

Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes for August 20, 2020

WEB CONFERENCE

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections
Tim Hall, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Inc.
Ron Kent, Rep by Paul Ghougassian, Southern California Gas Company
Ben Lucha, City of Palmdale
Mark McDannel, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Mike Mohajer, Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Christopher Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works
Eugene Tseng, UCLA Solid Waste Program
Carolyn Watson, Rep by Dorcas Dee Daniel-Lugo, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Chris Coyle, Republic Services – Sunshine Canyon Landfill
Alex Helou, City of Los Angeles
Kay Martin, Bioenergy Producers Association
Kevin Mattson, Waste Management
Rob Williams, UC Davis Policy Institute for Energy, Environment and the Economy

OTHERS PRESENT:

Traecey Anthony, Alternative Resources, Inc.
Hans Detampel, Samaha Group
Volker Gutjahr, Samaha Group
Jim Osborn, Alternative Resources, Inc.
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kenn Phillips, Samaha Group
Sam Samaha, Samaha Group
Sarah Solomon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Ann Wentworth, Samaha Group
Elizabeth Zaragoza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Christopher Sheppard called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF JULY 16, 2020 SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2020 meeting was made by Mr. Mike Mohajer and seconded by Mr. Wayde Hunter. The motion passed unanimously.

III. PRESENTATION – SAMAHA GROUP

The Samaha Group is a company that has partnered with INTEC to design and manufacture their Thermolytic Cracking Process (INTEC Technology). This technology uses a non-combustion gasification process to convert municipal solid waste (MSW) and organic waste into syngas and a high value petcoke. Mr. Kenn Phillips stated that this technology can also produce electricity and purified water. He added that this technology offers multiple benefits, including reducing disposal of MSW and organics, greenhouse gas emissions, and leachate.

Mr. Hans Detampel stated that the system accepts various additional types of wastes including oil waste, hospital waste, industrial waste, biomass, and plastics. He explained that the received waste is presorted, processed, and biologically treated through decomposition and fermentation, to reduce the mass by 30 percent. Mr. Rafael Garcia stated that syngas is cleaned and stored in above ground storage tanks that are connected to gas engines to generate power. He stated that their energy system is scalable. Mr. Detampel stated that discarded tires can be added to increase the quality and quantity of the syngas due to their high caloric value.

Mr. Sam Samaha stated that they do not have an operating permit since they recently introduced the technology to the United States earlier this year. Mr. Detampel explained that they developed a plant in Germany but then dismantled it due to a lack of feedstock and because selling the electricity was not profitable. Mr. Detampel stated they currently have two projects in Vietnam, a gasification plant and a project that produces fine powder from scrap tiles as a replacement for certain plastics.

Mr. Paul Ghougassian asked if they have conducted an economic analysis for the California market and compared their gasification technology to other technologies such as Sierra Energy in Northern California. Mr. Phillips stated that INTEC can produce a significant amount of electricity, especially compared to existing waste-to-energy facilities in Florida. Mr. Ghougassian asked if they have considered converting their syngas into renewable natural gas (RNG). Mr. Phillips stated that they have considered many different products, but they prefer to produce electricity for economic reasons.

Mr. Phillips stated that they have a one-page white paper that compares their gasification process to other technologies. Mr. Sheppard asked that he send the white paper to him so that he may disseminate it to the ATAS members.

IV. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Ms. Sarah Solomon provided the following update:

- The California Office of Administrative Law has disapproved the Senate Bill 1383 rulemaking package.
- CalRecycle revised the regulations and held a 30-day comment period from April 20, 2020 – May 20, 2020.
- Governor Gavin Newsom has extended the rulemaking package resubmission deadline to November 2020, although CalRecycle expects to submit the package in September 2020.
- CalRecycle released a guidance document that explains CalRecycle's compliance process and illustrates the discretion CalRecycle has in enforcing SB 1383 requirements.
- CalRecycle released the report "Analysis of the Progress Toward the SB 1383 Organic Waste Reduction Goals" which analyzes the progress that the waste sector, state government, and local jurisdictions have made in reducing organic waste disposal. CalRecycle will be hosting a public webinar on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, from 10 a.m. to noon, to present the findings from the analysis and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and provide feedback.

Mr. Sheppard added that the Statewide Commission on Recycling, as part of AB 1583, had a commission meeting on Wednesday and decided that the recycling subcommittee of the Commission would discuss the issue of conversion technologies (CTs). Mr. Sheppard encouraged everyone to follow the meetings and that the schedule and information can be found on CalRecycle's website.

Mr. Mohajer mentioned that AB 3163 has advanced to the Senate Appropriations Committee. He stated that the bill is in the suspense file and that Appropriations staff may take action on it. Mr. Mohajer stated that the analysis raised concerns that RNG is going to be more costly than biomethane and will increase the State's utility costs. Mr. Sheppard commented that both the County and Task Force took a position to support AB 3163.

V. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY EVENTS/MEETINGS/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Ms. Solomon mentioned the following conferences that are also listed in the Conversion Technology Newsletter.

- Waste Conversion Technology Conference - postponed to August 16 - 18, 2021, in San Diego, CA.
- CEAC Policy Conference - held virtually on August 19 - 20, 2020.
- Biogas: Driving the U.S. Circular Economy – originally scheduled virtually for September 10, 2020, has been cancelled.
- Southern California SWANA Chapter Workshop - held virtually on September 10, 2020.
- WASTE EXPO 2020 - held virtually on September 14 - 17, 2020.
- 2020 Net Zero Conference - held virtually on September 15 - 16, 2020.
- RNG WORKS 2020 Technical Workshop & Trade Expo - scheduled on September 30 - October 1, 2020, in Nashville, TN – Registration is limited to 250 participants.
- U.S. Biogas 2020 - held virtually on October 5 - 6, 2020.
- Annual Southern California Waste Management Forum Conference - held virtually on November 5, 2020.

VI. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Traacey Anthony of Alternative Resources, Inc. (ARI) gave the following update:

- Clements Environmental updated permitting flowcharts for anaerobic digestion (AD), composting, and MSW and biomass gasification.
- ARI provided site acreage guidance for composting facilities.

Mr. Sheppard stated that staff is finalizing the permitting flowcharts and that the link will be shared with everyone once it is posted to the CT website.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hunter commented on the difficulties with using WebEx.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m. The next ATAS meeting is tentatively scheduled remotely for Thursday, September 17, 2020, at 10 a.m.