



**MINUTES**  
**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**  
**Monday, January 27, 2003**  
**Solid Waste Management Center, 1201 Second Street**

Solid Waste Management Division

Chairperson Carrie Sprague called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Roll Call: Commissioners Present: Rod Becker, Howard Chong, Jay Miyazaki, Carrie Sprague  
Commissioner Absent: Judith Maguire  
Commissioner Arriving Late: Rachel Balsley (7:05)  
Staff: Becky Dowdakin (Secretary); Tom Farrell, Nabil Al-Hadithy  
Members of the Public: Sara MacKusick

2. Comments from the Public: None

3. Announcements: Miyazaki announced City Council budget workshop tomorrow (January 28) at 5 p.m. at Old City Hall. Also, there will be a Public Works/City Council budget workshop on February 4, 2003 at 5 p.m.

4. Approval of the Minutes from the December 30, 2002 Meeting: Balsley noted that she was absent from the last meeting. M/S (Miyazaki/Becker) to approve minutes as amended, carried 4/0/1, Balsley abstained.

5. New Business:

- a. **Battery Recycling**

Nabil Al-Hadithy, Toxics Division Manager, explained that City Council, upon request from the Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC), had directed him to conduct a feasibility study of recycling batteries generated by the City and by Berkeley residents. The City is required by law to recycle batteries as Universal Waste, because the City is a hazardous waste generator. The City is in compliance with this requirement. In 2006, State law may ban household batteries from municipal landfills and require cities to provide recycling programs for them. Toxics Division staff has reviewed the costs of battery recycling and has concluded that a public collection program for household batteries is not feasible at this time, for reasons of cost alone. Logistical problems would also be very difficult to address. Staff believes that continued landfill disposal does not pose a significant environmental impact.

The Commission discussed the merits of the nine CEAC recommendations on battery recycling, one by one [excerpted below]. M/S (Chong/Balsley) that upon recommendation of staff, and in light of the current fiscal situation and 2006 phase-in of a law banning batteries from municipal landfills, the Commission supports recommendations b, h, and part of e (to encourage City to work with merchants associations and the Chamber of Commerce), and to postpone consideration of the other CEAC recommendations on battery recycling. Passed unanimously.

*“b. Provide information to be distributed to all municipal employees alerting them to the presence of battery recycling containers, along with the reasons employees should use them. A notice that batteries can be recycled at municipal offices should be included in the reuse directory or other*

*such guides as soon as is it is applicable and practical. Public education about battery recycling should be included with any other public outreach about recycling.*

*“e. Request the city manager to write to all large retailers in the city that are likely to handle batteries to request that they recycle all battery types, and not just rechargeable batteries. The city might consider making this program more palatable to retailers by publicizing those retailers who comply, and possibly by allowing local retailers to recycle non-rechargeable through the city program.*

*“h. Encourage the use of rechargeable-recyclable batteries by providing appropriate information to all city purchasers of non-rechargeable batteries.”*

6. Old Business:

**a. Harrison Village Shelter**

Sprague recused herself and left the room. Dowdakin distributed a draft Council report from the Planning Department scheduled for the February 11, 2003 Council meeting. The report recommended that Council not proceed with an Environmental Impact Report, because too many negative environmental impacts had already been identified, but instead to begin looking for alternative sites for the transitional housing proposed for Harrison Village. Al-Hadithy briefly explained some of the environmental problems with the site, including the recent discovery of underground storage tanks beneath the existing building.

The Commission discussed the letter drafted by Becker in August 2002, and the urgency of their recommendation in light of the pending Council report. Miyazaki proposed that staff follow the accelerated process to get the Commission recommendation on the Council agenda, and that if staff was unsuccessful the commissioners would bring it to their Councilmembers individually.

Chong made the following friendly amendment, accepted by Becker, to the draft letter:

“Because of the grant funding time restrictions and high additional cost of mitigation and clean up at the Harrison site, the Solid Waste Management Commission supports the City Manager’s recommendation that the City not further consider lease of 711 Harrison Street to BOSS for expansion of the homeless shelter.”

M/S (Becker/Miyazaki) to approve the letter as amended, to be put in the correct Council report form by staff. Passed 4/0/0 (with Sprague absent).

**b. FY2004/05 Budget and Commission Recommendations**

Miyazaki reintroduced his draft memo on the FY 2004-05 Budget, which he revised to incorporate changes suggested at the last Commission meeting. The Commission discussed the draft memo, making substantial revisions to recommendations 3 and 4 to strengthen the connection between reducing unnecessary expenses and funding capital improvements. Tom Farrell, Manager of Solid Waste and Recycling explained the need at the transfer station for installing an effective storm water collection system that is required for the water quality permit. M/S (Chong/Miyazaki) to approve with amendments to recommendations 3 and 4. Passed unanimously.

**c. Services to Multi-Family Residences**

Chong said he was interested in requiring building owners to provide recycling for tenants or imposing a fee for non-participation. He requested that the item be tabled until the next meeting, and the Commission agreed.

7. Staff updates: Dowdakin said that the City Clerk had posted the Commission's revised **Mission Statement** on the Commission's web page with only a minor revision. The **2001 Report to CIWMB on Diversion and Disposal** is due at the end of the week, and City of Berkeley will be reporting a 52% diversion rate. Engineering Division staff received construction bids for the **Transfer Station Expansion for Plant Debris** in December 2002, and the selected bid is approximately \$480,000 in excess of the grant. Staff will be asking Council to authorize expenditure from the Refuse Fund reserve to cover the budget gap. The Alameda County Waste Management Authority approved the City's grant application for the **Cash-for-Trash** contest, and that Ecology Center was making preparations to roll out the contest around Earth Day in April. Dowdakin included several newspaper clippings in the packet regarding Berkeley's success with **Greening South Asian Restaurants**; ten Berkeley restaurants have enrolled in the commercial foodwaste program as a result of SWMD efforts in conjunction with Thimmakka. Becker suggested that "Trash Talk" on KCBS radio might be interested in airing this story.
8. Future agenda items and meeting days: The next meeting will be February 24, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. Agenda will include election of officers, status report on ACWMA organics facility, EPA grant, roster including email addresses.
9. Adjourn: M/S (Miyazaki/Balsley) to adjourn meeting, carried 5/0/0. Meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.