

COUNTY OF HAWAII  
INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRSWMP) UPDATE  
**SWAC Meeting Notes – November 16, 2009**

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Meeting started at 11:10 a.m.  
Recess 12:40 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.  
Reconvene meeting 12:50 p.m.  
Meeting ended 1:40 p.m.

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

**Absent:** Jes Foster

**Staff Present:** Lono Tyson, Mike Dworsky, Terrin Gloor

**Consultants:** Dan Pitzler, Ron Terry

**DOH Rep:** Lane Otsu - Absent

**Approval of July 2, 2009 Minutes:** Motion by Mike Gleason, seconded by Paul Buklarewicz

**Adjournment:** Motion by Russell Ruderman, seconded by Shon Pahio

## **Agenda**

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

- Call to Order and Announcements
- Statements from the public on agenda items – one.
- Approval of minutes from July 2, 2009 SWAC meeting
- Unfinished Business
- Future Agenda Items – Final revisions to IRSWMP update
- Meeting Announcements – Final meeting if necessary likely to be held in October, 2009
- Adjournment

## **Statements from the Public**

Ric Rotandu provided SWAC members information about biodegradable plastics. He believes that Hawai'i County would be an excellent location to develop this technology.

## **Discussion**

Barbara: Convened meeting.

## Residuals Management Strategy

- Paul mentioned a blank in the public meeting minutes on page 5 should refer to Keauhou RTS.
- Mike D. updated SWAC on the reasons for not proceeding with the 7-acre expansion at the South Hilo Landfill, and noted that the Department now believes that there is about 6 years of available capacity at the existing South Hilo Landfill. Lono added that expanding into the 60-acre quarries would be significantly more cost-effective.
- Russell asked if it was too late to modify recommendations in the IRSWMP update. Dan replied that it is not.
- Barbara is not in favor of the 60-acre expansion – too much disposal capacity takes the pressure off of diversion. Lono noted that there is a Council resolution directing the Department to explore this expansion. Barbara agreed, but said she doesn't think we need to recommend a landfill in the Plan.
- Shon thinks that any landfill has risks and that trucking waste from East Hawaii to the West Hawaii Landfill makes the most sense. County should ask Waste Management for a substantially lower rate to accept waste from East Hawaii.
- Lono commented that it would be good to look in more depth at trucking costs.
- Mike K thought that the economic situation might lead the County to trucking instead of the high costs of developing a new landfill. Dan reported that we have evaluated the costs and preliminary estimates are that the 60-acre landfill would be cheaper than trucking waste to West Hawaii Landfill. Barbara suggested that we reference these cost estimates in the executive summary.
- Ted expressed that we are then just putting off a decision until the next time plan is evaluated. Shon said that trucking is something the County can do: we could study the landfill while trucking.
- Ron pointed out that the Saddle Road project is having success and before too long should be a much preferred trucking route to going through Waimea. There was considerable support for the idea that if the cost of hauling is equal to landfilling, then we should truck waste rather than develop a new landfill.
- Steve asked if we know how much landfill life would be reduced if East Hawaii waste was sent to the West Hawaii landfill. Mike K and Dan agreed that it would remove about 1/3 of its remaining capacity. Existing landfill life is somewhere around 40+ years depending on assumptions.
- Barbara asked about what SWAC values in making this decision: cost, diversion, risk?
- Shon asked about conserving South Hilo Landfill space for an emergency and how much the studies needed for landfill expansion would cost.
- Alex suggested changing the heading in Executive Summary that discusses this issue and say that SWAC supports trucking and investigating a new landfill.

- Mike D. said that it was the prior Mayor who agreed to go along with Council desires and not truck waste to West Hawaii.
- Russell is not necessarily against landfills for environmental reasons, but trucking could get started right away.
- Steve wondered if we are just one environmental disaster away from filling the South Hilo Landfill.
- Dan noted that it could be very expensive to truck part of the waste to West Hawaii while keeping South Hilo open at lower volumes because of economy of scale issues. Lono noted that if you close the landfill, you'd have to begin closing it within 90 days.
- A straw poll was taken to change the recommendation so that trucking is the primary option, while we evaluate the feasibility of both trucking and landfill expansion and if costs are close, truck.
- Lono noted the importance of the quarry site as a potential repository for disaster debris.
- Mike D. noted that if the plan advocates trucking immediately, Council approval of the plan would be less likely.

### **Pay-As-You-Throw and Funding Options**

- Lono discussed options being considered by the Administration include PAYT, user charges, tax increases, a "recycling surcharge", and possible combinations: tipping fee increases are not being considered at this time. Barbara suggested that the term "solid waste surcharge" would be better than using the term recycling surcharge.
- Alex noted that property taxes are unfair because payments for waste services are not tied to how much people dispose, and they provide no incentive to reduce waste. Still, it may make more economic sense to use property taxes at this time.
- Ted suggested a lower PAYT charge, combined with tax increases.
- Mike said that recycling bans would also help incentivize waste reduction. Dan said that there are studies that show that both bans and PAYT incentivize waste reduction in an additive manner.
- Shon asked if the Department has forecasted revenues and expenses beyond this year. Lono replied that they have not: still lots of uncertainty about next year.
- Mike K. asked if the adjustments discussed today would be in the next draft of plan. Dan said that they would, and discussed the IRSWMP update approval process. Barbara asked if Council would approve by resolution or ordinance. Lono responded that the Administration prefers a resolution so that it can make changes without substantial delay in the future.
- Ted asked if the implementation plan accounted for the funding reduction. Dan said yes. Barbara wondered if more than one year's delay is sufficient. Lono replied that Department budget will be the way such decisions are made. At this time, we don't know what that will be.

### **SWAC Representation At Council Deliberation About Plan Adoption**

- There was some discussion about how or if SWAC should be present or speak during Council deliberations and approval of IRSWMP. There was discussion about Sunshine Law requirements. It was clarified that SWAC members should try to be present, and any of them could speak as a private citizen not representing SWAC. It was agreed to appoint one spokesperson for SWAC (see motion below).
- It was agreed that the final plan would be provided to SWAC members by email.

**Motion:** Mike Gleason, seconded by Christine Dochin. Motion carried unanimously. *After satisfactory changes are made in the Executive Summary to modify the residuals management strategy, the SWAC approves forwarding the IRSWMP update to the Mayor for approval.*

**Motion:** Shon Pahio, seconded by Paul Buklarewicz. Motion carried unanimously. *Alex Leonard is appointed to be the spokesperson for the SWAC at Council meetings to discuss the IRSWMP update.*