

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY GROUP (SWAG)

August 11, 2022

ATTENDANCE

SWAG Members:

Present: Richard "Buck" Arvin, Mark Bonner, Virginia Douglas, Ned Greene, Keisha Strand,
Jane Wyman

Absent: Tiziana Bottino, James Gestrich, Harry Glasgow, Will Lintner,

Solid Waste Division Staff: Monica Gorman, Scott MacDonald, Trent Magill

Guests: None

OPENING

Ms. Gorman called the meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Group to order at 7:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

AGENDA TOPICS

INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Gorman welcomed everyone to the meeting via Microsoft Teams. No invited guests or visitors were present.

APPOINTMENTS

No appointments. Mr. Bonner indicated that Dave Watjen has moved, and he is trying to get a replacement for him by next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A quorum was present. The draft minutes of the June 9, 2022, SWAG meeting were approved.

Editor's note:

(At the June 2022 meeting it was decided by the members in attendance that a quorum should not be required to approve meeting minutes.)

Mr. Bonner asked about the closing of the Loudoun Composting facility which is closing in June and wanted to know if the material will be brought to PWC. Ms. Gorman explained that the Loudoun Composting facility processed yard waste, but not food waste. Staff indicated that some of that material will be coming to the Balls Ford Compost Facility.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Landfill Operations

RNG project update - Ms Gorman shared that Opal Fuels has completed work on the expansion of landfill gas management system, completed installation of several new wells, progressing on the renewable natural gas (RNG) plant and completing the County's permitting process. Solid Waste Division is working with DEQ on the air permit. Anticipated groundbreaking by Opal contractors is the end August 2022. Anticipated start date is next year.

Phase IV update – SWD staff, landfill consultant SWS, DEQ, Army Corps of Engineers and EPA meet virtually to discuss Phase IV design options. These options offered a ranged of about 35 to 90 years of disposal life for the landfill. The greater useful life options had more wetland impacts. Regulators indicated they were not likely to permit any options with a longer lifespan that significantly impact wetlands. Division was strongly encouraged to submit a plan that had more limited life (e.g., 20 years of disposal capacity) with limited wetland impact. SWD is in process of permitting the 35-year option, with less than two acres of wetland impacts. Cell will be designed so more disposal capacity can be added through a future permitting process. There are 9-10 years remaining in Phase III and Phase IV adds 35 more years. Hopefully, some new technologies will be identified over this 45-year period. If not, there may be an opportunity to permit more disposal in Phase IV.

Question from Mr. Arvin requested clarification on the various landfill expansion options and an explanation on how a wetland bank and compensation credit system works. Ms. Gorman indicated that private companies have establish wetlands on their properties. Often these are located on agricultural lands. The businesses sell for a certain amount of money pieces of the land for compensation (similar to the purchase of carbon credits). Mr. Arvin also inquired as to when the County had to decide on an option. Ms Gorman indicated that the County is currently pursuing the 35-year option with the least impact on wetlands, and it is in process.

Later in the meeting, Ms. Gorman shared maps of the landfill and talked more about the future of Phase III and plans for Phase IV. The division anticipates moving disposal to the newly constructed Cell A/Phase III at the end of this year. She also noted that Cells A, B and C are the last remaining areas that are currently permitted at landfill- about 10 years of capacity. She shared a drawing focused on the design of Phase IV. Essentially, Phase IV will be a separate landfill to the north of the current landfill, which consists of Phase 1, 2, and 3. The two landfills will have some environmental systems in common, but most infrastructure (buildings and scales) are nearing the end of useful life and will have to be replicated.

Balls Ford Road Operations

The facility currently has a lot of material on the ground awaiting processing. Last year, the facility received about 31,000 tons. Not all tonnage was from PWC since this is a regional facility. Since January 2022, the BFR has received 28,000 tons (includes about 10,000 tons brought in by Fairfax County. With the closing of Loudoun Composting, BFR and Prince George's County are the only regional facilities for organics.

Recycling/Diversion Programs

Complaints summary- Total 27 complaints. The majority (11) were missed yard waste pick-ups and mixing yard waste or recycling with trash (7). (Mr. MacDonald noted that the summary covered a longer period than normally used in SWAG reports.)

The yard waste program is making a difference. Mr. MacDonald recapped a slide on Yard Waste at BFR, which compared CY 20, 21 and 22. About 3,000 tons have been diverted to Balls Ford, even with some haulers not fully participating. Staff are working with haulers on this matter, to include issuing violations. He also noted complaints about the program from HOA, homeowners, etc., have leveled off.

Ms. Douglas asked what barriers haulers might experience that affect their participation. Mr. MacDonald remarked that many haulers claim labor shortages are a barrier to this extra collection, but he feels this is suspect because other companies can do it. Another issue is some companies seek out customers in neighborhoods with low recycling participation and then offer trash pickup service only. Mr. MacDonald also shared that haulers are not sending out information about yard waste collection to their customers, so some of them may not know about the program even though the division sent out information.

Mr. MacDonald noted that American Disposal Services can no longer provide both trash and recycling collection at Evergreen and Nokesville weekly trash and recycling sites. For the last two weekends and going forward (until further notice) the Division opted for trash collection only at those sites. American's contract ends March 2023 and under the draft SWMP the County would consider ending these services in conjunction with an expansion of convenience sites.

The glass recycling program will begin receiving revenue this year. Program started in July 2019 with Strategic Materials in North Carolina. New glass contract is with Cap Glass in Pennsylvania. Instead of paying \$5/ton, we will now earn \$15/ton for our glass.

The donation bin program for clothing and shoes resumed in July at both facilities. The County signed an agreement with Helpsy to provide bin service. Helpsy accepts clothing, footwear, accessories, linens, and other items such as soft luggage, sports jerseys, and stuffed animals. The contract does not include the operation of the Donation Center which remains closed.

Ms. Douglas asked for clarification on potential partners to expand to a donation center again. Mr. MacDonald shared the history and problems of this program. The County has talked with ACTS about partnering at the site and there are other potential partners such as a B Thrifty and ReStore.

Mr. Bonner discussed electric car batteries. He found a company called Hybrid Doctor in Fredericksburg and he will email the info to Mr. MacDonald. Mr. MacDonald also noted that he has made a connection with Redwood Materials, which works with several major car manufacturers. They are scheduled to pick up the hybrid batteries. Mr. MacDonald noted that we don't take these batteries and staff were recently trained on that and proper handling of those that are encounter. Because of the high voltage potential of this discard batteries, special handling is needed.

PROJECT UPDATES

Draft Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) - Status Update

Staff briefed individual Board members on the project. Plan to bring the SWMP before the Board on September 6th to request a public hearing. The public hearing will likely take place in October. The draft plan is still on our website for public comment. Mr. MacDonald shared some of the comments which included Mary Loren of Manassas who recommended that residents dispose of prescription and other drugs at all County police stations. Ms. Loren also felt that the County should do more at the landfill to separate different types of waste (metal, wood, and plastic materials, etc.), and wanted to the County to recycle baby car seats.

SWMP Comments dated August 5, 2022, from Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

The comments submitted by this group were provided to the SWAG members prior to the meeting for review and were supportive of many aspects of the draft SWMP including EcoPark concept, food scraps collection, expansion of glass recycling, but recommended that the County take additional steps such as signage and color of commercial dumpster's, staffing all drop-off centers, and installing litter guards on storm drains which is a watershed management issue.

Yard Waste Program – Status Update

Covered in BFR Operations section and Recycling/Diversion Program section.

Division Staffing – Status Update

Ms. Gorman provided a staffing update. The Senior business analyst position is filled. Trent Magill has been promoted to the Principal Engineer. The County also recently hired a landfill scale house operator and made contingent offers for two other scale house operators. Also, we recently completed the interview process for an administrative position at the landfill. Lastly, we scheduled interviews for heavy equipment operators, but there were several no shows, which is not unusual for this group of highly sought-after workers.

Financial Analysis Project

Ms. Gorman shared that the Board and finance staff have been briefed on the project. The report has not been finalized, but some highlights and key points were provided. In 1998 the Board adopted the Solid Waste Fee of \$70 single family equivalent. The fee is applied to residential and non-residential properties. \$70 in 1998 is equivalent to \$120+ in 2022. When you look at Solid Waste Fund comparing revenues to expenditures the trend shows we are drawing down the fund balance over time. In October/November 2021 the division retained Public Works Solutions, a consultant tasked to conduct a fiscal impact analysis of current and projected operational, CIP and equipment replacement expenditures and revenues in the fund and develop recommendations to maintain fund viability. This study was an initiative of the 2004 SWMP and was carried over to the draft 2022 SWMP plan.

Public Works Solutions evaluation indicates that maintaining the \$70 fee will generate significant deficits in the fund by 2025 and fully deplete the fund balance within six years. The existing fund balance and our existing revenue stream is insufficient to construct the remaining cells of Phase III and start construction of Phase IV.

Staff will bring recommendations to Board as a part of the FY24 budget process.

Ms. Douglas asked what anticipated funding that would be required request to Board will look like. Ms. Gorman explained, the Division will make a request similar to Storm Water Management's request last year –adjust the fees so that there is sufficient revenue stream over time to restore the fund and build a fund balance. Other options being considered include requesting revenue bonds. The consultant will develop a couple of recommendations for where those fees need to be which could include changing the Solid Waste User Fee. The other options include hybrid fee system that would also include a tipping fee at the gate (most trash currently comes in at no charge).

SWAG MEMBER GENERAL QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mr. Bonner stressed the need to get appropriate signage and resources for disposal of hybrid batteries because they will be on the increase.

Mr. Bonner asked about the handling of deer carcasses. He is a deer management coordinator for the state. The areas dealing with Chronic Wasting Disease in the state are growing and require special handling of deer carcasses. Staff agreed to investigate further.

Ms. Strand requested an update on the school composting pilot. Mr. MacDonald noted that the pilot, which involved six schools, recently ended. The school division will continue the pilot and will focus on elementary schools. School division will more actively manage the program contracts and bill paying. Mr. MacDonald will provide additional updates in the future.

Ms. Strand asked about current SWAG membership numbers. Ms. Gorman responded that the group currently has 10 members out of the 16 authorized. The vacancies include one from Brentsville District, four from Coles District, and one from the Neabsco District.

Editor's note: **SWAG Membership**

Sixteen members to be appointed by the Prince William Board of County Supervisors including seven to be chosen by magisterial district, one to be chosen at-large, six to be chosen from Coles Magisterial District, and two to be chosen from the Potomac Magisterial District. Terms shall be co-terminus with the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

ADJOURNMENT and NEXT MEETING

Ms. Gorman adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m. The next SWAG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. Meeting is supposed to be the "member appreciation event" –picnic and landfill tour. Group will be polled on tour interest.