special waste. Mr. Mohajer requested a site map showing the location of the monitoring well.

IV. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints and Notice of Violations

Ms. Gladys Rietze, staff to the Task Force, provided an [update on the odor complaints from the AQMD](#) for the month of August 2023 at Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL):

- During the month of August 2023, 264 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 77 were listed as Trash, 91 were listed as No Field Response, 27 were classified as Landfill Gas, and 69 were classified as None, which meant the inspector visited the site and did not detect any odor.

- Compared to July 2023, the number of complaints received in August 2023, increased from 34 to 264 complaints.
- Compared to August 2022, the number of complaints for August 2023 increased from 40 to 264 complaints.
- AQMD issued 9 NOVs related to odor for the month of August 2023, and a total of 40 NOVs for the year of 2023.
- Compared to the previous year, the number of NOVs increased from 12 to 40.
- As of August 2023, the total number of odor complaints received during 2023 is 1,100.

Mr. Wayde Hunter of the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens indicated the odors in August appeared to be the worse this year and asked Ms. Kate Downey of Republic Services (Republic) about the sudden increase.

Ms. Downey responded that the increase of odors was due to Hurricane Hillary storm and that 90 percent of complaints were received after the storm. She also mentioned the entire Southern California network of trash was still backed up because of the lack of transfer station capacity where wet waste is sitting longer than usual. Additionally, the 80-to-100-degree temperature weather shortly after the storm accelerated odors. Per Ms. Downey, the odor situation in September had improved as transfer stations are being cleared out.

Task Force Letter to Regional Planning regarding NOV Hearing

Ms. Rietze noted that at the July 20, 2023, FPRS meeting, Mr. Edgar De La Torre with Regional Planning confirmed that an NOV was issued to Republic for exceedance of tonnage at SCL of which the Landfill Operator filed an appeal. An Appeal Hearing took place on June 27, 2023, and due to a request for extension from the Landfill Operator, the Hearing was rescheduled to November 7, 2023.

At the July 20, 2023, Task Force meeting, the Task Force voted for Public Works staff to write a letter to Regional Planning requesting they expedite the NOV hearing process. Ms. Rietze stated that it was Task Force staff's understanding that the letter may no longer be needed since there is an ongoing Public Records request and the County agencies need time to respond, and the Hearing Officer is intended to be impartial and independent of Regional Planning; therefore, Regional Planning has very limited access to the Hearing Officer to maintain the impartiality requirement.

Mr. Mohajer's asked to clarify whether Public Works staff made the decision not to send the letter. His concern was that Public Works staff may not have the authority

to bypass the Task Force, as the governing board, without first requesting the Task Force's authorization to not process the letter.

Mr. Hunter mentioned the gross tonnage Column from the SCL's monthly report to the LEA had been removed, making it very difficult to follow the information. Mr. Dave Nguyen indicated that staff was currently looking into the issue and will discuss with the LEA. Ms. Dee Hanson-Lugo confirmed to further discuss the concern and to review the report.

Update Related to Drainage Issues

Mr. Michael Harmon, staff to the Task Force, provided the following update:

Due to rainstorms the beginning of this year, significant damage occurred at SCL that affected infrastructure. Public Works sent a letter to Republic dated [April 19, 2023](#), requesting additional corrective measures and milestones that SCL would be implementing to address the impacts. Republic provided an initial response on April 30, 2023, and the most recent response on September 1, 2023, indicating SCL was making progress on damage repairs, such as:

- Significant repairs on damaged pipe riser in the terminal basin, including additional retrofitting measures to prevent reoccurrence of waste exiting onto the public drainage course. Repairs are anticipated to be completed by October 1, 2023.
- Pending permit approval from the City of Los Angeles to conduct cleanup on the public right of way at the front entrance of the Landfill. Anticipated completion by October 1, 2023.

From August 20 – 21, 2023 SCL experienced heavy rainstorms that caused a discharge of mudflow onto San Fernando Road. Public Works became aware and notified the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) on September 7, 2023, and the SCL-LEA on September 12, 2023.

On [May 17, 2023](#), the Water Board issued a NOV to SCL regarding the Waste Discharge Requirements and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Permit. SCL provided the Water Board with a letter dated [August 17, 2023](#), in response to the 90-day requirement to demonstrate compliance with the 11 citations served by the Water Board from their April 3, 2023, inspection. Per the Report, all work is anticipated to be completed on or before October 1, 2023. However, Public Works staff found all the work in the NOV may not be fully completed within the 90-day requirement period.

Mr. Mohajer commented the August 17, 2023, Report from SCL had several sections that included work being completed on or before October 1, 2023 and shared his concern that the proposed date would not give enough time to perform repairs, if necessary.

Mr. Mohajer requested staff follow up with the Water Board on the status of completion for the repair work. He recalled that different divisions of County Public Works reviewed drainage plans.

Ms. Osmena confirmed that Stormwater Engineering Division is responsible for the review of the drainage plans. Mr. Mohajer asked Ms. Hanson-Lugo regarding LEA's involvement with the drainage at the Landfill since the LEA was mentioned on the August 17, 2023, letter. Ms. Hanson-Lugo responded the LEA does not review the engineering aspect of drainage plans but does make sure that there is proper drainage at the site.

Mr. Hunter shared an issue was raised at the SCL-Community Advisory Committee meeting regarding the ability for SCL to cease operation or diverting trash during rainstorm events.

Update on Toe Berm Project

Due to time constraint. This item was postponed to next month's Subcommittee meeting.

V. DISCUSSION ON FINDING OF CONFORMANCE REPORTS

Due to time constraint. This item was postponed to next month's Subcommittee meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 19, 2023, at 11 a.m.