

SWAC Meeting Notes – April 6, 2009

Meeting started at 11:11 a.m.

Recess 12:15pm to 1:05 p.m. (breakout group sessions)

Resume meeting 1:05 p.m.

Meeting ended 2:05 p.m.

Present: Barbara Bell, Alex Leonard, Shon Pahio, Nimr Tamimi, Ted Vorfeld, Steve Okoji, Christine Dochin, Paul Buklarewicz, Mike Kaha, Russell Ruderman, Mike Gleason

Absent: Jes Foster

Staff Present: Lono Tyson, Mike Dworsky, Molly Lugo, Linda Peters, Suzanne Andrade

Consultants: Dan Pitzler, Marc Dexter, Ron Terry

DOH Rep: Lane Otsu

Approval of March 3, 2009 Minutes: Motion by Alex Leonard, seconded by Paul Buklarewicz

Adjournment: Motion by Paul Buklarewicz, seconded by Christine Dochin

Agenda

In accordance with the agenda, this meeting included the following topics:

- Introductory remarks
- Statements from the public on agenda items – one speaker (a representative of Sustainable Kohala) made statements in support of implementing the zero waste plan, in particular the need to get organics to farmers. He felt that incineration or new technologies would be quite expensive and money better spent on zero waste.
- Approval of minutes from March 3, 2009 SWAC meeting
- Unfinished Business
 1. Comments, questions by SWAC members on previously presented materials
 2. Discussion/decision making on ISWMP Goals
 3. Hilo Landfill Horizontal Expansion option and information
- New Business
 1. Discussion/decision making on implementation plan
 2. Residuals management – update and discussion
 3. Plan title – On the Path to Zero Waste
- Announcements - none
- Adjournment

Discussion

After a discussion about ISWMP goals, there was some initial discussion about the presentation made by Dan Pitzler about key implementation planning issues. After that, SWAC members broke up into their preference among 3 groups: pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) and changes to Recycling/Transfer stations; Commercial and Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling; and Organics. After the initial discussion, one SWAC member reported back on the discussion held in each group and the full SWAC commented in response.

Discussion about ISWMP Goals and Plan Title

- GOALS: Dan passed out a draft
- Name: Title/Subtitle, Dan possible add sustainability statement
- Lono Tyson: "Litter Free" can only minimize illegal dumping, but since it's just a goal...leave it.
- Barbara Bell: Sustainability - any definitions?
- Linda Peters: City may adopt U.N. definition.

Discussion about Proposed 7-Acre Expansion at South Hilo Sanitary Landfill (SHSL)

- Mike Dworsky presented a series of slides and commented on the current sliver fill operation and the proposed expansion.
- Barbara asked where else constructed wetlands were in operation. Dan and Mike said Alaska, Minnesota, and many other locations in U.S.
- Ted pointed out that in the Sort Station EIS, the plan was to send leachate to the County wastewater treatment plant. Mike replied that this is possible, but difficult and expensive. Ted asked if, in fact, it could be treated that way. Mike said that yes, that is the typical way.
- Alex asked about upkeep and maintenance to the plants used in the wetlands. Dan replied that the plan is for a major rehab job on the wetlands about every 6 years or so.
- Paul asked if gas from the SHSL would be captured for energy. Mike replied that there was probably not enough gas present, but possibly there would be enough to supplement what's generated at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Another option would be to have an anaerobic digester to generate gas.

Discussion about Implementation Plan

- Paul asked if there were differences in the composting being proposed for East and West Hawai'i. Dan said that at this time, there's a location and Request For Proposal out for composting at the West Hawai'i Sanitary Landfill (WHSL), but the current plan is to continue with mulching at South Hilo Sanitary Landfill for now.
- Alex asked what the additional \$8M from PAYT would pay for? Dan replied that it could be applied to anything, but the \$9 million shown on the implementation plan was for new programs only.

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- After looking at the draft cost estimates, Shon wondered why we should bother with the 7 acre site? i.e., it costs far less to move into the quarries, why not just go there? Mike pointed out that there's value in maximizing air space at the existing site. There's also a lot of time and complexity involved in permitting the quarries versus the 7-acre expansion. The smaller expansion could also serve as a type of pilot project for the larger expansion into the quarries.
 - It was agreed that we should map out the path to a full, permitted landfill that factors in all of the key steps and considerations. Barbara thought it would be good to provide a list of questions for the City Council. Shon thought we should at least start trying to permit the quarries – get going.

Discussion about PAYT and the Recycling/Transfer Station Implementation Plans

- Implementation/Education is key political will.
- Without PAYT – Recycling probably won't happen.
- Illegal dumping – Will Hawai'i be like other places, spike and fall off?
- Tough on the poor. How can we reduce impact to poor? The plan as described is efficient – but doesn't help the poor.
- First – Do the re-use facility slow timeline, keyed to economy?
- Could we provide *x number of* free bags along with property taxes?
- Will people ask for property tax reduction?
- Consider giving a free bag to those that recycle. Then you might get a secondary market in bags.
- This policy would push people to use residential haulers. Then how do we get those people to recycle?
- Look at issues/solutions from other jurisdictions that did this.
- Should we subsidize bags for poor?
- Consider asking for volunteer to work at transfer stations and pay them with tags
- Any recycling/transfer stations that we should consider closing?
 - Glenwood might be okay.
 - Reduce hours/days rather than close – commensurate with volume of input
 - Pair them – one station open M-W-F, an adjacent station open T-Th-Sat., e.g.
 - This would be fair.
- 10hr operating day is overkill. There was agreement that fewer operating hours and staggered days of operations would be OK. Then close stations as reasonable. The cost of transfer station upgrades is very high – thus, we should minimize the number of upgrades.
- If stations are going to be closed, do it sooner rather than later.

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- Pay AsYou Throw – Helps pay for the better services – Public may appreciate this fact.
 - Not all Transfer Station sites may be able to provide all services
 - This system is quite costly – PAYT is necessary to maintain it
 - Costs of upgrades – What is basis for all of the upgrades?
 - Currently, commercial haulers and their customers subsidize residential customers: Pay As You Throw would help level the field.
 - Different rates at different Transfer Stations? This would be difficult to administer.

Discussion about Commercial and C&D Recycling Implementation Plans

Construction and Demolition

- Fear is that permit fees requiring C&D recycling could result in dumping
- Enforcement: How to handle
- C&D: Leeds Certification may help drive this.
- Provide opportunity for businesses to take advantage of recycling opportunities.
- How do you prove compliance? Provide resources to builders during permit process
- Benefit: Streamlined application process County rules (existing) and are not set up for recycling
- Deconstruction Contractors

Commercial Recycling

- Hauler licenses should require evidence that they offer a recycling program
- Level of Enforcement would need to be decided.
- Note that there is a private hauler developing alternate disposal technology
- If there is a differential tip fee, the customer pays penalty, hauler does not pay
- Recycling/Transfer Stations – 2 bin system for commercial. Would there be a cost for this or free?
- E-waste: Not well implemented today. With unattended transfer stations – e-waste is getting dumped
- Additional signage, opportunity to either drop at Recycle Hawai'i or as a last resort set aside and transport to appropriate facilities later.
- Glass: Problem small business is taking glass to HI-5 center-hauling. Employees given the opportunity to take containers for refund
- Kona site could handle additional materials - modify to accept commercial recyclables

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- Add a truck scale to Kona site
 - Pricing is key to program working
 - GW onsite management – Coqui frogs could be an issue
 - Consider having a C&D landfill as an option. Some people take demo material to parking lot, leave the rest as on-site fill. No paper permits received. Would you need to cover waste daily?
 - Soil/rock/concrete can be re-used
 - C&D is one way that California and some other communities get such high recycling rates
 - Kaiko’o Mall Demo – SHSL accommodate C&D separately
 - It was agreed that we should encourage the private sector to address C&D disposal or major new recycling facilities beyond that already provided by the County.

Discussion about Organics Implementation Plan

- Urban vs. Rural – does it make a difference? No, the backyard compost units can work well in urban/suburban locations as well as rural. It’s important that home composting is done appropriately.
- Support Mechanisms are needed to get organics from restaurants to farms.
- County staff and education – Need the right people to get this implemented.
- Farmer Training – County should have a certification process.
- Green waste locations at private or recycling/transfer stations. The recent County green waste Request For Proposal did not elicit a private site for green waste.
- Mobile tub grinder is a good idea.
- Certification program for accepting large quantities of food waste – composting.
- Seattle – There is an experienced guy with a microbial system. Has solved odor problems within 24 hours.
- Russell: Turning Green Waste into mulch is easy, compost hard, but fertilizer is expensive. This is a big opportunity.
- Key: Planning must be in synch.
- State/County overlapping jurisdictions. Potential 343 (EIS) requirements
- To do: Look at regulatory issues for organics and have recommendations in the plan to ease current regulatory bottlenecks.

Discussion about Plan Title

There was support expressed by SWAC for the following Plan Title: “The County of Hawai`i Integrated Resources and Solid Waste Management Plan, The Path to Zero Waste.”

Russell felt strongly that the Path to Zero Waste is incompatible with an incinerator. The put-or-pay provisions required for an incinerator is inconsistent with the zero waste path.