

SWAC Meeting Notes – June 16, 2008

Meeting started at 11:07am

Meeting ended 2:05pm

Present: Paul Buklarewicz, Jes Foster, Christine Dochin, Mike Kaha, Steve Okoji, Shon Pahio, Nimr Tamimi, Ted Vorfeld, Mike Gleason, DOH Rep: Lane Otsu

Absent: Barbara Bell, Alex Leonard, Russell Ruderman

Staff Present: Bobby Jean Leithead Todd, Nelson Ho, Ivan Torigoe, Madeline Reed, Mike Dworsky, Linda Peters, Terin Gloor, Sharron Henry

Consultants: Dan Pitzler, Ron Terry

Agenda

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

- Introductory remarks
- New Business
 - Office of Corporation Counsel: procedures and Sunshine Law briefing
 - CH2M HILL presentation: scope of work, 2002 goals, committee member objectives
 - Next steps: meeting dates, times, locations
- Statements from the public on agenda items
- Announcements
- Adjournment

Objectives, Knowledge Gaps, Issues and Concerns

SWAC members were asked to help us shape the ISWMP update by providing their initial thoughts about the following three questions:

- What are the most important actions the County should take to improve solid waste management?
- What would you like to know more about?
- What are the key issues and challenges you foresee in the years ahead?

SWAC member responses, including some comments from the public and County staff, follow:

Actions the County Should Take to Improve Solid Waste Management

- The public needs to understand the urgency of the current disposal situation.

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- The public needs to pay for services they receive: the public currently are not exposed to the costs of the services they receive. This needs to change.
 - One island, one solution.
 - Document and inform the public of the true cost of recycling.
 - Currently, we are short on facts – need to document the cost of ideas/options.
 - Revisit political obstacles including laws and regulations regarding recycling and illegal dumping. Need to improve enforcement.
 - Eliminate free transfer stations.
 - Evaluate other collection systems.
 - Develop local end uses for recycled materials and industries that can use our recycled materials.
 - Find out more about Extended Producer Responsibility programs.
 - Consider barging/trucking combinations for recyclables.
 - Recognize the effects of high freight costs.
 - Recognize that there are many good things in the 2002 ISWMP Update.
 - Be sure plan is consistent with HRS 342-G.
 - Consider good things being done in other Hawai'i County plans – they're further along than our County.
 - Plan must take an "integrated" systems approach – we can't leave out critical parts of the system.
 - Ensure that "costs" include environmental and social effects.
 - Consider the avoided costs of programs.
 - Recognize that we are the only County without curbside collection. Also recognize the effects of the Konno decision and the rights of the United Public Workers (UPW). We need a discussion of curbside collection and pay-as-you-throw (PAYT).
 - Consider law to require a charge for plastic bags and other financial incentives to reduce waste.
 - Be open to community input.
 - Consider night hauling through Waimea.
 - Landfills are important as part of a plan to address disaster debris from emergencies.
 - Consider possible bans on certain materials from landfills.
 - Consider state-wide actions to promote producer responsibility.

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- Work with other counties as appropriate. Would be good to have statewide coordination for some programs e.g., a single waste reduction facility.
 - We need to face facts head-on and inform the public.
 - Consider converting Hilo transfer station to a recycle area.
 - The plan needs to be flexible to address the dynamic nature of technology and markets.
 - The plan must be practical.

What Would you Like to Know More About

- Gasification, waste-to-energy, plasma arc
- Other successful models in other communities – think broadly about potential solutions
- Why it took so long to conduct the recent waste reduction facility procurement.
- The Konno decision
- Learn from people who went through the ISWMP planning process in the past.
- What are the time and schedule constraints for various programs.
- We need good facts about proposed programs.
- Learn from what larger communities have researched e.g., conversion technologies. But recognized that the Big Island may be comfortable adopting an experimental technology. Another approach is to not be too specific about the technology.
- Does Department want a recommendation about a specific technology? Probably not, but if WTE is a good idea, provide specific examples.
- How the Department of Environmental Management will implement the plan.
- SWAC needs to lobby for its findings (with Council, public).
- The UPW believes that all solid waste handling (e.g., curbside pickup) is their work.
- More information about model communities e.g., Irvine, CA.

Key Issues and Challenges

- Building consensus and engaging the majority.
- SWAC member's skills bring with them biases (or a frame of reference) – work through these issues to develop evaluation criteria for plan implementation.
- How to deal with issues of pollution – both real and perceived.
- Sticker shock for new programs will be apparent, but how do we communicate the cost of doing nothing.
- Education and marketing.

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- Convincing the public that the current system is not free.
 - Selling big dollar projects to poor people. Need to work to ensure empathy with residents.
 - How do we best engage everyday people (note that Council meetings are on TV).
 - Web input i.e., a comment box.
 - Ways to ensure modular adaptability – flexibility for structures and sites.

Plan Protocols

It was agreed that all materials should be available to SWAC members in hard copy. This will be done when feasible by email. As needed, DEM can print and make hard copy available.