

APPROVED

Skagit County
Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Members Present

Brian Dempsey
Britt Pfaff-Dunton
John Doyle
Leo Jacobs
Scott Sutherland
Tamara Thomas

Todd Reynolds

Representing

City of Burlington
Skagit County Health Department
Town of La Conner
City of Sedro Woolley/SWAC Chair
City of Mount Vernon
District 2 Citizens
(Chapter 7 review only)
Skagit Steel & Recycling, Recyclers

Members Absent

Diana Wadley
Tim Crosby
Torrey Lautenbach
Not Represented
Sandi Andersen

Representing

Ex-Officio, Department of Ecology
Haulers
Lautenbach Recycling/District 1 Citizen
District 3
City of Anacortes/SWAC Vice Chair

Visitors

Bob Raymond
Callie Martin
Dan Berentson
David Bader
Eddie Nersten
Elena Pritchard
Matt Koegel
Rick Hlavka
Terrill J. Chang

Representing

citizen
Skagit County Public Works/Solid Waste
Skagit County Public Works Director
Lautenbach Recycling
Skagit County Public Works/Solid Waste/Interim Division Manager
Skagit County Public Works/Solid Waste/recorder
City of Anacortes
Green Solutions
B-TOWN Consulting

Call to Order

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. at the Continental Building Crane Room at 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon.

Introductions

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, requested introductions of all in attendance. Names and business title introductions were offered by each attendee prior to addressing agenda items.

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Public Comments

Mr. Bader introduced himself and requested time to address comments submitted to him by Torrey Lautenback/District 1 Citizen. It was agreed that such comments will be interjected as each chapter is reviewed.

Mr. Raymond introduced himself and submitted a comment sheet listing his personal concerns. Mr. Raymond states that he believes the goal statement is impressive, and appropriately focuses attention on identifying improvements in current systems and movement to sustainable practices.

Mr. Raymond's primary focus is on recycling and organics. Progress in these areas can hinge on taking a closer look at how each of the listed items is handled through industry best practices; in order to identify opportunities for innovation and improvements. His concern involves the adopted planning process which primarily focuses on editing the prior document and does not allow for opportunity of exploration of new innovative practices.

Review and Approve Minutes

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, opened the floor to discuss the January 13, 2016 minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Doyle to approve the January 13, 2016 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sutherland. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Agenda Items

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, moved forward to begin discussion of agenda item(s):

- a. *Wrap up CSWMP Chapter 7*
- b. *Wrap up CSWMP Chapter 8*
- c. *Review CSWMP Chapter 9*
- d. *Discussion of current CSWMP revision process and strategic goals*

*It should be noted that it was the majority consensus of the group to review the Agenda Items in the revised order as they appear above, and not in the original sequence as listed on the Agenda.

a. Chapter 7, Transfer And Disposal System

Mr. Hlavka addressed track changes indicating revisions made since discussions at the last meeting.

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7.3 Transfer System

Alternatives for Waste Transfer, Alternative B

Mr. Bader addressed the language referencing Mixed Loads as noted under Alternative B and T2 of 7.7 Recommendations, suggesting that T2 seemed to be a more clear and reasonable suggestion.

Mr. Hlavka looked at the different types of loads, mixed, clean, etc. and used T2 as an attempt to cover all types to encourage bringing recyclables in properly and to the proper facility.

Ms. Thomas suggested that Scale House attendants inform customers about potentially recyclable materials without addressing the issue of the type of loads. It was the general recommendation to strike *Mixed Loads* from the language as a solution for clarity.

Mr. Nersten suggested that the Scale House is limited in its ability to engage in lengthy conversation with customers due to heavy volume of in-bound and out-bound traffic. Also, the Scale House can sometimes have limited visibility as to the type of load coming in so they are not always aware of exactly what is coming in and therefore must rely on customer's feedback. A more efficient system could be for the Scale House or tipping floor attendants to pass out informational brochures to customers already on-site that would be helpful in the future as well.

Mr. Doyle requested getting a better and more specific definition of sustainability as it relates to the various components as they are addressed.

b. Chapter 8, Special Wastes

Mr. Hlavka addressed track changes indicating revisions made since discussions at the last meeting.

It was suggested by Ms. Pfaff-Dunton, and other members, that municipalities investigate the availability of other sites within city limits that can be used for storage and staging areas in emergency situations. Areas for storage of dumpsters, hazardous waste separation holding areas, holding areas for massive commercial food spoilage due to power and generator failures should be considered in advance. Holding areas for a period of time may be necessary due to rail lines down and shipping options unavailable. A preliminary list of these areas could be a critical element in an early response time rather than locating a resource after a state of emergency. Competing interest needs to be considered. Locations of shelter sites, base operations, equipment maintenance and more will need to be staged as well.

c. Chapter 9, Administration and Public Education

Mr. Hlavka commented that this chapter starts with Background and Goals, and goes on to Existing Programs, Planning Issues, Alternative Strategies, Public Education Alternatives and Public Education Recommendations.

9.2 Existing Administration and Public Education Programs

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Skagit County Health Department

Mr. Bader expressed his concerns regarding Flow Control Ordinance enforcement. As the Skagit County Health Department is the local enforcement agency, do they have the tools to prevent material from leaving the county instead of going to the designated county transfer station facility?

Ms. Pfaff-Dunton stated the Health Department is not policing the loads, it is the responsibility of Public Works. Public Works is not able to do so due to a lack of resources.

Mr. Hlavka suggested that the Health Department include a requirement in their permitting process to enforce against using illegal solid waste handling or disposal activities.

Mr. Doyle commented that demolition permits can specifically cite compliance in terms of source separation and identifying the end disposal location.

Mr. Jacobs suggested that in some situations, contractors disregard ordinances in place, due to lack of an economic price incentive.

Mr. Bader suggested that the missing element stems from the Board of Commissioners not giving the tools needed, such as a code enforcement officer delegated to address and enforce requirements.

Mr. Hlavka suggested added a recommendation to update the County Code language to address this issue, non-existent state laws and others.

9.6 Administration and Public Education Recommendations

Medium-Priority Recommendations/A& PE2) Hire a Recycling Coordinator

Ms. Martin requested a discussion on the group's definition of Recycling Coordinator in comparison to the Recycling Educator, and what activities they would like to see in the event that the position is created.

Mr. Hlavka inquired as to whether her concern was directed towards this particular statement requiring further clarification, or would stronger statements dictating the necessity of the position be more appropriate.

Ms. Martin suggested a stronger language in the Plan to emphasize the need for the Recycling Coordinator position. She suggested adding an Internship position as a short term reduced cost alternative.

Mr. Bader suggested another approach to the terminology of the Plan. By using an alternative position (other than a full time hire), such as a comp plan facilitator, who would enforce the elements such as recycling, and also enforce the flow control element of the comp plan and bring in another source of revenue.

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Mr. Doyle suggested separating the creation of the position from the workings of the Plan and developing another approach instead of a full time hire.

Ms. Martin encouraged the recommendation of implementing a task force to better see a clear agenda as to what the Outreach or Education Coordinator should be doing. The current position was inherited from the previous predecessor and then developed forward with progressive and creative methods in an attempt to catch up with the present. A task force with a clear set of goals and method of execution, focusing on just Education Outreach for example, would greatly improve on the focus and direction of campaign messaging.

d. Discussion of current CSWMP revision process and strategic goals

Existing Goals for Skagit County Solid Waste Management Plan

Mr. Doyle suggested that we, at this time, review Goals and Objectives to ensure that everyone is clear and consistent in what steps are necessary to proceed forward and then review the completed work to ensure that it is in alignment with those *Goals*, and then move forward. He suggested that Ms. Thomas' cause for exiting the meeting was due to her concern that, in addressing the *Goals* at the end of the Agenda, labeled them as not being relevant. Mr. Doyle suggested to Mr. Hlavka that part of the objection is that the review is being lead by the perception of Green Solutions, and it's the Boards perception that we are not really being clear both to ourselves and to Green Solutions.

Mr. Hlavka suggested that to re-visit previous recommendations based on a change in the *Goals*, would require reviewing 8 chapters out of 9, and should review all 9 at once.

Ms. Martin commented on behalf of Ms. Thomas in stating that she was in receipt of Ms. Thomas' list of goals wishing to be addressed. Mr. Raymond had also disclosed a list of goals to Ms. Martin for review with the understanding that they would be reviewed at the beginning of the Agenda.

Mr. Doyle agreed with Mr. Hlavka's comment that the *Goals* discussion did take place in Chapter 1, but Mr. Doyle suggested that the dynamic of the group has changed and the issues reviewed at that time were not resolved. Therefore, the group has not been getting further clarification on some crucial points that thread through the whole Plan. If goals and objectives are set very clearly from the beginning, everything goes fairly smoothly since everyone is working from the same framework. Some items were left on the table unresolved.

Mr. Hlavka commented that discussions addressing *Goal* reviews were had in the beginning prior to review of the Chapters. The consensus of the group was that the *Goals* did not need to be re-written. It was understood that Ms. Thomas had different ideas as to how the *Goals* should read, but the consensus of the majority of the group was different.

Mr. Jacobs suggested that any unresolved issues will be set for another meeting and readdressed at that time.

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Ms. Martin suggested that her understanding of feedback from Ms. Thomas was that there has not been sufficient discussion regarding creative alternatives. The review has been following the Plan already in place; reviewing it with some changes as to how to adapt the old Plan to the future, but not sufficient progressive thought.

Mr. Jacobs commented that in the beginning of the review, the consensus was that the Plan would be updated and not re-written. In the review process, additional alternatives were addressed and incorporated as well.

Mr. Hlavka commented that the next action is to look at the set of Recommendations and ascertain whether we will meet the 65% goal. The opportunity to address this will be in the next chapter, The Implementation Plan.

Mr. Chang suggested that as co-author, he sees the Solid Waste document as a general guidance not intended to dictate exactly everything projected for the next 5 years. Its purpose is guidance in a general direction and not so specific as to anticipate fluctuations of specific markets.

Mr. Hlavka commented that prior to beginning of the Plan review, the committee met twice with the Solid Waste System Governance Board. First, to update the Board on SWAC's current conditions and activities, and secondly; to gather the Board's feedback on which direction they wanted to see the Solid Waste System go. The Board's expectation was to not necessarily shoot for the moon, but to continue to show progress. This was the feedback used in which to base the 65% recycling rate. Therefore, the *Goals* were discussed from the beginning of the Plan review process.

Mr. Doyle's concern is that the Plan is too vague and that enough specifics have not been added in terms of understanding what the criteria is in what we are evaluating.

Ms. Martin suggested that her job description should be revised and re-written since its original draft of 20 years ago. If recommending hiring a Recycling Coordinator, it would be advantageous to see a clear and distinctive definition and goal description of each position. There needs to be a clearer insight and awareness of the current catch-all educational and training being provided. Not only for the benefit of the community's awareness, but to keep SWAC and SWSGB apprised as well. In the event that a Recycling Coordinator position does not materialize, presently setting clear goals for her existing full-time Recycling Educator position for the next 5 years would be a huge benefit.

It was the consensus of the committee to address the *Discussion of current CSWMP revision process and strategic goals* as the first Agenda item on the next SWAC meeting.

Mr. Chang addressed the hand-out entitled *Existing Goals for Skagit County Solid Waste Management Plan*, and expressed his overview of its framework in his review process. He suggested that the Plan is not the details of the implementation. At the time of his review, he found all the current *Goals* to be essential.

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Mr. Hlavka suggested that the current task of the committee should be to review the hand-out prior to the next meeting and discuss the purpose of re-visiting the *Goals*. Revise the existing *Goals*, or write a new set. It was the consensus of the group to revise the existing *Goals*.

Mr. Bader commented on the discussions with the SWSGB and the SWAC regarding the County's programs and the desire to continue to show progress. Our decisions and what's contained in the Plan support that goal.

Mr. Bader made the suggestion that the SWAC consider changing the Mission Statement for the Skagit County Public Solid Waste Division to encourage support of modern solid waste handling practices or promoting waste reduction and recycling.

Mr. Berentson gave everyone an up to date report on the review process for the Solid Waste Division Manager. There are currently 3 finalists. The first candidate was introduced to the Skagit County staff today and given a tour of the Sauk, Clear Lake and Ovenell sites. Another qualified candidate is scheduled for the same introduction and tour next Wednesday, February 17, 2016. A final decision could be made as early as the end of February. Kevin Renz maintained a smooth running system over the last few years and so we could be in a position to look to the new person for some leadership and to bring in new experiences from somewhere else.

Mr. Bader passed on positive comments on behalf of Torrey Lautenbach regarding the continuing progress of the Ovenell and transfer sites after the absence of the previous Solid Waste Division Manager, Kevin Renz. The staff has been excellent in picking up the slack. The staff has been doing very well in holding the system together.

Announcements/New Business

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, opened the floor to address announcements or new business. There were none.

Public Comments

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, opened the floor to address any public comments. There were no additional Public Comments.

Unfinished Business

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, opened the floor to address any unfinished business. There was no unfinished business.

Adjourn

Leo Jacobs, SWAC Chair, made a Motion to Adjourn. The Motion was seconded by all in attendance. By a vote of the membership, the Motion passed unanimously. Chair

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Jacobs thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.