

Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of June 16, 2011

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, California

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Margaret Clark, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Sam Perdomo, Business/Commerce Representative
Ron Saldana, Los Angeles County Disposal Association (Formerly GLASWMA)
Eugene Sun, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Carl Clark, rep. by David Thornburg, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc.
Gail Farber, rep. by Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Dr. Jonathan Fielding, rep. by Cindy Chen, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Stephen Maguin, rep. by Chuck Boehmke, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Greig Smith, rep. by Nicole Bernson, City of Los Angeles
Dr. Barry Wallerstein, rep. by Jay Chen, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Enrique Zaldivar, rep. by Karen Coca, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Michael Conway, City of Long Beach
David Kim, City of Los Angeles
Mary Ann Lutz, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division
Gerry Miller, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chuck Agu, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Becky Bendikson, Sunshine Canyon Landfill CAC
Chip Clements, Clements Environmentals
Wayde Hunter, NVC/GHNNC
Jeff Inabinet, via teleconference. South Coast Air Quality Management District
Aaron Katzenstein, via teleconference. South Coast Air Quality Management District
Jennifer Lao, HDR
Travis Lauge, City of Santa Clarita
Corey Mayne, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Tobie Mitchell, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Steve Smith, via teleconference. South Coast Air Quality Management District
Coby Skye, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Lou Wilkinson, Sunshine Gas Producers, L.L.C.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 1:10 p.m.

Mr. Mike Mohajer made a motion to add the report from the Public Education and Information Subcommittee to the agenda after Item II. The motion passed unanimously. See A1.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 26, 2011

A motion was made to approve the May 26, 2011, minutes with corrections. The motion passed with one abstention from Mr. Eugene Sun.

A1. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE (PEIS)

Mr. Mike Mohajer reported that subcommittee considered 12 articles from various cities and the County for inclusion in the summer edition of Inside Solid Waste publication along with an update on legislation and an update on the County plastic ban implementation.

III. REPORT FROM THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE (ATAS)

Ms. Tobie Mitchell stated that the Subcommittee heard a presentation from Dr. Eugene Tseng regarding his May 19, 2011, briefing to the US EPA and the White House Council on Environmental Quality. The purpose of the briefing was to provide a status update on the Los Angeles County Conversion Technology Project, the UCLA Extension Solid Waste Program, and the Navy Conversion Technology Project. During this meeting, three key issues were discussed including 1) the importance of recognizing municipal solid waste as a renewable resource at the Federal level, 2) why it is critical to define and distinguish the differences between “waste-to-energy” and “non-combustion conversion technologies”, and 3) why pioneer conversion technologies need funding to establish a process and opportunity for future growth in the industry. At the meeting, the Subcommittee passed a motion to request the Task Force to recommend that a representative from the County of Los Angeles be sent along with Dr. Eugene Tseng to Washington D.C. to provide a presentation on the County and Task Force’s conversion technology efforts.

Mr. Mike Mohajer made the motion for the Task Force to request the County of Los Angeles to send a County representative with Dr. Tseng to the July 29, 2011, meeting in Washington D.C. Mr. Eugene Sun seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Mitchell indicated that JFE Engineering would be making a presentation on July 6, 2011, at the Department of Public Works regarding their eco park projects in Japan. She would send meeting details to the Task Force members in case there is interest amongst members in attending.

Ms. Mitchell also reported that the Subcommittee discussed the draft Energy Policy Report developed by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Subcommittee members are concerned that this Energy Policy may have adverse impacts on conversion technology development and requested that the Task Force send a letter to SCAQMD requesting their Board postpone adoption of the Energy Policy until interested stakeholders are given adequate time to submit comments.

Mr. Mohajer made the motion for the Task Force send a letter to SCAQMD requesting them to delay taking formal action on their draft energy policy to vet through stake holders for their input and comments. The motion was seconded by Ms. Nicole Bernson. There was further discussion regarding the energy policy. On behalf of SCAQMD, Mr. Jay Chen and Mr. Aaron Katzstein, via teleconference, provided more insight on the policy and answered questions from Task Force members. Mr. Steve Smith also participated in the teleconference. After this discussion, the motion passed with one abstention by Mr. Chen.

IV. REPORT FROM THE FACILITY AND PLAN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Ms. Betsey Landis reported the subcommittee discussed the odor problem at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill. Staff from Republic presented their plan to control the odor problem to the subcommittee and gave assurance that staff is working on the gas and odor mitigations on a daily basis. They also will be submitting their Waste Acceptance Plan to the Regional Water Board, which includes soil and their testing methods. County biologist Wesley Coleman was also present to provide his vegetation report for the Sunshine Canyon Landfill.

V. RENEW LA PROGRAM FIVE YEAR STATUS REPORT

Ms. Karen Coca presented the City of Los Angeles' Renew LA Program Five Year Status Report ([see attached](#)). The program was introduced in 2005 and adopted February 2006 under the leadership of Councilman Greig Smith. The program redefined the City's recycling goal and added the term "Zero Waste" to achieve a diversion rate of 90% or better by 2025 with very little inert residuals. The report highlighted the programs' goals, policies, milestones, challenges, and accomplishments.

VI. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Coby Skye gave an update on AB 341, AB 1178, and SB 841 and presented the attached Fact Sheet for Senate Bill 841 ([see attachment – Factsheet](#)). He also provided the Task Force with a Legislative Table for a summary of bills and to track bill activity ([see attachment – Legislation Table](#)):

1. AB 341 (Chesbro)

This bill would (1) require CalRecycle, on Jan. 1, 2020, and annually thereafter, to ensure that 75% of all solid waste is diverted; (2) provide that NDFE updates are not subject to CalRecycle approval or comment/review by a LTF; (3) statutorily establish mandatory commercial recycling, including requiring a jurisdiction to implement a commercial recycling program and include that program in a jurisdiction's AB 939 compliance review; (4) require the enforcement agency to give notice of its determination to allow certain changes to the operation of a solid waste facility without a revision to the facility's solid waste facility permit.

This bill has made it through the Assembly, and there is a hearing set for June 27 before the Senate Environmental Quality Committee. The Task Force has sent a letter of opposition.

2. AB 1178 (Ma)

This bill would prohibit a city or county from restricting the importation of solid waste into any solid waste facility within that city or county based on the place of origin, except as specified.

There have been a number of amendments to the bill; however, the intent of the bill remains the same. The Task Force has taken a position of opposition against this bill, and staff will continue to monitor the bill.

3. SB 841 (Wolk)

This bill prohibits the enforcement of an indemnity obligation that requires a solid waste enterprise to defend and hold harmless the local agency in connection with the local agency's imposition of fees, charges, levies, exactions, or assessments that are found by final judgment of a court to have been imposed in violation of Article XIII C or XIII D of the CA Constitution or that require a SW enterprise to refund certain fees. This bill becomes operative on July 1, 2012, and is not retroactive.

This bill is currently in the Senate and could be passed this year. It has been unanimously approved by the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. Skye also reported that so far this year there have been 137 pieces of legislation that staff has been tracking, and 22 letters have been sent. June 3 was the deadline to pass bills out of their house of origin. Several bills have not passed out of the house of origin, thereby becoming "two year" bills, however staff will continue to monitor in case similar language is amended into an active bill. The Legislature will go on recess July 15 through August 15. The end of August is the deadline for Assembly and Senate to pass bills for this year, and September 2 is the deadline to get bills to the Governor. Staff anticipates more activity once the budget passes.

VII. SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL GAS BENEFICIAL USE PROJECT

Mr. Lou Wilkinson, Vice President of Business Development for DTE Biomass Energy, Inc., returned to further present on the air quality analyses and emissions projections for the Sunshine Canyon Landfill Gas Beneficial Use Project. Steve Smith and Jeff Inabinet, SCAQMD staff, were available via teleconference to answer questions and provide clarity on the findings of the Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR) for the project.

Mr. Wilkinson reported the project was analyzed at the permitted level of emissions but expects the actual emissions to be much lower. He showed data from the gas-to-energy facility at the Calabasas Landfill and compared it to the proposed project under the same conditions.

Ms. Linda Lee provided a comparison table showing emissions projections for the existing flare system from previously approved environmental impact reports in comparison to the emissions from the proposed project. The data showed that in the long run, the emissions output from the flare station resulting from the projected increase in the volume of trash disposed of in the landfill would be greater than the emission levels from the proposed project.

Ms. Nicole Bernson commented the analyses presented in the DSEIR were inadequate to address impacts on the nearby residential community of Granada Hills and the Van Gogh Street Elementary School. It appeared that the project would increase the emission levels of a number of constituents beyond the baseline, thereby impacting the surrounding communities. She indicated more analyses should be conducted to optimize the system in order to attain the lowest levels of emissions that are technologically feasible; the need for purchase of any offsets should be eliminated, and a more stringent standard similar to those applied to publicly owned projects should be used in evaluating this project.

After further discussion, Ms. Nicole Bernson made a motion to send a letter to SCAQMD requesting that the more stringent suitable technologies be implemented to reduce emissions without relying on a credit system and address the concerns of the Granada Hills community and the Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council. Ms. Karen Coca seconded. The motion passed with one abstention from Mr. Jay Chen.

VIII. REPORT FROM CALRECYCLE

There was no report from CalRecycle this month.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 21, 2011, in Conference Room B.

X. OPEN DISCUSSION

The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

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