

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of July 16, 2015, Meeting

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Conference Room B, Headquarters Building
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, California

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeanne Biehler, represented by Gerardo Villalobos, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative

Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative

Carlos Ruiz, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Martins Aiyetiwa, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Russell Bukoff, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Gabriel Esparza, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition/Sunshine Canyon Landfill – Community Advisory Committee

Jonathan Lee, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Dave Nguyen, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

Rob Sherman, Republic Services, Inc.

Julia Weissman, County Counsel

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:06 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MAY 21, 2015, MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the June 18, 2015, Meeting Minutes meeting was made by Mr. Carlos Ruiz and seconded by Ms. Betsey Landis. It passed with Mr. Christopher Salomon abstaining.

III. UPDATE ON THE SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Gabriel Esparza provided the Subcommittee with an [update](#) on odor complaints at the Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill (Landfill) for the month of June 2015.

During the month of June, a total of 41 complaints were made to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) hotline. In comparison with May 2015, the number of complaints received in June increased by 242 percent (from 12 to 41 complaints). Compared to June 2014, the number of complaints this June increased by 46 percent (from 28 to 41 complaints).

Mr. Esparza reported that of the 41 complaints received in June, none were called from nearby schools or from complainants who identified themselves as parents of a child attending one of the nearby schools. There were no Notices of Violation issued by AQMD in the month of June.

Update on Proposed Alternative Daily Cover Pilot Project

Mr. Esparza provided the Subcommittee with an update on the proposed Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) pilot project for the Landfill. On November 26, 2014, Sunshine Canyon Landfill-Local Enforcement Agency (SCL-LEA) sent a [letter](#) to Republic Services, Inc. (Republic) approving the Landfill operator to conduct an ADC pilot project at the site. The SCL-LEA also required the operator to obtain all necessary approvals and clearances from regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction over the site. As such, Republic is now requesting Public Works' approval for the project.

On April 13, 2015, Republic submitted [Final Proposal to Conduct an Alternative Daily Cover Pilot Project](#) to Public Works for review and approval. On June 2, 2015, Public Works sent a reply [letter](#) to Republic with comments on the proposal and requested Republic to address the comments and resubmit to Public Works for further review.

In the letter, Public Works' comments to Republic included, but are not limited to providing a detailed description of the material specifications, describing cover placement procedures, setting performance measurement criteria on its effectiveness in controlling odor, preventing leachate seepage, and enhancing gas collection efficiency. Public Works also requested Republic, per Condition 79 of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP), to notify the Sunshine Canyon Landfill - Community Advisory Committee (SCL-CAC), the Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council (GHNNC) and other interested community groups of its proposed operational changes at the facility and to provide adequate opportunity for the community to comment on the proposal.

Republic presented the proposal to the GHNNC and SCL-CAC on July 7 and 9, 2015, respectively. Then, on July 16, 2015, Republic submitted a revised proposal to Public Works, which is currently under review.

Mr. Esparza then introduced Mr. Rob Sherman, from Republic, who made a [PowerPoint Presentation](#) to the Subcommittee giving an overview of the proposed ADC Pilot Project.

Mr. Sherman stated that the objective of the ADC pilot project is to determine if the alternative cover meets the performance requirements of [Title 27 Section 20690](#), for controlling blowing litter, vectors, odor and scavenging. Another objective is to determine if it is as effective as the 9-inch soil as daily cover material.

The alternative cover is a non-reusable geosynthetic material that meets the EPA standards in controlling disease vectors, fires, odors, and blowing litter without presenting a threat to human health or the environment. It is 1.75 millimeter thick, tear and puncture resistant, and designed to provide coverage for up to four weeks. Once buried, the material will not impede the natural process of waste degradation nor interfere with gas and leachate collection systems. The product has been used nationally and internationally for over 20 years, including 10 years at Puente Hills Landfill, prior to its closure in 2013.

The ADC would be placed over the entire deck of the working face, up to a maximum area of two to three acres and anchored by ballast (soil). The ADC

cover is laid up and down the slope in strips with a 10 percent overlap. The cover will be left in place until the start of the next day's operation when it will be covered with more trash. Depending on how the working face is built up with trash, there may be times that the plastic cover is exposed. However, at the close of business on Saturday, 9 inches of soil are required to be placed over the working face. At the start of the next business week, the soil would be peeled back 5 to 6 inches readying the working face to be filled again. Furthermore, he informed the Subcommittee that daily inspections would be conducted and documented to examine the material at the start and end of each working day, noting reports of tears, odors, or any unusual occurrences. Mr. Sherman stated that if the material cannot be laid down to provide the necessary coverage due to extreme weather conditions such as high winds, then Republic will cover the area with 9 inches of soil.

Mr. Ruiz stated his concern that intense rain or high winds can make the ADC vulnerable to being blown away or sliding off the targeted areas. Mr. Sherman stated that the ADC can be applied parallel to the wind's direction to prevent it from blowing away. The overlap can also be increased, as well as increasing the amount of ballast used. With regard to rain, Mr. Sherman replied if rain is in the weather forecast, Republic will take precautionary measures to lay down more ballast to ensure the cover stays anchored.

Ms. Landis asked why the cover was laid vertically and not in contours across the working face. Mr. Sherman replied covering the working face vertically enables them to close down certain areas of the Landfill during low peak hours without interfering with other activities taking place. Ms. Landis also expressed concern with regard to rain as the slick surface of the cover could cause the ballast to slip and the cover to slide down. Mr. Sherman replied they would be following the manufacturer's recommendation as well as drawing from Puente Hills Landfill's experience in applying the ADC to prevent these incidents from happening. He stated Republic understands these concerns and recognizes it is their obligation to protect the site and the surrounding community.

Mr. Wayde Hunter informed the Subcommittee that at the SCL-CAC meeting held on July 9, 2015, a motion to oppose the ADC pilot project was passed and will remain in place until Republic provides GHNNC, SCL-CAC, any other interested organizations, and the public with the following:

- All of the information (technical as well) pertaining to the project
- Provide satisfactory answers to all questions asked by Public Works in the June 2, 2015 letter.

- Incorporate all necessary parameters (goals, benchmarks, monitoring, reporting, etc.) and safeguards to protect the public from odor and any other impacts which might affect their health, safety, and welfare as may be determined or opposed by those agencies that oversee the operation and compliance of the Landfill, while working in a combined effort with GHNNC, SCL-CAC, other interested organizations and the public.
- Provide adequate time for GHNNC, SCL-CAC, other interested organizations, and the public to respond and to hold hearings if necessary per Condition 79 of the CUP.

Mr. Hunter summarized that the SCL-CAC is not opposed to the pilot, but if it is to be conducted, that it be conducted under the strictest conditions and be stopped at any time if any negative impacts arise.

Mr. Gerardo Villalobos stated that from the LEA's perspective, the material of the cover is already an approved alternative daily cover per Title 27; however, it must be approved site-specifically. It has been recognized by CalRecycle as an alternative that meets the prescribed standards to control odor, litter, and other impacts associated with a landfill's working face. To address Ms. Landis' previous concern on placement of the cover, Mr. Villalobos stated that vertical placement of the cover is the industry standard as it allows for water to shed easily and stop odor, and the working face can be progressively covered throughout the day, minimizing odor impacts. He further stated that SCL-LEA will monitor the site on a daily basis, and if it is determined that the way the cover is placed is not meeting standards, they will make the necessary changes and restrict the use of the material.

Mr. Ruiz asked Mr. Villalobos if the proposed ADC is required to be the same thickness and strength as the tarp previously used at the Landfill. Mr. Villalobos commented that the regulations are not that specific.

Mr. Mike Mohajer stated that whether or not the SCL-LEA has approved the ADC is irrelevant in reference to the County CUP requirements. He stated for the record that if Republic does not comply with the CUP, Republic may be subject to measures taken to shut down operations at the Landfill. Mr. Mohajer also requested staff to determine the permeability of the ADC cover material.

Update on Consultation with County Counsel and the SCL-LEA

Mr. Ruiz stated that according to the Status Report on Adopted SCL-LEA Board of Directors Motion, dated June 17, 2015, the SCL-LEA proposes issuing a

Stipulated Order of Abatement requiring Republic to implement an alternative daily cover project (Project) in direct violation of the CUP as it requires Republic to ignore Public Works 9-inch soil cover requirement. Additionally, in the SCL-LEA's November 26, 2014, approval letter for the Project, Republic is required to obtain necessary approvals from regulatory agencies, such as Public Works. As such, Public Works has raised these issues with County Counsel. Counsel encouraged Public Works to meet with the SCL-LEA to discuss these issues with them. Mr. Ruiz stated that it is Public Works' opinion that, this contradiction can be cleared up easily by modifying the stipulated order to recognize the need for Republic to get Public Works' approval.

Mr. Ruiz added that as the SCL-LEA has been created by a joint powers agreement between the City and the County of Los Angeles, County representatives on the SCL-LEA are allowing a situation which undermines Public Works' authority and work with the Landfill operator. Ms. Weissman further stated that if the SCL-LEA promulgated a requirement that directly conflicts with Public Works' requirements, they would be in conflict with their obligation under State regulations.

Mr. Mohajer emphasized that at no time State regulations may overrule local land use authority, provided that the local requirements are not less than the State requirements. He also stated that the Landfill's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents require the use of soil for daily cover if odor is present, and he would like to see something in writing that states that the SCL-LEA, and their Board of Directors, met the Landfill's CEQA requirements in developing the Stipulated Order of Abatement. Ms. Landis stated she also considers CEQA's requirement to be the foundation of the issue and should not be ignored.

Mr. Ruiz stated that the underlying issue seems to be that soil, as daily cover, is perceived to be the problem. It has been Public Works' position, that the Landfill gas collection system must have the ability to collect the gas, even if soil is used as daily cover. He further stated that if the use of an alternative daily cover is approved, it would be done to facilitate the management of the gas in partnership with the gas collection system, not to replace it. Mr. Sherman commented that Republic Services absolutely believes the 9-inch soil requirement, and the inability to peel the soil back, is a direct cause of the odor problem, but not necessarily the entire cause. Mr. Ruiz replied that to say that the use of soil as daily cover is the direct cause of odor; it implies that soil cannot be used as daily cover and that is "ridiculous."

Lastly, Mr. Mohajer requested staff to quantify the difference in landfill capacity when covering with 9 inches of soil compared to covering with the proposed ADC.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDING OF CONFORMANCE QUARTERLY REPORTS

Mr. Russell Bukoff presented the Subcommittee with information regarding a Finding of Conformance (FOC) report submitted by the operator of Lancaster Landfill on the Second Quarter 2015 Conversion Technology Update for the Lancaster Landfill. The FOC report was disseminated to the Subcommittee on July 7, 2015.

The report was submitted by the operator in accordance with CUP condition 101 as an update of the facility operator's efforts into implementing conversion technology. The report states that Waste Management LLRC has secured initial agreements to move forward with a full-scale composting operation called Lancaster Advance Recycling for Green Waste and Organics project. However, at this time, no permitting or physical construction is expected in the immediate future. As the project develops, Waste Management LLRC will update the Department and Task Force and be open to giving a presentation on the facility to the Task Force.

V. OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no discussion or public comment.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.