



**MINUTES**  
**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**  
**Monday, June 24, 2002**  
**Solid Waste Management Center, 1201 Second Street**

Solid Waste Management Division

Vice-Chairperson Judith Maguire called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

1. Roll call: Commissioners Present: Rachel Balsley, Rod Becker, Kristine Johnson, Judith Maguire (Vice-Chair)  
Commissioners Absent: Howard Chong, Carrie Sprague  
Staff: Becky Dowdakin (Secretary), Tom Farrell, Wendy Cosin, Nabil Al-Hadithy  
Members of the Public: Jeff Belchamber, boona cheema, Babette Jee, Sara MacKusick, Dave Williamson

2. Comments from the Public: None.

3. Approval of the March 25, 2002 minutes: M/S Becker/Balsley and approved 4/0/0.

4. Old Business

**a. Draft Battery Resolution**

Dowdakin briefly summarized that the Commission had commented on the draft Battery Resolution at its last meeting, and that Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) member Robert Clear had largely incorporated these comments by softening the resolution to recognize that staff can study and implement programs that they think will work best. Nabil Al-Hadithy, Toxics Division Manager, reported that the CEAC was inclined to word the resolution as strongly as possible, and insisted that it include a public collection program for battery recycling. He further stated that he believed that the City was doing a good job on its internal battery recycling program. Johnson asked if six months was adequate to implement a program, and if staff knew the current level of battery recycling in Berkeley. Dowdakin answered that six months was not enough time to implement a program, though it might be possible to complete a study in that time. Al-Hadithy added that the current level of battery recycling in Berkeley is not known.

M/S Becker/Balsley to amend the resolution to include the following language after section 1c: "Work closely with recycling agencies in other Bay Area cities and Alameda County to coordinate regional battery recycling services." Motion carried 4/0/0. M/S Johnson/Becker that the resolution be approved as amended. Motion carried 4/0/0.

5. New Business

Vice-Chair Maguire reordered the agenda to allow the Commission to hear the presentation on the Harrison Village Shelter first.

**c. Harrison Village Shelter**

Wendy Cosin of the City's Planning Department introduced boon cheema of Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS) and Babette Jee. Together they presented an overview of the Harrison Village Shelter project and answered questions from the

Commission, staff, and public. The project is an expansion of the existing transitional housing facility that has operated on the site since 1976. The site is located on Harrison Street at 4<sup>th</sup> Street, directly across the railroad tracks from the City's Transfer Station, and the City now owns the land. BOSS has secured funding for one new building, and a second new building awaits funding. At full build-out, the entire facility will house 132 residents. The existing use permit allows for 100 residents. The first application from BOSS to the City for the project was incomplete. Cosin stated that she was not sure whether once BOSS submits a complete application, the City will require an Environmental Impact Report or a make a Negative Declaration.

In response to questions from the Commission, Cosin responded that BOSS' original application for the project was incomplete because needed environmental data was missing. Jee added that BOSS is working with the City on using the data from the City's air monitoring station and that they had hired a consultant to analyze the data. cheema stated that the residents are not there much during the day, but confirmed that there was on-site childcare. Cosin clarified that the operator producing an environmental problem must correct any violations of standards, and that the area is zoned Mixed Use Light Industrial. cheema added the shelter use had been "grandfathered" in.

Al-Hadithy explained that the air monitoring station indicated that air quality in the area was bad. This is due to a slow moving freeway, the entire Solid Waste Management Center (including recycling operations), and a Southerly wind that carries industrial pollutants. Mainly the problem is particulates. There are no known violations of standards by pollutant generators. However, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) can find that a business is a "nuisance" based on subjective judgment of a complaint from the community.

In response to questions from the Commission, cheema responded that though the air around the shelter sometimes smells bad, it does not interfere with the program, and staff and residents had made no complaints. Jee gave a brief description of the historical use of the site, and state that the soil has is lead-contaminated, so the on-site gardens are in raised beds. cheema stated that about 15-20% of the population is on site during the day, totaling 30 people, including staff. The average stay for residents is four to six months, and the average population is 75-80 residents.

Farrell asked if there was a statutory requirement for residential air quality. Jee answered that the monitor indicates that the air exceeds the State pollution level, but falls below the Federal level. Al-Hadithy added that there is not carryover from risk level statements to regulations, but that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) plans to issue standards for planners to use as guides. For this project, the City is electing to use a comparative standard, that is, this site compares to other sites in the Bay area. Becker asked if there were any environmental constraints on the funding. Jee answered that the only environmental constraints are in regards to the green building grant from the Alameda County Waste Management Authority.

Johnson pointed out that the risk study needs to consider that the project will have a significant child population, and that children are not “standard” humans. Maguire stated that she too was concerned about children, but thinks the project will not be approved in another neighborhood.

**a. Quarterly Reports from Community Conservation Centers and Ecology Center**

Sara MacKusick, Community Conservation Centers (CCC) Executive Director, reviewed the CCC quarterly report for the January through March 2002 period. She noted that in this period, recyclable materials prices began to climb and have gone up dramatically since. With the cooperation and participation of Ecology Center and the City, CCC has been working with Environmental Science Associates (ESA) to study their operations. ESA has produced a preliminary draft on their study of CCC’s operations, which is under review of all the parties involved. When the project is further along, she will review the findings with the Commission.

Dave Williamson, Ecology Center Recycling Manager, reviewed the quarterly report for January through March 2002. He noted that tonnage had increased in the flats and decreased in the hills. Williamson concluded that the hill area decrease was due to the ease of poaching newspaper there. In the flats, Williamson stated that he believed gentrification of the area was the explanation for more recycling. Ecology Center is using a new truck that achieves partial compaction of materials. Because of the demographic changes, tonnage changes, and use of new equipment, Ecology Center has had to do some rerouting. Williamson believes that participation is up as indicated by a growth in commingled tonnage. Ecology Center has installed secondary containment for its biodiesel tank. Last, Williamson stated that the Ecology Center was interested in doing some neighborhood focus groups on plastic.

Balsley asked about the waste oil project, and clarification on the impact of gentrification on routing. Williamson answered that the City had asked Ecology Center to distribute Do-It-Yourself oil changing kits, but the project was on hold. Williamson then explained that his staff is adjusting to the fact that routes that were formerly light are now significantly heavier, and other routes while not significantly heavier have greater participation with lightweight (fluffy) materials. Balsley requested that Williamson report back to the Commission on the focus groups.

**b. Quarterly Report from Solid Waste Management Division**

Dowdakin reported on the Transfer Station activity for the January through March 2002 quarter. She highlighted growth in the organic materials diversion sector. Food waste tonnage has grown mainly through improvement of existing account, and residential plant debris collection has grown too. The most significant growth has been in diversion of organic materials at the transfer station. Dowdakin reported that through the fourth quarter, organics throughput has increased dramatically. Diversion of CRTs and refrigerators continues to outpace expectations, causing some budgetary headaches. While fees for these items cover the cost of handling them, increased revenues do not automatically offset the budgetary authority for the expense. In the new fiscal year, staff is likely to request mid-year budget adjustments to cover disposal costs.

MacKusick announced that the sale of the Dwight-King site had fallen through.

**d. Proposed Resolution on City Use of 100% Biodiesel**

Williamson brought an Ecology Center proposed resolution that the City use 100% biodiesel in its fleet no later than September 2002. He reported that Ecology Center had been using 100% biodiesel in its recycling fleet since March 2001 and had found it to be problem-free, with the small exception of susceptibility to fungus. No fleet conversion is necessary to use biodiesel. The environmental benefits are big reductions in particulates, reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>, 78% less greenhouse gases, and 85% reduction in mutagens. The NO<sub>x</sub> emissions may increase by 0.58 to 2.0%. Increases in NO<sub>x</sub> emissions are serious concerns for BAAQMD and CARB. Work is underway on creating a catalytic converter technology to address this problem.

Balsley asked about the expense. Williamson answered that 100% biodiesel is expensive, and could cost the City \$300,000 a year more in fuel costs. There is no Federal Excise Tax on biodiesel, the price is trending downward, and Williamson hopes that the City's impact on the local market would bring the price down. Unfortunately, because it is super oxygenated, trucks running on 100% biodiesel get about 83% of the miles per gallon as truck running on conventional diesel.

Becker expressed reservations, and wondered what the comparative pollution reduction qualities of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) compared to biodiesel. Becker wondered how these two options could best be balanced. Williamson stated that by BTU, CNG is less expensive. Farrell noted that budget is just one issue, a policy issue that Council must decide. The Solid Waste Management Division has looked at many options, and plans to continue using both CNG and biodiesel. The \$300,000 in increased operating costs must come from the rates. The plan is to increase the mixture of biodiesel incrementally.

M/S Johnson/Balsley that the Commission adopt a resolution in support of the Ecology Center resolution on biodiesel. The motion failed, 3/1/0, with Becker the sole vote against. Becker stated that he voted no because he wanted to see more analysis before recommending an action.

**e. Public Works Plan for Use of Airco Building**

Farrell reported to the Commission that the Public Works Department plans to move the Building Maintenance Division into the Airco Building as early as September 2002, though it may take longer. The building they currently occupy at the Corporation Yard is constructed of unreinforced masonry and must be vacated and rebuilt or replaced. Currently the Airco Building is used by SWMD for dry storage of field supplies and by the container maintenance operation. The move will displace all the storage uses and about 25% of the container maintenance operations. The Building Maintenance Division will also require off street parking for about a dozen City vehicles. Farrell stated that the move is temporary, and that Building Maintenance would move back to the Corporation Yard within three to five years.

In response to questions from the Commission, Farrell added that the City purchased the Airco building and partly renovated it using Refuse Fund Resources. SWMD needs additional office space for consolidated customer service, for personnel currently working out of temporary trailers, and for Ecology Center operations also occupying trailers.

The Commission expressed a variety of concerns including, the duration of the temporary relocation of Building Maintenance, the possibility of charging rent as an incentive to not over-stay, and the plan for addressing the existing SWMD needs for space. By consensus, the Commission requested that staff invite Rene Cardinaux and John Rosenbrock to the next Commission meeting in July 2002.

#### **f. Proposed Regular Meeting Schedule**

Vice-Chair Maguire removed this item was deleted from the agenda.

6. Staff updates: Dowdakin reported that shortly after the last Commission meeting, the City Council passed a resolution in support of SB1619 (Romero) and requesting Senator Byron Sher to combine his bill, SB1523 with the Romero bill. Both these pieces of **State Legislation** address manufacturer responsibility for CRT recycling. The **Neighborhood Cleanups** are going well with the third event recently completed. The original mailer for Areas 1 and 2 had incorrect pickup dates on them. To compensate for the error, staff mailed announcements with the correct dates to residents in these areas, and collection crews made extra patrols of these neighborhoods. Dowdakin said she would have a mid-way report on the neighborhood clean up at the August meeting. Contractors completed installation of the **Dust Suppression System** the transfer station. The system emits a mist over different areas of the transfer station throughout the day. Transfer station staff reports that the system is effectively reducing dust. The Public Works Engineering Division has again revised the schedule for the **Plant Debris Transfer Station Expansion**. After delays due to reexamination of the drainage system, construction is now scheduled to begin in September 2002. Dowdakin mentioned the packet attachment on the **New Solid Waste Rates** and noted that Berkeley's remain comparatively low. Last, the packet contained a letter from the City Clerk regarding **Commission Vacancies**; the Solid Waste Management Commission has three vacancies.
7. Future agenda items and meeting days: The next meeting will be July 22, 2002.
8. Adjourn: M/S Johnson /Becker to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4/0/0. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.