

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

**Minutes of April 16, 2015, Meeting**

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative  
Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Jeanne Biehler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative

OTHERS PRESENT:

Martins Aiyetiwa, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Stephen Beitz, Real Energy, LLC  
Kevin Best, Real Energy, LLC  
Russell Bukoff, 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  
Patrick Holland, 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  
Dave Nguyen, 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 11:11 a.m.

## **II. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 19, 2015, MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the Minutes of the February 19, 2015, meeting was made by Mr. Christopher Salomon and seconded by Mr. Carlos Ruiz, and it was unanimously approved.

## **III. UPDATE ON THE SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL**

### Odor Complaints

Mr. Gabriel Esparza provided the Subcommittee with an [update](#) on odor complaints at the Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill (SCL) for the month of March 2015.

During the month of March, a total of 297 complaints were made to the Air Quality Management District (AQMD) hotline. In comparison with February 2015, the number of complaints received in March increased by 150 percent (from 119 to 297 complaints). Compared to March 2014, the number of complaints this March increased by 81 percent (from 164 to 297 complaints).

Mr. Wayde Hunter commented on the high number of complaints, indicating that the total number of complaints in all of 2010 were 613, while the total number of complaints in just the first quarter of 2015 were 676. Mr. Ruiz indicated that complaints had been on a downward trend since 2011 until the latter part of 2014 when that trend reversed. As a result, Public Works is requesting Republic Services to provide detailed reports on landfill conditions, such as construction activities, changes in wind direction, etc., to shed some light on what had changed and to help us determine further actions.

Mr. Hunter informed that the Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Community Advisory Committee had a waste characterization study conducted at the Central Los Angeles Recycling Center and Transfer Station which transports solid waste to the Landfill. Preliminary reports indicated that the type of waste being disposed at the Landfill has changed from previous decades. He commented that the increased proportion of organic materials disposed at the Landfill, combined with the proximity of the Landfill to the community, have an impact on the rising number of complaints. These organic materials have not been received in the past.

Mr. Salomon added that previous regulations that required paper, plastics, and metals be diverted out of landfills have caused the organics to be more concentrated. However, with the passing of recent regulations requiring the mandatory diversion of organics from landfills, there will be an eventual decline in organics disposed at landfills which will lead to a reduction in landfill gas odors.

Ms. Landis asked Mr. Hunter about an old abandoned sewer pipe that the landfill used to discharge leachate into the resident sewer system along Balboa Street. Mr. Hunter replied that, to his knowledge, the line had not been removed by the operator. Ms. Landis expressed interest in finding out if the pipes were previously providing a path for leachate to discharge to the sewer, which could be a source of odor. She further wanted to know the status of the abandoned pipe.

Mr. Hunter inquired if Republic Services is complying with the additional corrective measures imposed on them by Public Works in a letter, dated October 22, 2014. Mr. Ruiz informed the Subcommittee that Public Works is working with Republic Services regarding the measures and emphasized that Public Works expects Republic to comply with all its requirements and will enforce as necessary.

#### Update on AQMD's Consultant Services for Analysis of Odor Control Problem

Mr. Gabriel Esparza provided the Subcommittee with a summary of the report titled "[Pneumatic Testing and Recommended Changes at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill.](#)" The report was prepared by Hydro Geo Chem, Inc. (HGC), who is one of the two consultants contracted by AQMD to conduct various tests and make recommendations on how to improve the performance of the gas collection system and address the odors at the Landfill. AQMD is currently working with its second consultant, Dr. Ramin Yazdani, to validate the results of the first report and provide further recommendations. These results will be presented to the Subcommittee once they are released.

The various types of tests were baro-pneumatic and shut-in tests, which measured atmospheric pressure, differential pressure within selected gas monitoring probes, and subsurface pressures, along with gas quality monitoring. Mr. Esparza stated these tests were conducted at three different areas of Sunshine Canyon Landfill on both the City and County sides.

Based on the data, HGC reported that the current gas collection system appears to be working well and is keeping much of the refuse under vacuum despite some of the challenges imposed by the waste types accepted and the need to

control odors. HGC stated that improvements that would increase landfill gas quality and reduce potential leakage and odors are possible. Measures taken to reduce surface gas leakage and water content of deep refuse will likely provide the greatest improvement. Some other recommendations made by HGC are as follows:

Intermediate cover

- Thicken and compact the cover.
- Replace the current intermediate cover material with less permeable soil.
- Modify the surface of the intermediate cover soils to reduce permeability, such as applying HydraGuard, which is a spray-on water solution.

Daily cover

- Use imported low permeable soils.
- Or, eliminate the use of daily soil cover and replace with tarps or cover material which initially has a low permeability but is degradable once landfilled as to not interfere with landfill gas collection.

Mr. Esparza informed that the report also discussed installing and operating dual phase pumps in the affected vertical wells and pumping down the excess leachate to improve landfill gas collection. In addition to these vertical wells, horizontal wells, properly designed and constructed can serve as both gas extraction wells and dewatering wells to remove leachate

Ms. Landis expressed concerns regarding the HGC report. She conceded that the landfill gas control system appears to be working well; however, the recommendation to use tarps is not clearly illustrated in the study. Ms. Landis suggested compacting soils would be a better solution. Mr. Ruiz added that if an odor problem persists, the landfill operator should fall back on the regulatory requirements, which would mean using daily soil cover.

Ms. Landis further stated the surface emissions of Sunshine Canyon Landfill's side-slopes were not investigated during the HGC study due to the fact that heavy equipment, such as drill rigs and trucks, made it inaccessible. According to the report, HGC recommends that a baro-pneumatic investigation of side-slope pneumatic properties be conducted. The goal of the investigation would be the quantification of side-slope surface leakage of landfill gas, methane, and non-methane organic compounds. Ms. Landis stated that this could very well be the problem with the slopes above the Landfill. If this were to be true,

Republic Services would also need to modify its landfill gas collection system to mitigate this problem.

Mr. Ruiz asked a question about the scope and purpose of the study. He stated that this study was not done to provide an answer to the entire odor problem, but rather focused very narrowly on the landfill gas collection system as it relates to the soil cover and the nine-inch soil requirement. There is a lot more going on at the Landfill than the normal scope. He also stated a key principle, which is that the landfill gas collection system must be able to handle the gas, including the assumption of a six or nine inch daily soil cover as specified in the regulations. Mr. Salomon added that this issue should be reasonably dealt with using the lateral trench collector system because that effectively breaches the barriers between cells. As such, the influence of that lateral transport collector system should be sufficient in handling gas, irrespective of the type of cover used. Depending on how well the system is designed, this becomes an issue. He looked at this report, and in particular the summary and conclusions, and he does not see how this report can conclude that the gas collection system is working well given the statements that the said cover is too permeable which is causing the influences of the lateral collectors to be too small. Either the system is sucking in a lot of air, which means that the gas collector system isn't too effective, or the surface is adequately blocking the infiltration of air forcing the system to collect landfill gas, which is the intent. This made him concerned about the rest of the report.

Ms. Landis found most interesting the report's information on the soils encountered as they were drilling the pipes in. To her, this was more interesting and revealing than the graphs. That's why she likes the recommendation that they look at the side slopes.

Mr. Ruiz emphasized there are many variables to be assessed in addressing the odor problem. The report did not consider the other various activities that are happening at the Landfill, including waste types accepted. Public Works will be looking at them one by one to abate the problem.

Mr. Salomon asked if staff has contacted AQMD to go over the results of the study. Mr. Ruiz stated that staff will contact the AQMD once it has fully reviewed the report. Mr. Salomon provided additional comments that surface gas monitoring should have revealed the emission locations, and data gathered from that report should give the ability to determine the sufficiency of the side-slope cover. Mr. Salomon also stated that in the active operating areas, nine inches of soil, no matter how well compacted, may not in itself be sufficient to keep odors in. He also stated that the biggest potential opportunity for gas emissions is at

the surface of the landfill, and the report is well intentioned but it does not necessarily capture the areas that are the sources of odor emissions. Mr. Hunter stated he was also disappointed with HGC's report. He questioned, among other things, if the three areas of the Landfill that HGC studied provide an accurate picture of the entire Landfill.

#### **IV. UPDATE ON THE APPLICATION FOR A FINDING OF CONFORMANCE FOR THE AZUSA LAND RECLAMATION LANDFILL**

Ms. Anna Gov provided the Subcommittee with an update on the application for a Finding of Conformance (FOC) for the Azusa Land Reclamation Landfill. Ms. Gov informed the Subcommittee that on January 14, 2015, the Task Force sent a letter to Waste Management, Inc., the facility operator, requesting them to submit missing items to complete the FOC proposal/package. On March 30, 2015, staff sent another follow up email to Waste Management. As of today, staff has not received a response from the facility.

Staff recommended the Task Force send a letter to the facility operator encouraging them to complete their application for an FOC to enable the Task Force to carry out its responsibilities in connection with the Azusa's facility permit revision. Mr. Ruiz made a motion to recommend that the Task Force send the letter. It was seconded by Mr. Salomon, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Salomon asked if there was a timeline the Task Force must meet in responding to an FOC application pursuant to AB 939. Mr. Ruiz responded that the Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element specifies that the Task Force has 60 days in which to act upon an FOC application once the proposal has been determined to be complete. In this case, since the application is not complete, the time requirement has not been triggered.

#### **V. DISCUSSION OF FINDING OF CONFORMANCE QUARTERLY REPORTS**

Ms. Anna Gov provided the Subcommittee with information regarding FOC reports submitted by landfill operators which include monitoring and progress reports for various landfills. The First Quarter 2015 Conversion Technology Update for Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center (LLRC) was disseminated to members of the Subcommittee on April 2, 2015. Waste Management, Inc., the operator of the LLRC has secured initial agreements to move forward with a full-scale composting operation called Lancaster Advance Recycling for Green Waste and Organics. No permits or physical construction is expected within the near future. As the project develops, Waste Management LLRC will provide updates to the Department of Public Works and the Task Force.

The 2015 Spring Waste Characterization Report for the LLRC was disseminated to members of the Subcommittee on April 7, 2015. This report provides a breakdown of specific material types and categories for the incoming waste streams such as paper, plastics, glass, metals, and yard waste received from residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. In comparison to the previous waste characterization report, approximately 20 percent more paper-waste and 20 percent less plastic waste were received at Lancaster Landfill for this reporting period.

The 2015 Spring Waste Characterization Report for Antelope Valley Recycling and Disposal Facility (Antelope Valley Landfill) was disseminated to members of the Subcommittee on April 7, 2015. In comparison to the previous quarter's waste characterization report, approximately five percent more paper-waste and two percent less plastic-waste were received at the Landfill for this reporting period.

At the last Subcommittee meeting, staff was requested to provide information on which facilities were required to submit FOC reports. Listed below is the requested information:

- The Antelope Valley Landfill submits semi-annual waste characterization reports.
- The Chiquita Canyon Landfill submits quarterly monitoring reports.
- The Commerce Refuse-to-Energy Facility submits quarterly Monitoring Programs.
- Lancaster Landfill submits quarterly Monitoring Programs for the reclaimable anaerobic composter research project, quarterly conversion technology updates, and semi-annual waste characterization reports.
- Sunshine Canyon Landfill provides quarterly vegetation reports, quarterly status reports, and semi-annual waste characterization reports.

## **VI. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was no further discussion or comment.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.