

## **WHATCOM COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY (SWAC) COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**October 26, 2017**

### **Members Present**

Amber Jones, Eric Johnston, Greg Young, Mark Peterson, Martin Kuljis, Larry McCarter, and Troy Lautenbach

### **Members Absent**

Barbara Brenner, Casey Heinle, and Ed Nikula

### **Staff Present**

Jeff Hegedus, Janice Deptuch, and John Wolpers

### **Others Present**

Rodd Pemble - SSC, Scott Bissell – Republic Services, Calvin DeHartog – Nooksack Valley Disposal, Kevin Moore – MW Recycling, Dan Liedecker – Nooksack Valley Disposal Pat Dunn - SSC, Lisa Friend – Citizen, Erika Nuerenberg – WCHD, and Dianna Wadley - Department of Ecology (via phone).

### **1st Order of Business: Elect a Temporary Chair**

The chair has to leave early today. As per bylaws, when both chair and vice-chair are absent, a temp chair must be elected. Motion made to elect Troy Lautenbach by 1st Mark Peterson and 2nd by Larry McCarter. Approved by all.

### **Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Whatcom County SWAC was called to order on Thursday, October 26 2017 at 6:05 p.m. in the Garden Level Meeting Room by chair, Mark Peterson.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for the July 27, 2017 SWAC meeting were approved as written. The motion for approval was made by Troy Lauenbach and 2nd by Amber Jones. Motion approved by everyone.

### **Membership Update**

Mark Peterson is interested in renewing. Troy Lautenbach is not sure yet, Casey Heinle is stepping down. We need to notify the Council office of our open positions. We need to fill a Citizen position, Public Interest Group position and an Agriculture position.

### **Implementation of Approved Amendment to WCC8.13, Solid Waste Disposal District, Regarding the solid Waste Excise Privilege Tax**

On September 12, 2017 County Council approved an amendment to WCC 8.13, Solid Waste Disposal District regarding the solid waste excise privilege tax. The excise tax, previously levied only on tonnage collected by certificated and franchised haulers, will now also be levied on tonnage collected at solid waste handling facilities. The effective date for implementation is January 1, 2018.

Jeff Hegedus brought a sample of the report for tracking, Amber Jones said it was very simple, Scott Bissell asked if the recycling boxes pays the fee, Jeff said does not apply. Lisa Friend asked if there were provisions to waive the fee for disasters and Jeff said No. This excise tax will generate an estimated \$422,000 in additional revenue for solid waste services, minus the estimated reduction in state funding of \$230,000.

#### **Impact of China 2018 Recyclable Materials Importation Ban**

Effective 2018, China announced that a ban on receipt of specified recyclable materials will be implemented. Recyclable materials represent the sixth largest U.S. export to China, and the ban is anticipated to have significant impacts on the U.S. recycling industry. Marty Kuljis, Operations Manager and Kevin Moore, CEO of NW Recycling, Inc. presented an update on this issue.

#### **Whatcom County Secure Medicine Return Program and Opioid Response Plan Update**

Erika Nuerenberg gave the committee an update on the Whatcom County Secure Medicine Return Program and Opioid Response Plan. She stated that the County Council is strong about passing this by the end of the year. It won't be implemented for at least six to eight months. There is currently only one pharmacy (Walgreens) that take controlled substances. In 2012 Alamada and King Counties sped forward and passed this same program and paved the way to move forward. Snohomish County, King County and San Francisco, are showing that this program can run smoothly and efficiently.

Opioid addiction is the highest cause of health impacts, 3 out of 4 heroin users started with using household prescriptions. 73% of teens say it is easy to get prescription drugs.

There will be multiple sites around the county, including Disposal of Toxics, libraries, police stations, and for home bound rural area people, they will use mailers with postage prepaid.

The program will use lock bags for household. Under the proposed regulation, medicine producers would be required to finance the program as a cost of doing business. There would be no direct cost to consumers to use the medicine return program.

#### **Point Roberts Solid Waste Management Systems Development Project**

For 1 ½ years the Whatcom County Health Department and the Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee (PRCAC) have been working hard and making progress on this project. We are proceeding with amending the ordinance, and will update council in committee in November.

At the October 10, 2017 PRCAC meeting recommendations were made to:

- Eliminate the exemption option from mandatory residential curbside collection for all parcels with an operating on-site sewage system
- Require a minimum residential curbside collection service level of every other week, with 32 gallon can, bundled with recycling, for these parcels
- Collect payment for the minimum service level on annual property tax bills
- Invoice directly as requested for services above the minimum service, such as larger can size, more frequent collection, or carry out/ drive in services

Currently, every other week curbside collection, with 32 gallon can, bundled with recycling costs \$16.33 monthly as per the approved Washington Utilities and Transportation (WUTC) tariff. The approved tariff rates have not increased for eight years and, combined with an average participation rate of only 300 curbside collection customers, were slated to necessarily increase significantly. With the exemption option available, it is predicted that the participation rate would thus decrease, further reducing economy of scale. Requiring the minimum curbside collection service level implemented at the 2,254 parcels that have

operating on-site sewage systems would provide significantly improved economy of scale, support cost structures, enable high service levels, and reduce illegal dumping. To accommodate seasonal residents, who may visit on the weekend but not be available to set out and pick up cans and recyclables on the weekly scheduled service days, carry out and drive in services will be further developed. Currently, in the approved tariff, the service provider will go up to the house, deliver containers to the truck, empty the containers, and return the containers to the house. The currently approved tariff fee for the carry out service is \$1.00 per 25 feet of carry, round trip.

**Open Session, Announcements, Agenda Items**


Jeff Hegedus mentioned the revamping of the Enviro Stars program. Lisa Friend mentioned the Washington State Recycling Conference on May 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 at Semiahmoo Resort, can register at WSRA.net website.


**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made 1<sup>st</sup> by Larry McCarter and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Amber Jones, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 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 January 26, 2017.*

Attest:   
Janice Deptuch, Clerk III  
Whatcom County Health Department

  
Peterson, Chair  
Whatcom County Solid Waste Advisory  
Committee