

Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes for November 19, 2020

WEB CONFERENCE

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections
Tim Hall, rep by Michelle Dewey, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)
Dorcas Dee Hanson-Lugo, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Inc.
Ron Kent, rep by Paul Ghougassian, Southern California Gas Company
Ben Lucha, City of Palmdale
Kevin Mattson, Waste Management
Mark McDannel, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Christopher Sheppard, Los Angeles County Public Works
Eugene Tseng, UCLA Solid Waste Program

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Chris Coyle, Republic Services, Inc. – Sunshine Canyon Landfill
Alex Helou, City of Los Angeles
Kay Martin, Bioenergy Producers Association
Mike Mohajer, Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Rob Williams, UC Davis Policy Institute for Energy, Environment and the Economy

OTHERS PRESENT:

Traacey Anthony, Alternative Resources, Inc.
Will Chen, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Nam Doan, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Coby Skye, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Yvonne Yueng, City of Santa Monica
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Christopher Sheppard called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 19, 2020 SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2020 meeting was made by Mr. Ben Lucha and seconded by Mr. Mark McDannel. The motion passed unanimously.

III. PRESENTATION – COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY ON BIOGAS PRODUCTS

Mr. Will Chen, with the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Sanitation Districts), gave a presentation on recent developments of their food waste recycling program. The Sanitation Districts started a food waste program in 2014 to co-digest food waste supplied by Waste Management at the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in Carson.

The Sanitation Districts receives and pre-processes food waste at their Puente Hills Material Recovery Facility (MRF) using a two-stage bio-separator and separating equipment. Up to 30 tons per day of food waste is slurried at the MRF and then transported in tanker trucks to JWPCP. Trucks are driven into the slurry receiving facility (SRF), which has two offloading stations each with two storage tanks that are co-digested with sewage sludge in one anaerobic digester (AD). The SRF feeds each digester a maximum of 83 tons of slurry per day. The Sanitation Districts will soon start construction of their SRF II, which will have three offloading stations instead of two and will increase the total receiving capacity to 415 tons of slurry, in addition to the 200 tons of slurry that JWPCP receives at the headworks of the plant.

JWPCP currently uses biogas to produce electricity at its onsite Total Energy Facility. Due to the increase in biogas production resulting from food waste co-digestion, the Sanitation Districts built 3,000 feet of pipeline to direct additional biogas to their new biogas conditioning system (BCS). The BCS refines raw digester gas into renewable natural gas (RNG) fuel to supply the Sanitation Districts' existing fueling station, which is operated by Clean Energy and is located directly adjacent to the BCS.

JWPCP is currently receiving about 300 tons per day of slurry with a steady increase in volume since 2014. Due to COVID-19, tonnage decreased by approximately 35 percent in 2020. The Sanitation Districts' goal is to eventually receive up to 600 tons per day of food waste slurry, which is the maximum capacity at JWPCP. The Sanitation Districts are considering various options for the additional biogas such as electricity generation, vehicle fuel production, and/or injection into the natural gas pipeline.

Mr. Sheppard asked Mr. Chen if a long-term pipeline injection agreement would be between the Sanitation Districts and the gas company, who owns the pipeline, or if the agreement would be with an off-taker who would use the pipeline gas at a power plant. Mr. Chen responded that they are looking for a long term off-take agreement with another entity because SoCal Gas and the power industry are focusing on transmission and not on procuring RNG. Mr. Sheppard asked what the timeframe would be for a long-term agreement. Mr. McDannel said that they have negotiated contracts up to 20 years, but securing long-term agreements may be challenging because the food waste slurry is supplied through one-year contracts and Senate Bill (SB) 1383, which will increase the supply of source-separated food waste, has not yet taken effect.

Mr. Sheppard asked if any local jurisdictions have approached the Sanitation Districts about purchasing RNG fuel to satisfy the procurement requirements of SB 1383. Mr. McDannel responded that they are working with their public information groups and will start outreach to waste haulers and local jurisdictions.

Mr. Ben Lucha asked if the Sanitation Districts have factored in the time of use rate during peak hours, when solar is not supplying large amounts of power to the grid, in their evaluation of options for the additional biogas. Mr. McDannel responded that the wholesale of electricity is generally inexpensive, but the price of electricity increases at the meter and that the Sanitation Districts considered the BioMAT tariff in their evaluation.

Ms. Michelle Dewey asked if the Sanitation Districts plans to use this fuel or electricity to help the County meet its SB 1383 procurement target. Mr. McDannel responded that they have not had such conversations, but they are actively marketing their food waste slurry processing and receiving capacity. Mr. Sheppard commented that the County is considering RNG procurement but that the supply of SB 1383 compliant RNG is limited and additional options are being explored.

Mr. Eugene Tseng asked how much contamination is in the source-separated food waste received at the MRF. Mr. Chen responded that the food waste contains five to ten percent contamination and the slurry received at JWPCP is limited to two percent contamination.

Mr. Sheppard asked how the Sanitation Districts tests the slurry to ensure it meets specifications. Mr. Chen responded that each load is tested onsite for pH and electrical conductivity and each customer is also asked to bring in a one-liter sample bottle that is evaluated for contaminants.

Mr. Sheppard asked Mr. Kevin Mattson how contaminant removal would affect tipping fees. Mr. Mattson responded that removing excessive contaminants would increase processing costs and may result in increased rates for customers.

IV. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Mr. Nam Doan provided the following update:

- The Office of Administrative Law approved the SB 1383 regulations on November 3, 2020. CalRecycle sent out an email last week on their listserv with the message of approval.
- On November 16, 2020, CalRecycle posted the SB 1383 Model Tool presentations and recordings on the SB 1383 outreach webpage.
- CalRecycle stated plans to revamp the SB 1383 webpages and include the rulemaking documents, frequently asked questions, and resources to implement SB 1383. CalRecycle will send an email to their listserv when the webpages are published.
- For future public monthly meetings, CalRecycle will include a standing item on updates for SB 1383 at each meeting.

Mr. Sheppard stated that the State Legislature is currently in between sessions. The Legislature is tentatively scheduled to reconvene on January 4, 2021.

V. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY EVENTS/MEETINGS/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Mr. Doan mentioned the following conferences, which are also listed in the Conversion Technology (CT) Newsletter.

- National Zero Waste Conference – held virtually December 1 - 3, 2020.
- WASTECON 2020 - rescheduled for November 2021 in Dallas, TX.
- RNG 2020 Conference – rescheduled for December 2021, in Dana Point, CA.
- COMPOST 2021 – held virtually January 26 – 27, 2021.
- International Biomass Conference & Expo – held virtually March 15 – 17, 2021.

VI. UPDATE ON CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Traecey Anthony gave the following update:

- ARI prepared requests for information on additional CT sites in the County.
- Clements Environmental provided more information on ammonia regulations and Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) determinations for composting and AD.
- Clements Environmental prepared an assessment of the currently available compost/mulch producers in the County to satisfy the SB 1383 procurement requirement.

Mr. Sheppard mentioned that Waste Management and Anaergia will be presenting at the next ATAS meeting on December 17, 2020. In light of COVID-19, Mr. Sheppard asked Mr. Mattson if there is a possibility of having an in-person tour

at the Waste Management facility. Mr. Mattson responded that they would provide a virtual tour with videos, photographs, and drone footage next month and could provide in-person tours in the future.

Mr. Mattson asked if the County had received any information about the organics processing facility Request for Proposals (RFP) released by Ventura County. Mr. Sheppard answered that he had not heard any formal announcement. Mr. Tseng stated that Anaergia was selected to develop the facility.

Mr. McDannel thanked CalRecycle for approximately \$2.5 million worth of grants that are helping the Sanitation Districts expand their food waste program. He also thanked the California Energy Commission for grants that helped the Sanitation Districts develop the BCS.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m. The next ATAS meeting is tentatively scheduled remotely for Thursday, December 17, 2020, at 10 a.m.