

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

Minutes of October 15, 2015, Meeting

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Conference Room C, Headquarters Building
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, California 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeanne Biehler, represented by Gerardo Villalobos, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative

Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative

Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Martins Aiyetiwa, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Gabriel Esparza, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Anna Gov, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition/Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Community Advisory Committee

Jonathan Lee, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Jalaine Madrid, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Karlo Manalo, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Dave Nguyen, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Rob Sherman, Republic Services, Inc.

Carlos Slythe, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works

Joe Vitti, Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Community Advisory Committee

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:13 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MAY 21, 2015, MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes of the August 20, 2015, meeting was made by Mr. Mike Mohajer, seconded by Mr. Carlos Ruiz, and it was unanimously approved.

III. SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL REVISED FINDING OF CONFORMANCE

Mr. Karlo Manalo provided the Subcommittee with an update on the status of Sunshine Canyon Landfill's (Landfill) Revised Finding of Conformance (FOC).

At the August 20, 2015, Subcommittee meeting, staff provided an update regarding the proposed alternative daily cover (ADC) pilot project at the Landfill. Since then, Republic Services Inc. (Republic) has released three [letters](#) on September 3, 2015, notifying Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Technical Advisory Committee (SCL-TAC), Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Local Enforcement Agency (SCL-LEA), and Public Works of their intent to commence the implementation of the ADC pilot project on the City-side of the Landfill on September 14, 2015, without prior approval from Public Works. Following the submittal of these letters, Republic also sent a letter to the SCL-LEA, titled [“Postponement of ADC Pilot Project,”](#) dated September 9, 2015, notifying the agency of their intended postponement of the implementation of the ADC pilot project until after the SCL-TAC meeting on September 29, 2015.

Consequently, the Task Force sent a letter to Republic titled [“Revised Finding of Conformance – ADC Pilot Project”](#) on September 28, 2015, requiring Republic to obtain a revised Finding of Conformance (FOC) from the Task Force prior to implementation of the ADC pilot project. On October 12, 2015, Republic sent a letter to the Task Force, titled [“Task Force Letter Regarding Implementation of Alternative Daily Cover Pilot Project,”](#) indicating that Republic does not believe an FOC is required for this pilot project as the “FOC is not a permit and does not regulate on-going operations at the Landfill”. Thus, Republic is moving forward with the project. Staff has responded to Republic in a letter, titled [“Revised](#)

[Finding of Conformance.](#)” dated October 15, 2015, stating Republic’s assertions are incorrect and directed Republic on how to apply for an FOC.

Republic sent a letter on October 8, 2015, to Public Works informing that Republic plans to move forward with the ADC pilot project on October 12, 2015, as directed by the SCL-TAC in its October 5, 2015, letter to Republic, titled [“Implementation of the Alternative Daily Cover \(ADC\) per the SCL-TAC Motion.”](#)

Mr. Ruiz stated that Public Works does not object in principle to the idea of using ADC to save landfill space; however, Republic cannot commence the project without Public Works’ approval. Given Republic’s action, Public Works will evaluate its options in dealing with Republic on this issue according to the responsibilities given to Public Works under the Landfill’s Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

Mr. Carlos Ruiz also maintained that Public Works believes the gas collection system is the primary factor in controlling the odor at the Landfill, not the soil. The optimal solution to the odor problem is to require proper “well density” levels of the vertical wells that can handle all of the gas that is being generated.

IV. UPDATE ON THE SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Gabriel Esparza provided the Subcommittee with an update on odor complaints at the Landfill for the months of August 2015 and September 2015.

During the month of August 2015, 126 complaints were made to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) hotline. In comparison with July 2015, the number of complaints received in August 2015, increased by 448 percent (from 23 to 126 complaints). Compared to August 2014, the number of complaints in August 2015 increased by 56 percent (from 81 to 126 complaints).

Mr. Esparza reported that of the 126 complaints received in August 2015, five complaints were called in from nearby schools or from complainants whom identified themselves as parents of students attending one of the nearby schools. There were two Notices of Violation (NOV) issued by the AQMD for the month of August 2015.

During the month of September 2015, 337 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. In comparison with August 2015, the number of complaints received in September 2015, increased by 167 percent (from 126 to 337 complaints). Compared to September 2014, the number of complaints in September 2015, increased by 12 percent (from 302 to 337 complaints). Of the 337 complaints received in September 2015, 33 complaints were called in from nearby schools or from complainants whom identified themselves as parents of students attending one of the nearby schools. At the time, there were seven NOVs issued by the AQMD for the month of September 2015.

Mr. Mohajer inquired if Public Works has requested Republic to conduct an air tunnel study, similar to the study done at Puente Hills Landfill (PHL) when it was in operation. Mr. Ruiz stated that an air tunnel study has not been conducted at the Landfill. He explained that the air tunnel study revealed that as the PHL rose in elevation, there would be a 'tunnel' effect, which would exacerbate the potential impact due to odors. As a result, additional mitigation measures were incorporated for the installation of the gas collection system, such as conducting trench excavation for horizontal collectors within enclosed areas to capture any emissions and avoid the Landfill being a nuisance to nearby neighborhoods.

Mr. Mohajer asked if a similar air tunnel study could be conducted at the Landfill, with the goal of installing devices to divert the wind flow and bypass the surrounding community. Ms. Betsey Landis commented that strong winds might not necessarily be the main cause of the odors, but rather the high temperature experienced during the months of August 2015 and September 2015. She added that since the Landfill is so large, it would be very complex and require much work to complete such a task.

Mr. Gerardo Villalobos informed the Subcommittee that Public Health's Toxic Epidemiology Group, led by Dr. Cyrus Rangan, initiated a neighborhood assessment survey on October 8, 2015, to examine the odor complaints near the Landfill. Dr. Rangan's group began their research early evening and finished at midnight. The group will also schedule a follow-up to the survey during the morning hours at Van Gogh Elementary School. The surveys are designed to correspond to the time patterns of odor complaint calls made to AQMD's hotline from the community. Mr. Villalobos advised that the data is still preliminary; however, he hopes to present the group's findings at next month's Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Joe Vitti expressed his interest in receiving a copy of the results of this assessment for the Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Community Advisory Committee.

Mr. Wayde Hunter also indicated that 337 complaints were the most recorded complaints made since 2009 when odor complaints first began to be charted.

Evaluation of the Landfill Odor Problem Report prepared by Yazdani Consulting for AQMD

Mr. Esparza provided the Subcommittee with an update on the report, titled Evaluation of the Landfill Odor Problem at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, dated August 15, 2015, which was prepared by Yazdani Consulting for the AQMD. Yazdani Consulting was one of two consultants contracted by AQMD to make recommendations on how to improve the performance of the gas collection system and to address the associated landfill odors at the Landfill. AQMD recently presented this study at the SCL-TAC Meeting on September 29, 2015, and prepared summary sheets as handouts on both reports. AQMD has agreed to provide a detailed presentation on this study to the Subcommittee and has requested the item be placed on November's agenda.

Mr. Mohajer commented that what he found interesting was the reported permeability of the cover soil and its high content of sulfur. Ms. Landis also expressed the same sentiments, adding that measurements for the amount of sulfur in the soil could be misleading as the units of measurement used were not uniform. However, she stated that there were good suggestions in the report and emphasized the need for urgency in acting on using the report's findings to improve the odor problem at the Landfill.

2nd Quarter 2015 Independent Monitoring Report

Mr. Manalo reported that at the Subcommittee meeting held on August 20, 2015, the Subcommittee requested staff to prepare reports summarizing the contents of the Quarterly Status Reports prepared by UltraSystems for the SCL-TAC. In accordance with the request, staff disseminated the report to the Subcommittee. Mr. Manalo discussed status updates provided by UltraSystems in its 2nd Quarter 2015 Independent Monitoring Report for the Landfill that may require further action to be taken by the operator.

Drainage

UltraSystems reported that conditions of the drainage channel connecting Basins A and D were getting worse, which have been reported to the operator on prior site monitoring visits. Certain sections of the channel's base floor and sidewalls have shown some damage, which will need to be repaired. Republic informed UltraSystems of their plans to schedule repairs of this channel for 2016.

Odor/Air Quality

UltraSystems noted several sources of odors from their monthly inspections in the 2nd quarter of this year, which have all been reported to the operator.

- In April 2015, odor was detected on the main access road due to trash exposure on the working face.
- In May 2015, a slight odor around the leachate treatment system was detected.
- In June 2015, condensate odors were observed during the construction of Cell CC-3B.

Revegetation/Oak Tree Mitigation/Sage Mitigation

- Hydroseeding on interim and inactive slopes has not been successful due to lack of irrigation.
- Vegetation on the Deck C Sage Mitigation area and PM-10 oak trees located in Deck C are doing well. Planting of the understory trees has not been done.

Erosion and Dust Control/Visual

- In April 2015, plastic and jute netting were used on slopes located south of Cell CC-3A for slope stability and dust control. UltraSystems suggested Republic revise the erosion control plan to incorporate current construction activities onsite.

Phase III – Ten Year Review

The City of Los Angeles City Planning Department presented the Phase III – Ten Year Review condition in the Landfill's City Permit at the April 2, 2015, SCL-TAC TAC meeting. At the September 29, 2015, SCL-TAC meeting, the City informed the TAC of the City Planning Commission's hearing scheduled for October 22, 2015, when the 10-year review will be discussed.

Mr. Mohajer made a motion for the Subcommittee to recommend to the Task Force to send a letter to the City of Los Angeles City Planning Commission, with copies to Mayor Eric Garcetti and Councilmember Mitchell Englander, requesting a continuation of the October 22, 2015, Public Hearing on the Phase III – Ten Year Review of Sunshine Canyon Landfill Plan Development and Operation Measure to a later date and in the early evening hours to give the community of Granada Hills an opportunity to make comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ruiz and passed, with Mr. Villalobos abstaining.

Mr. Mohajer also stated that at the SCL-TAC Meeting held on September 29, 2015, Mr. James Aidukas of Ultrasystems, presented two observations that required action regarding the Landfill. The first issue called for the clogged terminal basin at the Landfill that needed to be cleaned by Republic. The second issue called for the installation of netting over the hillside areas of the Landfill to prevent the possibility of erosion in preparation for the upcoming winter rains. Mr. Mohajer requested staff to discuss these issues with Republic and SCL-LEA to ensure the terminal basin is cleaned and the installation of the netting is considered. Mr. Ruiz stated staff will follow up with Republic and the SCL-LEA regarding these issues.

V. UPDATE ON THE APPLICATION FOR A FINDING OF CONFORMANCE FOR THE AZUSA LAND RECLAMATION LANDFILL

Anna Gov presented the Subcommittee with an update on the consideration of a Finding of Conformance (FOC) for the Azusa Land Reclamation Landfill, Inc. (ALR).

ALR submitted an application on July 29, 2014, to the Task Force for a FOC in response to the Task Force's June 26, 2014, [letter](#) that a FOC is required. On November 12, 2014, the Local Enforcement Agency for the ALR issued the revised Solid Waste Facility Permit, and the Initial Study/Environmental Checklist

and Addendum to the 1988 Negative Declaration was certified and filed on November 18, 2014.

On January 14, 2015, and on May 4, 2015, the Task Force sent [letters](#), dated January 14 and May 4, 2015, to the facility operator requesting that missing items from their FOC proposal package be submitted. On June 25, 2015, staff received a package with additional information for the ALR, and on July 28, 2015, the facility operator provided the CUP for the portion of the Landfill that is within the City of Irwindale, along with a statement that there are no activities taking place in that area. Since the CUP for that area has expired and is no longer valid, there is currently no Land Use Permit (LUP) for the Irwindale portion of the Landfill. Therefore, staff currently does not recommend approval of the FOC until the facility operator obtains a LUP from the City of Irwindale, or until the facility operator revises their plans to reflect that no activities are going to be taking place at the portion of the Landfill that is geographically within the City of Irwindale.

Ms. Landis asked if the facility operator for ALR needs a new permit from the City of Irwindale to get Public Works' approval on the FOC. Mr. Ruiz clarified that the facility operator must either obtain a LUP from the City of Irwindale and get the proper environmental documents or revise the site plan to show that no grading will take place in the City of Irwindale portion of the Landfill. Public Works is currently working with the facility operator on the LUP.

VI. Discussion of Finding of Conformance Quarterly Reports

There was no discussion on this item.

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.