

**WHATCOM COUNTY
SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2013**

Members Present:

There were eight members, and thus a quorum present: Barbara Brenner, Pete Edwards, Casey Heinle, Eric Johnston, Amber Jones, Marty Kuljis, Marj Leone, Ed Nikula

Members Absent:

Calvin DenHartog, Mariah Ross, Greg Young

Staff Present:

Gary Stoyka

Others Present:

Aaron Lawhead, Republic Services
Diana Wadley, Department of Ecology, *ex officio* member

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Whatcom County Solid Waste Committee was called to order on Wednesday, December 18th at 5:35 p.m. in the Garden level meeting room by Chair Ed Nikula

Introductions:

Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager, Whatcom County Public Works and Diana Wadley, Washington Department of Ecology, were introduced.

Minutes:

The minutes of the July 25th, 2013 SWAC meeting were presented for approval. Barbara Brenner noted that the minutes incorrectly listed her as absent when she was present. The minutes were approved with that amendment.

Communications:

None.

Agenda Items:

1. EOW Service Pilot – Ferndale

Greg Young was absent from the meeting. Amber Jones reported that no progress has been made on this item. The topic will be continued until the next meeting. Gary Stoyka asked for clarification on what the pilot project is. Amber stated that the plan is to have a portion of Ferndale go to every-other-week solid waste pickup as the only service level rather than having it be an optional service level that residents can choose to have for a lower cost. Gary stated that he would try to contact Greg Young to see if he has any new information on the project to report.

2. Update of State Solid Waste Management Plan

Diana Wadley from the Department of Ecology made a presentation about the update of the state solid waste management plan. Following the presentation, Diana distributed a short survey for the SWAC to fill out to gather input for the plan update. In response to the question of what the SWAC is looking for in an update, Barbara Brenner stated she would like to see more information about how environmentally friendly "environmentally-friendly" products are, particularly if they don't last as long as non-environmentally-friendly products. Barbara also wanted the state to report recycling rates by county. Eric Johnston stated that he would like more guidance on how to deal with biosolids from wastewater treatment. Casey Heinle suggested improvements to the state's pharmaceutical waste system. Marty Kuljis said that there needs to be a better way to track the end uses of recycled products. He said that some members of the public do not have confidence that materials submitted for recycling actually get recycled. Pete Edwards stated that he would like to see more local markets for recycled products. Marj Leone said that she would like to see more recycling options for items that are not currently recycled. Gary stated that he would like to see

improvements to the state's e-waste recycling system. Eric Johnston added that he would like more information on urban versus rural recycling rates to see if that may shed light on remaining barriers to recycling.

3. Whatcom County Code 8.10-Service Level Ordinance

Gary Stoyka distributed three versions of the Service Level Ordinance (WCC 8.10). The first version is the version that was presented to the SWAC at the July meeting. The second version shows comments that were solicited from the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) following the July meeting. The third version reflected changes to the ordinance that Debbie Bailey made based on the comments from the UTC. Gary stated that, based on the minutes of the July meeting, it appeared that the two major issues with the update were (1) data reporting requirements contained in Section 8.10.070, and (2) the penalties for theft of recycling materials from curbside bins in Section 8.10.050 (I). Recycling companies wanted to know if the information required to be reported to the County was actually used. They said that it takes time and money to prepare these required reports and don't want to have to do that if it isn't being used or it is duplicative of the information that is submitted to the state. The SWAC indicated that the comments received from the Health Department were vague as to whether this information is actually being used. Furthermore, they stated that, if the information is necessary, they were concerned that some of it may be proprietary and its disclosure could put them at a disadvantage to competitors. Gary said that he would seek clarification from the Health Department on whether the information is used and whether it could be made more consistent with the information that the state already requires.

The main issue regarding penalties for theft of recycling revolved around whether this applies to thefts within city limits or just in the unincorporated areas. Eric Johnston stated that the City's legal staff indicated that it applied to just the unincorporated areas. Gary asked if the City had a similar ordinance in city code. Eric stated that Bellingham generally treats recycled materials set at the curbside to be property of the collection company and that the collection company would need to file a police report in cases of theft. Barbara Brenner questioned the need for such an ordinance stating that she didn't see the problem with people taking recycling items from the bins if they, in the end, take them to a recycling center. Members from recycling companies stated that that creates a problem for recycling companies since they rely on money from marketable recycling materials to cover the cost of items that they must pay to have recycled. They said that it is not currently a major problem, but can be when the market for some materials, such as aluminum, soars. They said that they are not concerned with occasional poaching, but are concerned about larger-scale pilfering.

There was some minor discussion regarding the comments received from UTC. The main issue revolved around the terminology for "waste haulers". UTC stated that the term "solid waste collection company" is what is used in state law and would be preferable in the ordinance. Amber stated that whatever term is used needs to be defined in Section 8.10.030.

Gary stated that he would add or modify the definitions accordingly to accommodate UTC's comments. Gary also said that he would seek further clarification from the Health Department on the reporting requirements. Gary said that he would distribute a revised version of the ordinance for discussion at the next SWAC meeting. Gary asked for clarification on the role of the SWEC in ordinance adoption. Gary was told that any recommendations for ordinance changes from the SWAC would be submitted to the SWEC for consideration before being submitted to the County Council.

Other Business

Gary Stoyka distributed a proposed schedule for SWAC meetings for 2014. He informed the SWAC that the proposed schedule puts them back on the usual schedule of meeting on the fourth Thursday of the first month of the quarter, meaning that the next meeting is scheduled to occur in about 5 weeks on January 23rd. He also informed the SWAC that the County Council has approved money in the 2014 budget to do the required 5-year update of the County's Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan. This update is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2014.

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Open Session

Diana Wadley informed the SWAC that there will be approximately \$1 million in funding available to CPG recipients, awarded on a competitive basis. Application forms will be available in January.

Eric Johnston said that the County has reduced its funding for the Clean Green disposal site to \$25,000 for 2014 and that, in accordance with the agreement between the City and the County, the City was reducing its contribution to \$25,000 as well bringing total contributions by the two governments to \$50,000. He said it costs about \$350,000/year to run the facility and that it currently only brings in about \$112,000 in fees. He said the City and County will be working together in the coming months to make changes to the system to cover the funding gap. He said they are looking at reducing the season to April-October from the current March-November, increasing fees to \$10/load, placing limits on the size of a load, restricting the types of materials that are accepted, and the use of outside vendors.

Next Meeting Agenda

1. Election of officers for 2014
2. Continuation of Whatcom County Code 8.10, Service Level Ordinance
3. Every-Other-Week Service Pilot Update
4. Status of Bellingham/Whatcom County Clean Green disposal facility

Next Meeting Schedule


The next meeting will be held from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 23rd, 2014.

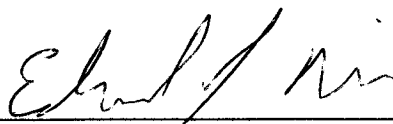
Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Whatcom County Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held December 18, 2013.

Attest: 
Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager
Whatcom County Public Works Department


Ed Nikula, Chair
Whatcom County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

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