

**MINUTES**  
**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**  
**Monday, September 25, 2000**

Chair Rachel Balsley called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Balsley, Lerner, Maguire, Sprague

Absent: Becker, Johnson, Schild.

Members of the Public: Jeff Belchamber and Sara MacKusick of Community Conservation Centers, and Dave Williamson of the Berkeley Ecology Center

Staff present: Debra Kaufman, Tania Levy, Joseph Ayankoya , and Joe Smith.

**2. Public Comment**

Sara MacKusick introduced CCC's new assistant manager, David Johnson. She brought refreshments to celebrate the opening of the rebuilt processing site.

**3. Approval of the June 26, 2000 minutes**

It was M/S/C Sprague/Lerner to approve the minutes, with the correction from the Alameda County Waste Management "Authority", to "Board". The vote was unanimous.

**4. CCC Quarterly Report, April-June 2000**

Sara MacKusick reported that CCC's tons increased 11.8% in FY 2000 over FY 1999. This is partly due to their actively seeking commercial recycling accounts. High fiber prices resulted in a \$50,000 surplus instead of the predicted \$30,000 deficit. Jeff Belchamber reported that the container upgrade is on schedule and is now processing 50% of their containers. CCC and the Ecology Center agreed on new processing costs (of \$92/ton) for mixed containers and (\$34/ton for) mixed fibers. The costs will be re-evaluated after six months.

**5. Ecology Center Quarterly Report**

Dave Williamson reported that the Ecology Center has received 3 new trucks. These compact trucks can be used in the hilly neighborhoods. Ecology Center will use a grant to replace three trucks with CNG -fueled higher-capacity trucks for use in the flat neighborhoods. Due to high fiber prices, poachers in vehicles have returned and are taking papers and containers. Tonnage dropped to 1996 levels. Poaching is a misdemeanor, which requires District Attorney to enforce. A traffic ticket with vehicle confiscation could be a more effective deterrent. The police and Ecology Center are cooperating, and 3 vehicles were confiscated due to faulty registration.

The mailer about Ecology Center's new programs resulted in 278 requests for bins in September, compared to the normal 125 requests/month. Set-out rate is steady, with an increasing amount of plastic and commingled paper. The Cash for Trash promotion will begin in February 2001.

The Commissioners discussed the problem of poaching. Staff reviewed the history of anti-poaching efforts in Berkeley. Citizens should report the license, time and place seen and a description of a poacher, to enable the police to catch them. There was consensus that the enforcement should focus on poachers with vehicles because they are causing the most damage, and appear to have the resources to earn a living in other ways. Staff will arrange a meeting with the City Police to revitalize anti-poaching efforts; Carrie Sprague will attend the meeting and will draft a letter of support from the Commission.

#### **6. Provision of neighborhood cleanup services to multi-family households.**

Staff reported that some apartment buildings have asked for free annual cleanup service. Currently the neighborhood cleanup serves 31,000 1-4 unit buildings and cost \$80,000. Oakland and San Francisco also limit service to 1-4 units. Apartment managers are responsible for removing their trash regularly; including them could encourage them to keep it for the annual free pickup. With 15,000 multi-family units in Berkeley, the additional cost of collecting from apartments could be as high as \$40,000. An alternative would be to collect by appointment, in the normal work day rather than using overtime.

Commissioner Balsley asked if collecting from apartments would increase recycling. Staff responded that collection is mostly trash now, except for mattresses and reusables. The City may stop collecting plant debris in 2001 because residents now have biweekly plant debris service. Commissioners said the newsletter should be sent to all residents because it has general information. This year it was sent only to 1-4 unit residences. Staff will discuss the merits of an appointment based system further and report back at a future Commission meeting.

#### **7. Plant debris: transfer station expansion grant status and possible action**

The ACWMA has offered a grant of \$725,000 transfer station compost area improvements, provided we meet conditions that include lower fees for organics recycling from nearby cities. Commissioners reviewed conceptual conditions at their May meeting and were provided with the final conditions in their packets. Staff is preparing a Council Report to accept the grant.

Commissioners discussed the conditions. The proposed fee reductions could result in revenue loss up to \$22,000, but that would be balanced by revenues from anticipated additional tonnage, and is a small loss compared to the amount of the grant. The expansion would allow the city to divert more material and handle it more efficiently.

Another condition is developing a policy to increase wood diversion and attract more clean loads of wood. We do not now have enough staff at the transfer station to divert wood, and may need more workers to handle the additional business. Commissioner Lerner suggested putting wood recycling information at lumberyards and hardware stores, and mailing it to contractors, as well as providing it to our transfer station customers.

Another condition requires the City to consider co-collection of plant debris and food waste from residents, but does not require a commitment to implementation. This will require study because state law requires food waste to be collected at least once/week. Major expenses for staff and new trucks would be needed, and possible changes in the collection system. (such as weekly organics collection and biweekly collection of dry waste.) Staff recommends prioritizing the expansion of the commercial food waste program this year because of the large diversion potential per customer, (currently 150 tons per month from 50 businesses, compared to 300 tons of recyclables from 1500 businesses) and because the plans and resources are in place, and study residential organics the following year.

It was M/S/C Sprague/ Lerner to support the grant and the conditions, and to so inform Council. Ayes: Sprague, Lerner, Balsley, Maguire. Noes: None. Absent: Becker, Schild, Johnson.

## **8. APWA Accreditation**

Staff reported that the Department is close to being accredited. Two outstanding conditions remain for the Solid Waste Management Division – load checking for hazardous waste, and drainage to the storm drain. We have submitted plans to satisfy both requirements. Commissioner Balsley requested information on local options for household hazardous waste disposal at a future meeting.

## **9. Weekly newspaper disposal**

Commissioner Sprague was concerned about recycling of outdated papers from distribution boxes. She found that distributors have a system in place. Joe Smith reported that poachers precede the litter trucks and salvage clean newspaper, as well as bottles and cans.

## **10. Staff updates**

Staff distributed a new Commissioner list. Budget work is beginning for FY 2002 and 2003. The City is working on a new system tying budget to projects and performance measures. The St Vincent DePaul mattress recycling facility is not operating yet, but they are accepting mattresses from Berkeley – the first City to participate. They expect to begin shredding mattresses in late October. The annual report to the California Integrated Waste Management Board showed Berkeley had a 50% diversion rate in 1999.

## **11. Future Agenda Items and Meeting Days**

The next meeting date is October 23. Agenda items will include

Multi-family neighborhood clean-up

Household Hazardous Waste disposal options

Poaching, review of Commissioner Sprague's letter to police

## **12. Adjournment**

It was M/S/C Lerner/Sprague to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.