



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

Solid Waste Management Division

Chairperson Carrie Sprague called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Roll Call: Commissioners Present: Rachel Balsley, Rod Becker, Jay Miyazaki, Carrie Sprague
Commissioner Absent: Judith Maguire
Commissioner Arriving After Roll Call: Howard Chong (7:02 p.m.)
Staff: Becky Dowdakin (Secretary)
Members of the Public: Adam Cota, Sara MacKusick, Martin Bourque, Dave Williamson
2. Comments from the Public: Adam Cota introduced himself as a Berkeley resident and spoke about the importance of reusable cups. He suggested that the City and local businesses could promote and sell reusable cups, and vendors could offer discounts to customers that use them. Cota noted that he was interested in becoming a member of the Commission.
3. Announcements: Miyazaki announced that the City and the Citizen Budget Review Commission are offering a budget workshop for commissions and boards on December 12, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Berkeley Senior Center.
4. Approval of the Minutes from the October 28, 2002 Meeting: Miyazaki said that the minutes should be amended to note that Commissioners Balsley and Johnson abstained on the vote to approve the minutes for the August 26, 2002 meeting. M/S/C as amended (Balsley/Becker) 6/0/0.
5. Approval of Agenda: Dowdakin pointed out that the agenda was quite long and asked if the commissioners wished to remove anything or reorder the agenda. After a brief discussion, the Commission agreed to proceed with the full agenda as published, but to move item 6h to follow item 6b.
6. New Business:
 - a. **Quarterly Reports from Community Conservation Centers and Ecology Center**
Community Conservation Centers (CCC) Executive Director, Sara MacKusick, summarized the quarterly report that was included in the Commission packet. She noted that CCC had experienced big spikes in both prices and tonnage for fibers, and that plastics tonnages continue to rise. She promised to have an operations audit report from their consultant for the next quarterly report.

Ecology Center Recycling Operations Manager, Dave Williamson, summarized the quarterly report, which was distributed at the meeting. He mentioned that the increase in container tonnage from the 2001 Cash-for-Trash contest was sustained, and that gentrification appeared to be contributing to increased volumes and participation. The cost of capital, notes on trucks, caused a significant increase in expenses; three surplus trucks will be for sale. Williamson summarized the Plastics Education report that was included in the quarterly report. He noted that about \$190,000 remains in the Education fund for the remaining years of the contract [ending June 2005].

MacKusick noted an error on page one of the CCC quarterly report. FY 02-03 tonnage for buyback/donation was 543.7 tons.

b. Quarterly Report from Solid Waste Management Division

Dowdakin summarized the tonnage tables that were included in the Commission packet. She noted that because one of the analysts had been focusing on soliciting food waste customers, food waste tonnage had grown significantly. Diversion of materials at the transfer station also improved, but so had overall tonnage through the facility.

h. Discussion of Email Message from Cota

Adam Cota, who had sent an email to the Commission last month, recounted his experience in trying to find out where to get home compost bins. He found the information he was looking for at www.stopwaste.org, the website for the Alameda County Waste Management Authority (ACWMA). He pointed out that information on home composting, and recycling, is targeted to single family homes, and that residents of apartment buildings are not getting the information they need. Balsley stated that ACWMA chose to target single-family homes for composting, because they generate the most organic waste and are very responsive to the information sent in the mail. Martin Bourque, Ecology Center Executive Director, asked if Cota thought apartment managers would participate in focus groups on waste reduction and recycling. Cota thought they would need an incentive. Chong said he would like to see more outreach materials designed for apartments. Bourque said that Ecology Center is interested in working with the City and Kathy Evans, as a consultant, on developing an outreach and education program for apartment buildings.

c. Report on 2002 Annual Clean up and Discussion of Alternatives

Dowdakin announced that the report on the 2002 Annual Clean up was not yet complete, and that it will be ready for the next meeting. She provided the Commission a table summarizing bulky cleanup services in other Bay Area communities, and suggested that Berkeley could adopt a program similar to one operating in one of the neighboring cities. The Commission decided to wrap the discussion of alternatives into item 7b on the FY2004/05 budget.

d. Reporting of Commission Actions to Council

Miyazaki distributed a memo on proposed protocol and procedures for reporting Commission business to the Council. On Miyazaki's request, the Commission agreed to postpone this item until the next meeting.

e. Plastics Education Report

This item was covered as part of the Ecology Center's quarterly report (6a), earlier in the meeting.

f. Information on Multi-Family Residential Service Sector

Dowdakin briefly summarized the census information and pie chart on housing that the Commission was provided in the packet. Chong suggested that bulk mail to apartment buildings is ineffective because it is usually left in a pile and not placed into the tenants' mailboxes. He recommended that the City Manager be asked to audit the effectiveness of mailings through return postal cards to establish the differential between single family and multi-family housing. The Commission debated the effectiveness of this strategy, and though agreeing with the aim, did not express much support. Miyazaki asked Chong to see what information he could obtain from the Rent Board regarding addresses of tenants, and to share what he could at the next Commission meeting.

g. Recycling in Berkeley Schools

Dowdakin reported that Berkeley High School had restarted their recycling program after a brief intermission. Custodial staff had collected, cleaned and redistributed recycling containers to the classrooms. The school will now use a compactor for mixed paper, rather than using carts.

7. Old Business:

a. Harrison Village Shelter

Dowdakin announced that the City Attorney 's office said that if Sprague recused herself from discussion of the proposed shelter, she could later participate in the discussion with the Zoning Advisory Board, of which she is a member. Sprague would have to leave the room while the Commission discussed the item. The Commission deferred this item to the next meeting.

b. FY2004/05 Budget and Commission Recommendations

Miyazaki stated that he would like the Commission to send a memo to Council in December, making recommendations on the Solid Waste Management Division budget. He suggested selecting priorities from the list generated in the "brainstorm" session at the last meeting. He further suggested that capital improvements be categorized by safety, amenities, etc. The Commission requested that Tom Farrell, Manager of Solid Waste and Recycling, attend the next Commission meeting to give his point of view on the capital improvement projects. Miyazaki listed his priorities as updating the Solid Waste Management Plan to prepare for reaching the 75% diversion goal, use of the Refuse Fund for non-refuse activities, connecting revenues and expenses, and rates.

Dowdakin provided the Commission with Resolution No. 51,227-N.S., establishing the Refuse Collection and Disposal Fund (Fund), and Resolution No. 54,351-N.S. permitting use of the Fund for litter collection and street cleaning. She volunteered to ask the Public Works Director to request a formal opinion from the City Attorney on the allowable uses of the Fund. Miyazaki responded that he preferred that the Commission make that request.

8. Staff updates: Dowdakin announced that November 27, 2002 was the last day for three of the customer service representatives to work at 1201 Second Street. They will be moving uptown and become part of the Finance Department due to the **customer service consolidation**. Dowdakin reminded the commissioners that **election of new officers** would take place at the February 2003 meeting, and that technically, their **terms will expire on December 1, 2002**, though they may continue to serve until the Council members appoint replacements.

9. Future agenda items and meeting days: The next meeting will be December 30, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. The agenda will include further discussion of budget recommendations, report on neighborhood cleanup, consideration of draft letter on Harrison Village Shelter, consideration of proposed reporting protocol and procedures, discussion of services to apartments.

10. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.