

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

January 16, 2020

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Chair, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, Rep by Dorcas Hanson-Lugo, County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Health
Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sam Shammass, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Wayne Nastri, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Reyna Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections
Gabriel Esparza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Chris Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works
Elizabeth Zaragoza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Betsey Landis called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 21, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes from the November 21, 2019, Subcommittee Meeting, as corrected, was made by Ms. Landis and seconded by Mr. Carlos Ruiz. Motion passed unanimously.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Dave Nguyen, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of December 2019 ([Link](#)).

- During the month of December 2019, 16 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 2 were classified as trash, 4 were listed as No Field Response, and the rest were listed as none, which meant the inspector visited the site and did not detect any odor.
- As of January 7, 2020, AQMD did not issue any Notice of Violations (NOVs) related to odor for the month of December 2019.
- Compared to November 2019, the number of complaints received in December 2019 increased from 14 to 16 complaints.
- Compared to December 2018, the number of complaints for December 2019 decreased from 36 to 16 complaints.
- According to the AQMD report, the total number of complaints received during 2019 is 350.

Ms. Landis asked if there were more odor complaints compared to 2018. Mr. Nguyen responded that there were a total of 208 odor complaints in 2018 and 350 odor complaints in 2019.

Mr. Hunter, with North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, commented that the rainy season is generating landfill gas and odors, especially with the rains in November and December. He also reported that Mr. Chris Coyle of Republic Services (Republic) said there was a backlog of trash possibly from Christmas, and that every load of trash was odorous, which may also account for more odor complaints.

Perimeter Monitoring Well 205R Update

Mr. Gabriel Esparza, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the status of methane readings from the perimeter monitoring well 205R.

Staff received the SCL Solid Waste Facility Permit Monthly Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) report dated January 15, 2020, from Republic for the month of December 2019. The Report provides the methane concentration reading for perimeter monitoring well 205R which was taken on December 19, 2019. The highest reading for this perimeter well was 2.5 percent methane by volume and continues to be below the 5 percent methane limit. Staff will continue to track the monitoring well methane probe readings.

Republic provided a response letter to the Task Force, which was received by staff on January 13, 2020, responding to the Task Force's request regarding oil well ownership and status information of pre-existing oil wells located within the SCL property. Staff disseminated Republic's response letter to the Task Force via email on January 14, 2020, and a hard copy has been made available to the members for reference.

Ms. Landis asked for a brief summary of Republic's response letter. Mr. Esparza stated that Republic answered the Task Force's question about what oil wells Republic owns on the property and they identified two of the wells that they owned and had officially abandoned in the middle of last year. Republic also provided copies of the Approved Abandonment Reports from the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) for the two wells. The remaining oil wells on the property are owned by other entities. Ms. Landis asked how many oil wells there are, and Mr. Esparza responded roughly 38. Ms. Landis asked how many other companies own the other wells. Mr. Esparza responded that he did not segregate that information but may range from 5 to 10 companies.

Mr. Hunter commented that in the letter from Republic, there are 24 oil wells not located within the landfill footprint. They have no active wells near or under the waste mass itself. Ms. Landis asked if they have any emissions. Mr. Hunter responded those wells have no emissions, but that Republic does have a flare for emergencies that has been used maybe once in the last 10 years due to a fire. They had very little damage because all of their wells were cleared, and they have electrically-driven pumps and a complete monitoring facility. He also commented that the Report does not identify all the abandoned wells and their ownership.

Saddleridge Fire and Landfill Information Request

Mr. Michael Harmon, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the impact of the Saddleridge Fire at SCL and the Landfill information requests made by the Subcommittee.

Saddleridge Fire (Wildfire) Update

At the previous Subcommittee meeting, a representative of Republic presented a detailed update on the impacts of and status of repairs due to the Wildfire, including a timeline for repairs to the gas collection system as required under the emergency variance granted by the AQMD. According to Republic, repairs to the gas collection system have been completed and AQMD performed a permit variance completion inspection on Thursday, January 9, 2020. Staff will follow up to confirm the closure of the variance.

Emergency Response Plans

Additionally, at its previous meeting, the Subcommittee requested staff to reach out to the operators of Class III municipal solid waste landfills in Los Angeles County (County) to acquire copies of their emergency response plans. Staff has contacted several operators and is currently in receipt of three landfill emergency response or contingency plans. Staff will review the plans for the following information such as, emergency power sources and/or back-up generators, watering equipment for use in fire suppression, and lists of emergency contacts in the event of an emergency. Staff will continue to follow up with the remaining landfill operators and report on the findings at a subsequent subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Landis asked if SCL is now fully operational with everything being repaired. Mr. Harmon responded that the purpose of the AQMD's inspection was to verify that the operator has repaired the damaged portions of the gas collection system.

IV. UPDATE ON CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL

Mr. Aric Rodriguez, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL).

NOVs issued to CCL

- AQMD began providing quarterly updates on odor complaints and NOVs starting January 2020.
- As of January 14, 2020, CCL received 13 odor complaints in November 2019 and 18 odor complaints in December 2019 from AQMD. CCL received no NOVs from AQMD in November and December 2019.
- LEA issued 7 NOVs to CCL related to methane exceedances for Perimeter Monitoring Gas Probe (Gas Probe) 13 between the months of May and October 2019. LEA issued no NOVs in the months of November and December 2019.
- In October 2019, Mr. Mohajer asked whether there are any landfill perimeter gas monitoring wells within 1,000 feet of any enclosed structures outside the Landfill.

After investigation, it was determined there are no perimeter gas monitoring wells within 1,000 feet of any enclosed structures outside the Landfill.

- Gas Probe 13 is approximately 5,000 feet from the United States Postal Service, approximately 3,300 feet from the CCL front office, and approximately 2,000 feet from the Val Verde Community.

Mr. Mohajer commented that based on information provided by staff and Landfill owner, there are no enclosed structures within 1,000 feet of the Landfill footprint.

Mr. Hunter asked if the landfill gas perimeter monitoring wells met minimum spacing requirements of 1,000 feet between perimeter monitoring wells. Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that they are.

Lawsuit Updates

- CCL filed a lawsuit challenging the NOV issued by Regional Planning on December 11, 2017. The trial is set for June 25, 2020.
- CCL filed a lawsuit on October 20, 2017, challenging 13 operational conditions and 15 fee conditions of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The trial for this lawsuit is scheduled for April 23, 2020.

Ms. Landis asked what the various complaints are that CCL is suing over. Mr. Rodriguez responded that since litigation is ongoing, County Counsel can attend a Subcommittee Meeting to address concerns. Ms. Landis commented that if these complaints might affect the actions the County or Task Force have taken, the Subcommittee needs to know what they are. Mr. Rodriguez agreed. She asked that staff provide an update for next month's Subcommittee Meeting.

V. COUNTYWIDE INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 5-YEAR REPORT

Mr. Chris Sheppard, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the draft Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan 5-Year Report (CIWMP).

The purpose of the review of the CIWMP is to confirm that the County's waste management practices are consistent with the hierarchy of the waste management practices defined in the State's waste management integrated law with priorities in source reduction, recycling, composting, environmentally safe transformation, and landfill disposal.

The CIWMP is made up of multiple documents; including 89 source reduction and recycling elements, one for each of the jurisdictions in County; 89 household hazardous waste elements; and 89 non-disposal facility elements; the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Summary Plan, approved by CalRecycle in 1999; and Countywide Siting Element approved in 1998.

The Task Force is responsible for reviewing all the major solid waste management planning documents prepared by the County and the 88 cities prior to their submittal to CalRecycle. The review process is laid out in State law and regulation that the Task Force reviews the annual reports and the 5-Year Review Report and provides comments to the County who then submits the formal report to CalRecycle. The Subcommittee reviews the documents and submits a recommendation to the Task Force on whether to approve the documents or send comments to the local agency or the County regarding the annual reports.

Ms. Landis asked if the 5-Year Review Report is what the Subcommittee received with a filled out questionnaire from CalRecycle. Mr. Sheppard responded yes, that CalRecycle provides a questionnaire that is a template. Ms. Landis asked if that is what staff is using for the 5-Year Review Report. Mr. Sheppard answered yes. Ms. Landis also asked if every city is using the same questionnaire form because the documents she reviewed have a lot of material that is not in the questionnaire form. She asked if the County is sticking just to the questionnaire form. Mr. Sheppard responded that the Review Report does not get into as much detail as the Annual Report. Ms. Landis asked if this was the only thing from the County that is submitted to the State. Mr. Sheppard responded to his knowledge this is what is submitted to the State.

Mr. Sheppard continued that the Report is summarized into eight key issues. If there are no significant changes within the categories, then it will not necessitate any revisions to the planning documents. At the last Subcommittee Meeting, CalRecycle stated that their driving mechanism in order to update the process is through the annual reporting, otherwise it would be a very lengthy and expensive process for everybody. Within the 5-Year Review Report in analyzing the categories, staff looked at disposal trends and the effect from the China National Sword on Recycling markets and for the most part there is no significant impact on the County's disposal capacity or the waste quantities within the County. The 5-Year Review Report was also given to the Subcommittee for review. Ms. Landis commented that everyone believes all is fine with the eight categories, but everyone seems to be left hanging with Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383) as it changed all the definitions regarding organics and the ability to adjust things for the waste industry, including the recycling industries. Discussion about the 5-Year Review Report continued. Ms. Landis agreed with Mr. Hunter in that the Task Force should develop a plan for the County to use to take care of its own waste and submit that plan to CalRecycle as a model to what should be done. A copy of the latest Draft 5-Year Review Report was given to the Subcommittee members for review. Comments should be addressed to Mr. Sheppard and will be incorporated into the final draft Report which is due back to the County by January 23, 2020. After the County receives formal comments from the Subcommittee and Task Force, they will submit Report to CalRecycle.

Mr. Ruiz shared a couple of comments. For many years the Task Force has taken the position with the development of markets in that the State has a major role and must take the lead in addressing the issue of markets. Mr. Ruiz's second comment was that there are a number of planning documents that are anticipated to be presented to the Task Force, which will be discussed at this afternoon's meeting. One of them is the organic waste management plan in dealing with organics and its capacity, and addressing the requirements of SB 1383. This is the document that Public Works is preparing. Staff will request feedback from the Subcommittee and the Task Force. There are also requirements for the County to work with local cities to address all the SB 1383 regulations regarding capacity. In addition, the County is updating its Roadmap to a Sustainable Waste Management Future. The County is seeking feedback from stakeholders so the plan is also to come before the Task Force for feedback. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Mohajer commented to Mr. Sheppard about the comments from the Subcommittee being due by January 23, 2020, and requested he preferred staff calling him for his comments. Some comments are very broad, and things will have to be re-written because he does not agree with what is written. Mr. Ruiz stated arrangements would be made for Staff to contact Mr. Mohajer. Mr. Mohajer also commented that as comments are being written, it should be recognized as a Countywide document and not focus on unincorporated County areas. Mr. Ruiz stated once draft revisions have been made, it will be presented to the Subcommittee. Mr. Sheppard commented if any other Subcommittee member would like to discuss their respective comments, arrangements would be made for Staff to contact them. Mr. Mohajer noted to the Chair that the Report needs to be used as a tool because things have changed and organics have become very critical. As he discussed at the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee with Mr. Tim Hall of CalRecycle, the driver now is reducing methane gas that CalRecycle considers not to be biogenic. Mr. Mohajer stated that most of the landfill gas, when he read the California Environmental Quality Act document response to the Task Force comments, is not biogenic. Therefore, it will not count as the 30 percent reduction in methane and greenhouse gases needed by 2030. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Landis informed the Subcommittee that there will be no discussion on the Finding of Conformance (FOC) reports due to time constraints and reiterated what the Subcommittee has requested staff to do with the 5-Year Review Report with the next steps for a formal report.

Mr. Mohajer requested justification from staff on the authority to have the Subcommittee end their meeting as scheduled.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FOC REPORTS

Due to time constraint, no report was given.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., in Conference Room A of Public Works Headquarters.