

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 22, 2023 – 5:30 – 7:30pm
MEETING NOTES

SWAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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|----------------------------|--|
| Carol Jones, Chair | Fred Kranz |
| Robin Barr, Vice Chair | Chaz Miller |
| Adam Diamond, Co-Secretary | Ellen Ryan |
| Amy Maron, Co-Secretary | Mark Symborski (M-NCPPC rep, non-voting) |

SWAC MEMBERS ABSENT: Troy Cavell, Heidi Lovett

RRMD STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Willie Wainer, Chief, Recycling and Resource Management Division
Lonnie Heflin, Chief, Materials Conversion Section
Eileen Kao, Chief, Waste Reduction and Recycling Section
David Frank, Waste Reduction and Recycling Section
Lisa Shine, Executive Administrative Aide
Jeff Camera, Chief, Materials Management Section (TS, MRF and closed LFs)
David Rosenbaum, Materials Management Section
John Nenghabi, Chief, Recycling and Refuse Collection
Scott McClure, Management and Budget Specialist III

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Daniela Ochoa-Gonzalez

The regular meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) was called to order by the Chair at 5:32pm.

Minutes: A motion to approve could not be reached because we lacked a quorum.

Featured Presentation

Topic: FY 2024 County Executive Recommended Budget for RRMD
Speakers: Willie Wainer with other members of RRMD and DEP (see list above)

Budget is flat, which represents a decrease in real terms, given the current inflationary environment. [CPI for all goods increased](#) 5% over the 12-month period ending March 2023.

Solid Waste Rate

Highlights of the fee increases include:

- Proposed disposal fee (tip fee) for trash will increase from \$60 per ton to \$70 per ton.
- The Refuse Collection Charge component of the Service Benefits charge, which applies to the Subdistrict A SF residences (receiving trash collection services), will increase 26% (\$33) to \$160.
- As a result of the price changes in the various components of the service benefit charge, the total charge for Subdistrict A SF households in the leaf vacuuming district will increase \$43 on the 2023 rate of \$533.87, or 8% (to \$577).

- Proposed C & D disposal fee delivered in open top roll-off boxes will go from \$76/ton to \$84/ton. These increases are to bring the County's fees in line with other disposal facilities and reduce the flow of material to county facilities.

Budget Categories

- Food Scraps Management: up 6% to \$1.9 million. Increase will support creation of four new drop-off sites for food scraps, and development of strategy to increase edible food recovery. Budget also covers collection and processing of food scraps as the residential pilot program expands; support of residential backyard and community composting; on-site programs to source separate food scraps generated by commercial sector; technical assistance and education.
- Multi-Family Waste Reduction and Recycling: 19% increase to \$1.2 million, including additional investigator for compliance and enforcement and vehicle.
- Zero Waste Planning: new program area for FY24; total of \$259K for two new positions and two vehicles to support this work.
- Residential Recycling Collection: up 1.9% to \$39.9 million. Increased budget covers CPI adjustments for contractors, increased demand for recycling containers, and higher bid prices for new collection contracts. In FY 24, about 3,000 additional households will receive recycling services for a projected total of 223,864 households.
- Refuse Collection: up 1.7% to \$10.1 million to cover CPI adjustments and higher bid prices. About 2000 more households will receive refuse collection services, for a projected total of 92,794.
- Transfer Station: 9.4% decrease to \$7.2 million due to reduced capital equipment purchases; budget includes expanded acceptance and processing of electronic waste, cylinder recycling, scrap tires, mattresses and box springs, and household hazardous waste.
- Recycling Center: 7.9% decrease to \$6.8 million due to reduced contamination that resulted from the Recycle Right program and changes in material exportation.
- Oaks Landfill: 21% decrease to \$3.2 million due to lower capital expenditures than forecast. MV solar array project at Oaks is almost done.
- Dickerson Yard Trim Facility: 20% increase to \$6.2 million—more capital expenditures, including new secondary screening equipment. Improved screening capacity will allow facility to squeeze more finished compost from same volume of inputs. Due to the legal covenant with Sugarloaf Citizens Association, the county is limited to 650,000 bags of Leafgro production, which was achieved.
- Dickerson Master Plan: Projected FY 24 cost is \$341K for a Health Risk Assessment.
- Resource Recovery Facility and out of county haul:
 - RRF: Decrease of 5% (\$1.8 million)—More electricity sales revenue due to higher rates and more Renewable Energy Credits. Includes \$1.4 million for capital expenses to ensure continued safe operations.
 - Out-of-County haul: Increase of 13% (\$1.7 million) for contract rate increases for transportation and disposal.
- Site 2 Properties: Increase of \$66,500 for maintenance of Site 2 structures.
- Disposal Fund (automation): increase of 16% to \$1.1 million, for support for IT systems, Video surveillance, radio equipment replacements, two new servers.

- Collection Fund (automation): increase of 7.8% to \$178K, for ongoing computer and software maintenance.

Questions and Answers

Q: Is budget sufficient to cover new programs? Where is money for SAYT pilot project?

A: Budget is adequate to reach goals. A combination of higher offsetting revenue from electricity sales and renewable energy credits (this more than doubled in FY 23 from FY 22) and increased efficiencies at MRF and Transfer Station resulting from capital improvements have helped the department budgetary wise.

SAYT: \$500k appropriated in FY 23 will be used in FY 24 to support the planned SAYT pilot.

Q: Willie, you mentioned “growth” in programs: can you give more details?

A: Have new programs, such as mattress and durable medical equipment recycling, batteries, expanded e-recycling. More households served as population grows, and more material is produced/handled.

Q: Are there financial incentives for the haulers to recycle?

A: Haulers won’t pay for disposal of items they recycle.

Q: What is the status of the public education campaign on recycling?

A: We’re doing a lot in Eileen’s section; we have a large budget for that.

Q: Where do things stand with electronics recycling?

A: We’ve expanded and are trying to educate haulers. E-waste is recycled in the United States. Working with Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (NMWDA).

Q: How you are going to promote the idea of zero waste to the general public?

A: We always talk about “Aiming for Zero Waste.” Can’t get to zero, but can get close. Will always have some residue that needs to be disposed of. Will have experts in public education involved in campaign.

- “Recycle Right” campaign to identify and correct contamination in curbside setouts has worked very well. Contamination rate decreased from 40% to 15%.
- Pushing really hard to purchase another property adjacent to transfer station—to be used for a resource recovery park, for residential use only.

Comment: There’s no agreement on what “zero waste” target is, and even the best recycling programs struggle to get above 50%.

Q: Is more material going through the system?

A: 80K more tons recycled in FY 22 than FY 21. Trash sent to RRF was a little less in ’22 than ’21.

Q: What is status of MRF Capital Improvement Project?

A: We had a meeting with RRT, the contractor. Design is 95% completed. Next step will be RFP to order equipment. Should be up and running before end of 2025.

Q: Are there places where it would be valuable to expand resources for RRM?

A: RRM asked for 4 positions for zero waste, only got 2 positions. Anything that will help RRM grow is where we need support from SWAC.

RRM Updates

We are looking for alternatives to the incinerator for disposal, through issuance of a Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI). Due date extended to May 6th for proposals. It will cost more to dispose of material. Only companies that responded to REOI will be allowed to respond to RFP.

Organics. RFP was awarded to EA Engineering last week. First meeting next week. 6-month effort. Work includes composition, source, and technologies that can be used to process organic waste..

Resource Recovery Park. Working on schematic. A \$50,000 contract was issued through the NMWDA.

Website. David passed along our comments; they are approaching final and incorporated many of our recommendations. The entire county website is undergoing redesign. Goal is to find something in 3 clicks or less. SWAC members are willing to be beta-testers.

Residential food scrap pilot. "Phase 2": Compost Crew has delivered all carts to the new area, and will start on March 27th. Ruth Carbonell of RRM staff has a task order to set up 2 MF properties with educational materials but the building owners have to set up the collection contract and pay for it on their own.

Topics for future SWAC meetings

draft budget letter discussion and vote; rescheduling postponed contract innovations and consolidation briefings; SAYT final report briefing.

SWAC Updates

Two new activities to develop guidance were proposed:

- Following up on County Exec's interest in the topic of Waste Prevention, Reuse/Recovery and Recycling Committee, Adam has volunteered to work on guidance on best practices for Resource Reuse and Recovery Parks,
- Waste Prevention, Reuse/Recovery and Recycling Committee: Amy has volunteered to lead a team looking at C&D Solutions

SWAC vacancy: Open for another 2 weeks, until April 12. 9 positions are open. For recruiting, personal invitations to potential candidates are the best.

Resignation Paula Jenson has resigned from SWAC due to personal reasons. Carol expressed that Paula's long service on the committee, over two different periods, has been greatly appreciated. Most recently, she chaired the Consolidation Sub-committee, and served as the SWAC representative to DAFIG and on the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee. Carol has valued her calm demeanor and thoughtful questions and comments from an informed-citizen perspective: she will be greatly missed.

Meeting Adjourned 7: 35 pm

ACRONYMS

C&D Construction and Demolition
CC County Council
CAP Climate Action Plan

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|-------|--|
| CE | County Executive |
| CNG | Compressed Natural Gas |
| CPI | Consumer Price Index |
| DAFIG | Dickerson Area Facilities Implementation Group |
| DEP | Department of Environmental Protection |
| EPA | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency |
| FTE | Full Time Employee |
| FY | Fiscal Year |
| MDE | Maryland Department of the Environment |
| MC | Montgomery County |
| MES | Maryland Environmental Services |
| MRF | Materials Recovery Facility |
| MML | Maryland Municipal League |
| MCPS | Montgomery County Public Schools |
| NMWDA | Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Agency |
| OLO | Office of Legislative Oversight |
| RRF | Resource Recovery Facility |
| RRMD | Recycling & Resource Management Division |
| SA | Service Area for County collection |
| SAYT | Save-As-You-Throw |
| SCA | Sugarloaf Citizens Association |
| SF | Single Family |
| SWAC | Solid Waste Advisory Committee |
| SWMP | Solid Waste Management Plan |
| T&E | Transportation and Environment Committee |
| TPD | Tons per Day |
| ZWTF | Zero Waste Task Force |