

**Clark County  
Solid Waste Advisory Commission**

**Regular Meeting  
Thursday April 2, 2009**

**Clark County Auto License Office  
1408 Franklin Street  
Vancouver, WA**

**SWAC Members Present:** Eldon Wogen, Don Ebbeson, Jeanne Stewart, Rebecca Wale, Lisa Schmidt, Richard Baker, Dan Kaler

**SWAC Members Absent:** Jack McClary, Mike Carnahan

**Staff:** Anita Largent, Mike Davis, Rich McConaghy, Gary Bickett, Sally Fisher

**Others:** Mike Drumright, Dean Large, Steve Korn, Jason Hudson, Lisa Cutner, Ahmad Qayoumi

**I. Roll Call, Approval of Minutes: March 5, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. A motion was made and seconded to approve the March 5, 2009 minutes. Motion carried with two abstentions from Richard Baker and Rebecca Wale.

**II. Updates: County Public Health, County Solid Waste, City of Vancouver Solid Waste, Department of Ecology**

Eldon asked that Department of Ecology be added to the updates at the beginning of the meeting.

**Clark County - Anita Largent**

- The second Student Environmental Learning Forum (SELF) was held on March 25<sup>th</sup>. This was an all day conference for high school students in Clark County with 250 students and teachers attended workshops. Students were encouraged to apply what they've learned at the conference in the form project teams and submit project applications to the County. We have applications from 10 schools for 17 projects.
- Delivery of the recycling carts begins on Monday April 6<sup>th</sup> and Mike will be giving an update later in this meeting.
- Included in the Commission packets is a flyer which lists some of the upcoming Earth Day events. A copy of the HHW Mobile Collections schedule is on the back.
- The Columbian has put together an Earth Day web site for information about local events that are happening in Clark County for Earth Day. They also have groups set up on Facebook and a Twitter group. Anita will send out the links for these.
- Home and Garden Idea Fair is on April 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>. We will have a booth for green building. We are teaming with eolutionsNW. This northwest shop will be displaying green materials for construction and remodeling. They are the only local company to carry these products.
- Copy is included of an article from the Vancouver Voice regarding the SOS program.
- On May 13<sup>th</sup> the BOCC is having a discussion about sustainable, affordable residential development. This is a result of study done by Cascade Green Building.

- The Lower Columbia Alliance for Living Sustainably (LoCALS) is a group that is promoting “buy local” and encouraging local businesses to adopt sustainable practices. They have a web site and are establishing a non-profit organization. We are teaming with this group as we had targeted the development of a business certification program for recycling and sustainable practices.

**City of Vancouver – Rich McConaghy**

- Thank you to Rich Baker for the Volkswalk group that worked as volunteers with the City on World Water Day. Approximately 200 people were at this event.
- City Solid Waste is starting appliance collections for April. They will be picking up west side on Mondays and east side on Tuesdays. About 35 appliances are picked up each day which is fewer than in past years.

**County Public Health – Gary Bickett**

- Gary presented a draft letter written to Portside for SWAC to review. If you have any questions or comments, you may contact Gary at Public Health (PH). The engineers for Portside were meeting Monday to go over the questions Gary had sent in this letter and some of the conditions/requirements.

Department of Ecology concurred with the City of Vancouver on the recommendations, conditions, and requirements on the shorelines permit. The next step is the grading permit. In the meantime PH is going to decide on the application for a permit deferral which is at Department of Ecology for their review. They have 45 days to review and PH has 90 days.

In the list of bulleted items, a SWAC public hearing is identified as part of the process. This was included by Bronson Potter. It is not part of a statute under the WAC’s or RCW’s. SWAC held a lengthy discussion about having the public hearing. Their decision was to not to hold a public hearing as there is no authority, no legal responsibility, and no effect on the process.

- PH is still waiting for annual reports: 5 out of 11 of the permitted facilities and 6 of the 11 non-permitted facilities. Those are recycling facilities, electronics recycling, etc. that are still required to submit annual reports to Ecology and PH. This is mainly to track materials that are being recycled.
- PH received the revised Moderate Risk Waste plan for the Washougal Transfer Station. This has been approved.
- PH is working on a proposal for the continuation of the Site Hazardous Assessment (SHA) grant. It’s on a two-year cycle with Ecology and the current grant expires at the end of June.
- The City of Vancouver is working with a company called Electrotech located on 137<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Plain. This site has not had sewer and the entire property is 8 acres in size. The company has been discharging waste to a dry well. Bryan DeDoncker conducted a site hazardous assessment and found lead and chrome contamination in the soil. The significant thing is the property is located within the ten-year zone of contribution for well field #8 for the City of Vancouver. Ecology has solicited the Federal EPA to place this property on the list for cleanup efforts and enforcement. They have agreed to this. More testing and evaluating is to be done on this property and there are no timelines on when things will happen. They need first to determine the extent of the plume and then what methods will be used for cleanup.

- PH has a meeting the week of April 6<sup>th</sup> with Viking Industrial Group in Battle Ground. They are proposing a vector waste processing facility for the private sector, including street sweepings, storm sewer sludge, etc. This would be a similar operation to Whatley Pit (utilized by the County, City of Vancouver and State Department of Transportation). They are not new to the industry and they have other locations.

Q: Will we need a public hearing on this for a solid waste handling permit? A: Yes when they get to that point. At the moment, it is all very preliminary.

### **Department of Ecology - Mike Drumright**

- Last month Mike reported that by late March, Ecology should know a funding level for the regular program grants starting in 2010. Historically Ecology has given grant levels based on revenue projections. This year, however, Ecology does not feel comfortable in issuing projections of grants until the state budget has been finalized. Mike will keep SWAC informed as information is released.

### **III. Reusable Shopping Bag Campaign - Leadership Clark County Project Team**

Leadership Clark County has been in place since 1993 and was put into place for people who were interested in being involved in the community. It is a ten month program during which time participants are put into groups or project teams. The team here tonight is the Environmental Project Team. Three of the six members are here tonight: Lisa Costa, Steve Korn and Ahmad Qayoumi.

The project team chose to do a Reminder Program for the public to remember to take reusable bags into retail stores when they are shopping. Signs are going up in parking lots of grocery stores, at shopping cart corrals all saying **got bag?** Clings for car windows are being distributed as a reminder to take bags into the store. The concept is if they can get more people bringing in their bags and actually using them, there will be less plastic bags going into the landfill. Our experience has shown us that there is no economical way to recycle the plastic bags. So, the group's focus is to remind people to use reuseable bags and hopefully eliminate the use of plastic bags.

As a volunteer group they have a budget of zero and they're not allowed to fund raise so the goal has been to build relationships and make things happen in the community. To date the group has worked with the County, City of Vancouver, NW Grocers Association and Washington Food Industry Group. They have also teamed up with Safeway, QFC, Albertsons, Fred Meyers, Costco and Winco.

The kickoff date for this program is April 18<sup>th</sup>. Thirty-four stores will be handing out 500 bags that day as well as the window cling reminders. The grocers are printing signs, doing reminder signs and giving away bags. The team credited Sally Fisher for helping to pull this all together. The City of Vancouver is issuing a proclamation on the 13<sup>th</sup> and the County is issuing a proclamation on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Q: Do you have a matrix to gauge your success? A: Yes, the stores are already tracking reusable bags. The registers have a special key when a reusable bag is brought in and a 5 cent credit is given. The association has agreed to give us numbers from February and March and then again in May to see if there's been a change.

Q: It's expected that you will see an increase at the end of the first 30 days, but the question is will this be sustainable? A: Sustainability is an important part of our project. It needs to be there to keep this project moving forward. As part of our final presentations before graduation, we will be recommending that a team from next year's group follow through with this project. Sally has volunteered to work with the next group and keep this going forward. A key component to this effort is education. Our goal was to ensure that this is not a one-time project that it could be expanded and continue to grow.

Q: Is this simply a spring board into a 20 cent tax on plastic? A: We found in our research that another jurisdiction pursued that and found it to be counter-productive and created more problems than it solved. King County is now caught up in the legal system with their attempt at the 20 cent fee.

Q: How often will you get reports from the stores? A: This team's project terminates in early June. The team thought that the stores would continue to supply the numbers to Sally and to the next leadership Clark County group. Eldon said he would like to see this information on a monthly basis. Anita agreed that we will continue to work with the grocers and we will request regular reporting. Eldon encouraged the County to take leadership in collecting the data on a regular basis because if we don't collect the data, we're just guessing at the impact it really has.

SWAC was entirely in favor of this project and stories were shared about remembering to take bags into the store with them.

Q: Do we have a copy of the presentation notes from tonight? A: A copy of the presentation will be sent to SWAC.

Q: Where can we get more information on Leadership Clark County? A: There is a web site <http://www.leadershipclarkcounty.com/>. Leadership Clark County is just beginning to take application for next ten-month term. The deadline for applications is April 30<sup>th</sup>. There are no age restrictions, but you must be nominated by one of the alumni.

#### **IV. Update of Recycling Collection Switch to Carts – Mike Davis**

Mike thanked all SWAC members for their participation and support in this long process. The press release went on Monday March 30<sup>th</sup>. He said that we could expect to see something very soon in the Columbian. The first of the postcards were mailed the week of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed by a packet of information this week (March 30<sup>th</sup>) and the first carts will begin delivery on April 6<sup>th</sup>. The websites for both Waste Connections and Clark County went live on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Q: Do you have this information in electronic or pdf format? A: Yes we do. If you have questions or get questions, please direct them to the websites. The websites have frequently asked questions, route maps and other valuable information. Waste Connections site [http://www.wcnorthwest.com/?action=rec\\_cart\\_faqs](http://www.wcnorthwest.com/?action=rec_cart_faqs) and the Clark County web site <http://www.clark.wa.gov/recycle/recycles/ResidentialCarts.html>.

There are plans to add streaming video on the web sites as time goes on. Mike said that getting everything to this point in this time frame has been a real challenge. We feel that everything has been covered and although we expect a very small percentage (less than 5%) to call with complaints, we will handle those on an individual basis. We will try to convince them to try the program for a month. Just as in the pilot, we feel that once they try it, they will be happy with it.

Included in the SWAC packet are maps showing the routes and dates they are coming on line. The areas are color coded so that you can see which day the different areas will receive carts. The carts begin delivery on April 6<sup>th</sup> at approximately 5,000 carts a week throughout the urban growth area and Battle Ground for the next ten weeks. In June, deliveries will be made to homes in La Center and Yacolt. In August, carts will be delivered to the rural areas.

Q: Is The Columbian the only press so far reporting on this? A: We had a phone interview with a radio station and The Reflector. No television stations have made contact yet.

Q: What will be the smallest size cart? A: A 35 gallon cart is the smallest. There are a limited number of 48 gallon carts. The standards are 65 and 95 gallon.

Q: The 95 is that once a month? A: It's the every-other-week. Or if a weekly person feels they need that size, they can have it.

Q: Are you going to use one of the old bins for the glass? A: Yes, there will be a glass only sticker in with the delivery information.

Q: My green one which is glass only is pretty well cracked what do I do? A: You can use any color just put the sticker on the side. On the Saturday following the delivery of your cart, you set out your extra bins and they will be picked up. If you are missed, Waste Connections has committed to go back and get them. If you want to keep them, you can do that as well.

Q: Are the carts all going to be the same color regardless of size? Will it be a different color than the garbage containers? A: Yes, they'll all be blue as shown on the brochure.

The typical cart is the 65 gallon cart. There will be a small percentage of households that want to go up and a small percentage that want to go down. The ones that want to go down, we will give them the 35 gallon cart. If that's too small and they're really adamant they want their cart, we'll try to work a deal with the City of Vancouver to get a few 48 gallon carts. So, we've got a spectrum of carts to go out.

Q: In the PR and all the informational pieces will it show all three sizes so that if a person gets a 65 that they know they absolutely can't use that size they have the option to go down to a smaller size? A: The plan is to not advertise that option. The plan is to have them try that size and if it really doesn't work, we have an option to help them.

Q: What about the carts that were distributed during the pilot program? A: There will be special letters to those people to let them know we will be swapping out the old cart with the new cart with the in molded graphic. The priority is to get the 95 gallons swapped out for the 65 gallon.

Q: Are we still collecting data out of those pilot areas? When we started it, numbers jumped. Did that sustain? A: That information is available. Staff will work with WCI in compiling the information.

Q: How does Waste Connections feel about the process so far? A: Jason Hudson, spoke for WCI. He said they feel good. The cart manufacturer has been finishing assembling the carts and tying the bags on before delivery.

## **V. Other Business**

Q: There was an article in the paper about the chipping program going away. Wasn't that something that was funded by Solid Waste? A: It was grant funded originally and that funding has gone away. Solid Waste revenues are down just like Public Works Operations. It wasn't a heavily used program.

C: In the current Waste News, there's a pretty lengthy article about Recycle Bank. It was very interesting. R: Anita said that a representative from Recycle Bank will be at the June SWAC meeting.

Jeanne wanted to thank Waste Connections for having the West Van facility open on Saturdays. It is really great to be able to go there on Saturday. Going on weekdays there's a large number of trucks going in and out. There are recycle containers right where you drive in, in addition they have a big bin for reusables. So, if you're cleaning your basement, you can do all in one trip to the transfer station. The center is very clean and organized. If all you have is recycling it is so clean, fast and easy. The staff is very courteous and helpful. It's a good service.

Eldon wanted to thank Mike Davis for his leadership on this cart program.

Jason Hudson mentioned a free shredding event that will be happening on April 18<sup>th</sup> at West Van. Flyers were sent to all City of Vancouver customers. The event is free but WCI is asking for a direct donation to Relay for Life.

SWAC's next meeting will be May 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **VI. Comments from the Public on Non-Agenda Items**

No comments from the public.