

County Council Environmental Management Committee Meeting Notes – May 5, 2009

Agenda

In accordance with the agenda, this meeting included a presentation by Dan Pitzler, CH2M HILL and discussion on the following topics:

- Implementation plan overview
- Conversion technology overview
- Residuals management strategy
- Plan status

Public Statements

- One member of the public spoke in support of the planning process but with an objection to referring to the new building at the South Hilo Sanitary Landfill (SHSL) site as a “sort station”, because the sorting elements of the facility have never been implemented.

Council Member Comments

Dominic Yagong – Wondered if the 7-acre cell at the SHSL was already in progress. Mike responded that an initial feasibility study has been conducted and is currently under review. Mr. Yagong then asked if any of the feasibility information has yet been shared with the State Department of Health (DOH). Mike responded not yet. Mr. Yagong expressed support for moving forward with the 7-acre cell rather than trucking waste through his district.

Pete Hoffmann – Asked if the plan would have bottom line costs and a single strategy? Dan said yes and noted the adoption process was lengthy including the Solid Waste Advisory Committee, public input, and approvals by Mayor, Council, and the State. Mr. Hoffmann asked if the recently submitted budget was consistent with the plan. Mike and Dan responded that it was, and that the period of implementation has been lengthened to allow the economy and County finances to improve prior to making the greatest expenditures.

Brenda Ford – Asked Dan for his opinion about the best residuals management strategy. Dan stated (in a prior response to Mr. Hoffmann) that he didn't feel it was his role to recommend, however, in response to Ms. Ford's question, he replied that he felt that the expand the SHSL strategy was the most advantageous for the County at this time. A key reason for that opinion is that it allows the County to proceed with relatively low cost actions to get more information about costs and feasibility, and then future decisions can be made with more complete information.

Kelly Greenwell – Expressed concern about the zero waste concept and the lack of economies of scale working just with materials from a single County. He believes that the County needs topsoil, which is a valuable resource and importing it makes no sense. He advocated expanding our thinking and converting waste into top soil that is so useful, particularly in West Hawai`i. This would provide social benefits and economic opportunities. Dan noted that the County’s recent RFP issued for green waste composting should shed some light on the relative costs of composting versus mulching.

Dominic Yagong – Asked if there’s been any discussion about Mr. Greenwell’s resolution at the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Dan said there had been discussion about multiple-County cooperation in certain areas, but not that specific resolution. He also asks if Pay-As-You-Throw goes back to Council for approval. Mike replied that this would need to be assessed further during implementation, but it is probably the case because it would be a new fee or charge.

Brenda Ford – Asked what Maui and Kauai were doing with conversion technologies in their plans. Dan and Mike replied that they didn’t appear to be pursuing them at this time, but Mike would check with each County.

Guy Enriquez – Requested that a public meeting be held in Ka`u. Mike said that he would check our schedule and see if a date and time could be found that would work for all.