



MINUTES
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
Monday, March 25, 2002
Solid Waste Management Center, 1201 Second Street

Solid Waste Management Division

Chairperson Carrie Sprague called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll call: Commissioners Present: Rachel Balsley, Howard Chong, Kristine Johnson, Carrie Sprague
Commissioners Arriving After Roll Call: Judith Maguire
Commissioners Absent: Rod Becker
Staff: Becky Dowdakin (Secretary), Tania Levy
Members of the Public: Robert Clear, Claudia Taurean, Dave Williamson

2. Comments from the Public: Robert Clear introduced himself as a member of the Citizen Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC).

3. Approval of the February 25, 2002 minutes: Balsley proposed that “buyer” on page three be changed to “proposed buyer” and that Ecology Center’s “education coordinator” be changed to “plastics education coordinator.” The amended minutes were M/S Balsley/Chong, and approved 4/0/0.

4. Old Business

a. Staff Report on Status of Refuse Fund

Dowdakin announced that Tom Farrell, Manager of Solid Waste and Recycling, was out of town on business, and that he would complete his presentation on the budget at a later meeting of the Commission. Dowdakin passed out several charts prepared by Farrell that covered many of the topics he presented at the February 25, 2002 Commission meeting: Distribution of 820 [Refuse] Fund by Use, Fund 820 Revenue Actual for FY 2001, and FY 2002 Adjusted Budget by Division for Fund 820. Farrell will discuss these charts in greater detail at his third, and final, presentation on the budget to the Commission.

b. Annual Neighborhood Cleanup

Dowdakin distributed a Draft Letter to the UC Berkeley Inter-Fraternity Council regarding the Annual Neighborhood Cleanup and preparations for student move-out. The Commission endorsed the letter with minor amendments for clarification. The Commission further suggested that staff send a similar letter to the student council that oversees the sororities, and include the Reuse Directory and ACWMA Recycling Guide.

c. Draft Battery Resolution

Clear explained that the earlier draft of the Battery Resolution reviewed by this Commission was modeled on an ordinance adopted by San Francisco, but appeared to be in conflict with EPA regulations. He drafted this new resolution from scratch. EPA regards all rechargeable batteries as Universal waste, and the State of California regards all batteries (except car batteries) as Universal waste. Homeowners are exempt from Universal waste regulations affecting batteries until 2004. This resolution attempts to address four points: (1) Continue the City’s in-house collection of batteries, (2) provide a convenient program for the public to recycle batteries, (3)

provide a public education program for battery recycling, (4) provide public receptacles for battery collection. CEAC likes this draft resolution but has not voted on it, and is soliciting the views of the SWMC.

In response to questions from the Commission, Clear explained that the resolution envisions the City providing battery collection opportunities inside City buildings, i.e. in lobby areas, and on the street. He noted that the Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste program has identified that battery sorting would be a big cost. In general, the Commission expressed concern that the draft resolution was too limiting on staff. It should be less specific to allow staff to develop logistical plans and programs, and to identify costs and funding. While supporting the spirit and intention of the draft resolution, the Commission took no specific position and made no official endorsement. Last, the Commission requested to see the draft resolution again before CEAC votes. However, while he appreciated the opinions and feedback, Clear expressed reluctance to continue to return to SWMC for input.

5. New Business

a. Recycling in Berkeley Schools

Tania Levy distributed copies of a staff report on recycling in Berkeley schools. Levy stated that Berkeley has about eighty schools. Seventeen are part of the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) and the remainder are independent. The Solid Waste Management Division (SWMD) provides recycling services to all the BUSD schools and to about half the independent schools.

Levy summarized that the obstacles to recycling in BUSD have included turnover of staff and students, absence of routine, custodian shortage, no system-wide recycling policy, and lack of monetary incentive. In the past few years, many of these obstacles have been surmounted. Beebo Turman has been promoting recycling in BUSD for several years, first as a volunteer and currently as a paid consultant hired by the City. She succeeded in getting the BUSD Board to adopt a policy (attached to staff report, Resolution Establishing a Green Procurement and Sustainable Procedures Policy for Berkeley Schools) that requires recycling in all school facilities. This policy is now presented as a model on the web page of the California Integrated Waste Management Board. Berkeley voters passed a parcel tax that has allowed BUSD to hire more custodial staff, including a supervisor, and provide training. Last year, an Ecology Center employee funded by the City, established an effective recycling program at Berkeley High School. This year, the City funded an entertaining recycling education program (assembly) for BUSD. The focus on recycling in the current school year has been in the cafeteria and includes bottle and can recycling, and composting.

Staff recently completed a cursory garbage audit of the schools and concluded that almost all BUSD schools could reduce their garbage service levels dramatically. Overall, BUSD could save \$55,000 annually by subscribing to just the level of service required to accommodate the current garbage generated. SWMD staff has tried many times to convey the savings opportunities available through reduced garbage service, and it appears that BUSD is now ready to listen. Staff has further concluded from this report that the next steps include providing BUSD with assistance in addressing illegal dumping, expanding food waste and milk carton collection, to provide outreach to independent schools, and addressing recycling

needs for summer session. Last, Ms. Turman will be leaving Berkeley, and staff will need to decide how best to replace her.

Levy introduced Claudia Taurean of the Alameda County Waste Management Authority (ACWMA). Taurean described that her services to schools include performing a waste audit, followed by a focus on sorting out recyclables, and establishing vermicomposting on site. Each school interested in the ACWMA program can sign up for a three-year period of assistance from ACWMA. Taurean has found that the school principals have been supportive, but BUSD needs to buy-in at a higher level for the program to work. In response to questions from the Commission, Taurean stated that ACWMA works in schools on request, including independent and home-schools of ten or more students.

Dave Williamson, Ecology Center Recycling Manager, stated that Marcus Kryska was a lucky find, and did an excellent job of setting up the recycling at Berkeley High School. Chong asked if the Commission should take any action on this subject. Dowdakin responded that the City Manager is sending a letter to the BUSD Superintendent regarding potential savings. Johnson volunteered to draft a congratulatory letter on behalf of the Commission to BUSD.

b. Public Hearing Start Time Limit

Referring to a memo from the City Clerk that was included in the Commission packet, Dowdakin asked the Commission what action they would like to take regarding the start time of public hearings. Chong made a motion that the Commission adopt the same policy adopted by Council, that public hearings shall not start after 10:00 p.m. Johnson seconded the motion, and the Commission passed it 5/0/0.

6. Staff updates: Dowdakin announced that the Library Grand Opening was scheduled for April 6, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., and encouraged the Commission members to attend. Two pieces of legislation are making their way through the State Senate. One bill is sponsored by Byron Sher and the other is Sponsored by Gloria Romero. Both bills concern manufacturer responsibility for Cathode Ray Tubes devices, such as televisions and computer Monitors. Dowdakin will bring a report on these bills to the next Commission meeting, so the Commission can consider recommending that the City Council endorse the bills. SWMD staff has proposed **new truck colors** for the collection trucks. The City Manager has approved the distinctive green and yellow colors and design. Staff hopes this helps distinguish City trucks from those of our commercial competitors.
7. Future agenda items and meeting days: Maguire announced that she would not be available for the next meeting, scheduled for April 22, 2002. The Commission briefly discussed changing the meeting date, and concerns about having a quorum, but did not change the date of the next meeting.

Balsley announced that ACWMA is having a mulching mower and compost bin sale on April 13, 2002, at Southland Mall in Hayward.

8. Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.