

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

Minutes for February 20, 2020

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Margaret Clark, League of California Cities
Jack Hadjinian, League of California Cities-Los Angeles Division
Gideon Kracov, Los Angeles County Disposal Association
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Liz Reilly, California League of Cities-Los Angeles Division

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY OTHERS:

Barbara Ferrer, rep by Daniel De La Cruz, Los Angeles County Public Health
Robert Ferrante, rep by Sam Shammass, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Mark Pestrella, rep by Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Enrique Zaldivar, rep by Reina Pereira, City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Craig Beck, Long Beach Public Works Department
Jeff Farano, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
David Kim, City of Los Angeles
Wayne Nastri, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Rafael Prieto, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Anna Haller, EarthCare
Perla Gomez, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Chris Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Elizabeth Zaragoza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 1:11 p.m. by Ms. Margaret Clark.

II. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 16, 2020 MINUTES

Ms. Betsey Landis motioned to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Liz Reilly seconded the motion. Mr. Jack Hadjinian abstained. Motion passed.

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

Mr. Mike Mohajer reported the following articles considered for the Spring Edition:

- Pharmaceutical and Sharps Waste Stewardship
- Construction of the Inglewood Forward Clippers Arena
- CalRecycle's The Truth About Textiles Workshop
- Food Donation and Food Waste Recycling Initiative
- County Roadmap 2020 Kickoff Meeting
- Pilot Recycling Centers in Culver City Approved by CalRecycle
- White Paper – Interrelated Challenges Will Reduce California Recycling Rates and Increase Recycling Cost on Local Garbage Rates

Mr. Mohajer expressed gratitude to Mr. Gideon Kracov for writing the article regarding white paper to publish it on the next issue of the next Inside Solid Waste newsletter.

Mr. Mohajer reported that he requested Staff to submit articles to the Subcommittee a few days in advance to review instead of receiving the articles the day of the Subcommittee meeting.

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

Mr. Chris Sheppard reported there was a presentation from Ms. Anna Haller of EarthCare, who will also present at the main Task Force committee meeting today. Mr. Sheppard continued that the Subcommittee discussed its goals and priorities for 2020, which include organic waste management, conversion technology, outreach, and updating the Southern California Conversion website. There was no project development update this month.

Mr. Sheppard also reported dates for the following upcoming events:

- NRC Zero Waste Conference, March 18 – 19, 2020, Berkeley, CA

- SWANAPalooza, March 23 – 26, 2020, Atlanta, GA
- SoCal Waste Management Forum Spring Conference, March 24, 2020, Downey, CA.
- Biocycle West Coast 2020, March 30 – April 2, 2020, Sacramento, CA

V. REPORT FROM THE FACILITY AND PLAN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE (FPRS)

Ms. Landis reported on odor complaints received through the Air Quality Management District's (AQMD) hotline regarding the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL). In the month of January 2020, there were 29 odor complaints: 1 call was at least classified as trash, 4 were listed as "no field response", and the rest were listed as "none", which meant that the inspector was on site and did not detect any odors. Staff is going to find out when the inspector generally visits the landfill site. As of February 6, 2020, AQMD did not issue any Notices of Violation related to odor in the month of January 2020. December 2019 compared to January 2020, the number of complaints increased from 16 to 29 complaints. However, in comparison to January 2019 to January 2020, the number of complaints increased from 17 to 29.

The latest 5-Year Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan Review Report was sent out last night to Task Force members, but most of the members had not reviewed it. The Subcommittee will receive more information next month and will update the Task Force at next month's meeting.

Ms. Landis made a comment on the Senate Bill 1383 Countywide compliance and reporting strategy. Ms. Landis urged Staff to make certain all 88 cities and the County unincorporated areas understand that they must comply with State Department of Food and Agriculture regulations, Public Health's requirements, and CalRecycle regulations in managing organic and food waste.

Ms. Landis reported receiving the list of conditions that Chiquita Canyon Landfill is challenging in its lawsuit against the County. There is no conclusion yet.

There was a discussion on a Staff report on the Findings of Conformance reports to implement onto landfills.

AQMD gave final compliance to SCL for the work they did to bring their landfill back into compliance on January 7, 2020. Public Works Staff is working on checking all other landfills to make sure they have emergency response plans with generators and a list of other items that they must have. Three out of 11 landfills have the necessary items. Staff will keep working with landfills to make sure they are properly ready in an emergency.

VI. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Clark Ajwani gave a legislative update and reported there are three bills to report from the [Legislative Table](#).

State Legislation:

AB 1567 (Aguiar-Curry and Mathis) – Organic Waste: Scoping Plan. This bill has exact same language as a bill that was proposed last year, AB 144, and the Task Force took a Support If Amended position. Staff recommends taking the same position on this bill which on or before December 31, 2021, would require the Strategic Growth Council to prepare an organic waste scoping plan. The purpose of this is to make sure the State has a comprehensive plan to meet all the organic waste mandates and climate change targets so there is one central plan for the State. Staff’s recommended amendments are to include local government in the list of stakeholders to consult with as well as to ensure to incentivize in-state biomethane production. Mr. Mohajer motioned to support if amended. Mr. Carlos Ruiz seconded.

Federal Legislation:

HR 5845 / S 3263 (Lowenthal and Udall) – Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act. Two identical bills introduced at the same time in each House of Congress, these bills would amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to reduce the production and use of certain single-use plastic products and packaging. Requiring plastic producers and manufacturers to develop an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for their plastic products and packaging. The bill includes provisions to phase out single-use plastic bags on a nationwide level and phasing out other top polluting products. Additionally, establishes minimum recycled content requirements with the end goal of reducing plastic pollution. Staff recommendation is to Support and Amend to include conversion technologies for the recovery of energy or fuel from waste, further define terms such as “targeted outreach” and provide more detail on minimum recycled content, increasing the maximum number of beverage containers that can be recycled per person per day and prohibit monies from the EPR program from being used for legal fees in case of any lawsuits. Ms. Landis and Mr. Mohajer commented that they oppose as the bill is against Conversion Technology. Ms. Clark commented the amendment should include conversion technologies. Ms. Reilly motioned to Oppose Unless Amended. Mr. Mohajer seconded the motion.

County-Sponsored Legislation:

AB 2612 (Maienschein) – Recycling and Organics Infrastructure and Market Development. The bill will allocate \$200 million per year from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund for organic waste management, recycling infrastructure and

market development. Staff recommendation is to Support. Mr. Mohajer motioned to support. Mr. Ruiz seconded.

Mr. Shamas asked if they also intend to support bioenergy projects like creating energy from an AD facility to make some of these projects economically viable. Mr. Clark Ajwani responded that the language is broad enough to include anaerobic digestion projects and organics related activities that could be for purchasing bioenergy including infrastructure.

Mr. Mohajer commented that the Governor's proposed budget under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (Cap & Trade) is \$965 million, but when it gets to the issue of short-lived climate pollutants concerns under SB 1383, there is only \$35 million for 110 facilities, there may be more moneys made available if a Bond measure is approved in the November ballot.

VII. PRESENTATION FROM EARTHCARE GASIFICATION SYSTEMS

Ms. Anna Haller gave a [presentation](#) on EarthCare's gasification system. It is a form of chemical conversion technology that puts carbon back in the soil. The technology system is small enough to fit on a quarter acre. In a three-gasifier unit operation, EarthCare can process 300 tons of food waste and 165 tons of green waste each 24-hour day. Material volumes are reduced by 90 percent with the remaining 10 percent being biochar. Ms. Haller encouraged everyone to research biochar and mentioned that scientists say that if 2.5 percent of carbon can be put back into the soil, it can stop climate change.

These types of projects are great for the municipalities in California because they offer a wide variety of compliance under the environmental mandates. However, there are conflicts with CalRecycle. She believes if there are enough people to prove the benefit of this technology and they go through the qualification process, it can be shown to both CalRecycle and the State of California that the technology can in fact reduce organic waste on a daily basis by 90 percent and divert waste from landfills.

The United Nations Recognizes biochar as a valuable product to sustain humanity in a variety of ways. It helps reduce water consumption, puts carbon back into the soil, and works great as water filtration. Ms. Haller recently learned that biochar would be a great product for black ink.

Ms. Haller's idea is for Los Angeles County waste to stay in the communities where it gets generated so they may reduce it, reuse it, and convert it. If waste materials can be kept in the communities that generate them, they can convert those materials into something that is valuable to those communities. It would have a domino effect in things such as in traffic reduction, reduction in greenhouse

gasses, and more. Waste costs would go down which would empower communities to handle their organic wastes by diverting it from landfills.

The capital cost of this project is much less when compared to other waste reduction projects as this was a technology from the farming industry for organic waste. EarthCare offers more materials and what they do is provide an engineering and project development package together for people who are interested in this technology. Currently, EarthCare is funding their own projects and each project is commercially viable. They require 300 tons of food waste, 165 tons of green waste, and two acres for truck logistics.

Mr. Mohajer asked Ms. Haller to share her experience with CalRecycle (previously mentioned in the ATAS meeting). Ms. Haller went to CalRecycle, they sent her to the California Energy Commission, and they responded to her that they do not recognize this technology as gasification. Ms. Haller went back to the manufacturer to discuss the result. The manufacturer responded that this technology is absolutely a gasification process. Ms. Haller went back to CalRecycle to say that the California Energy Commission does not want to recognize this as gasification, but CalRecycle did not know what to call this technology and directed Ms. Haller to speak with the United States BioChar Association, but Ms. Haller responded what could they do since they do not have any legislative value.

Since then, Ms. Haller has been sending test data on output materials, had conference calls with other manufacturers, spoke with CalRecycle representatives at a workshop, but they did not know what biochar was. Ms. Haller feels that there are enough cities, and if Los Angeles County leads the way, there could be enough pressure to get something done. She mentioned that she is currently working with Mammoth Lakes, whose landfill is closing in two years. She told CalRecycle that the waste is going to Nevada instead of Bakersfield, California. Because of the distance, CalRecycle was not content having California's waste being diverted to another state. She added that the town manager of Mammoth Lakes, Dan Holler, told CalRecycle that they are going to go through with the process despite CalRecycle not knowing what to call it.

Ms. Haller feels that Los Angeles, experts, and waste haulers already stand behind the technology (Republic Services is looking into biochar). Some large fortune 500 companies and others are doing testing on biochar and have a chance to build a carbon based product to put back into the environment and be a real solution to organic waste.

Ms. Landis commented that this is what she has been looking for because there are a lot of jurisdictions that do not have much space. She mentioned that she likes how the technology does not use that much space and it should be recommended to all jurisdictions within the County. Ms. Landis mentioned that

she does not see how to realistically meet the legislature and CalRecycle requirements, and Los Angeles County needs to find a system that works for County.

Mr. Ruiz asked if a jurisdiction wanted to utilize this technology, what are the terms and tipping fee. Mr. Haller responded the model in the presentation has a tipping fee for \$85 a ton for food waste and \$45 a ton on green waste. Ms. Pereira asked how many facilities EarthCare has. Ms. Haller responded that currently there are no facilities in California, but there are many facilities in the Midwest such as, Ohio, Indiana, and Georgia.

Ms. Clark asked how they do carbon sequestration. Ms. Haller responded that when you put biochar in the soil, it will sequester carbon over thousands of years. They take the organic waste and turn it into biochar. Biochar is a form of carbon (carbon-based material).

Ms. Clark asked whether perfluorinated or polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFOA and PFOS) are affected by this technology. Ms. Haller answered that tests had shown that PFOA and PFOS chemicals started to break apart at 1000 degrees. It was not planned, but the manufacturer came up with an operating temperature between of 1200-1500 degrees which turned out be the range for breaking down PFOS chemicals. Ms. Haller recommends visiting www.foreverchemicals.org to watch the movie "Dark Water" to learn about the story of Dupont City, West Virginia and their case with the PFOS in their water, and why the Environmental Protection Agency is testing for PFOS in all landfills, then onto anaerobic digester facilities and compost facilities.

Mr. Mohajer requested Ms. Haller to put on paper what she had finished explaining. Ms. Haller said she has written material about this subject and will send it to him.

VIII. CALRECYCLE UPDATE

CalRecycle's representative was not present during this item.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m. The next meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2020, in Conference Room A of Public Works Headquarters.