

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, November 11, 2024 – 5:30 – 7:30pm**  
**MEETING NOTES**

**SWAC members in attendance:**

Amy Maron, Chair	Oladapo Awe
Robin Barr, Vice Chair	Mark Symborski (M-NCPPC rep, non-voting)
Kavita Battula, Secretary	Troy Cavell
Chaz Miller	John Meyer III
Fred Kranz	Lauren Greenberger
Michelle Ennis	Kaela Martins
Andrew Cassilly	Barry Shanoff
Chaz Miller	
Dawn Sellis	

**SWAC Members absent:** Pradip (Peter) Mukerjee

**DEP Officials in attendance:**

Jon Monger, Director, DEP

Willie Wainer, Chief, Recycling and Resources Management Division

Lisa Shine, Executive Administrative Assistant to the RRMD Division Director

David Frank, Technical Liaison to SWAC

**Guests**

Paul Ellis, Legislative Assistance to Councilmember Stewart

Montgomery County Councilmember Kate Stewart

**Members of the public in attendance:** David Rosenbaum, Program Manager, Materials Management Section, RRMD; Sofya Orlosky, Elisabeth Fidler

Presentation by council member Kate Stewart on Bring your Own Bag Bill guest speaker (5:30-5:56)

- Bill bans plastic bags and institutes 10 cent fee on paper based on data from other municipalities showing that the addition of fee is most impactful on reducing single use bags
- 5 cents to water protection fund
- SNAP recipients exempt
- Bill introduced last month; public hearing scheduled for Jan 14<sup>th</sup>

SWAC Questions re BYOB

1. Mechanisms to measure outcomes? A: Collection of fees will be examined (dedicated admin)

2. Will bill apply to all businesses? A: Yes. Ten cent fee does not apply to carry-out; also does not apply seasonal markets due to enforcement challenges
3. Why SNAP exemption? A: Greater impacts on those individuals, namely carrying groceries home on bus. Individuals also typically don't carry change to cover the costs.
4. What is the expected revenue change? Any additional hires as a result? A: Not immediately, will need to ensure revenue stream first. There is currently a dedicated staffer which has great impact.
5. Revenue from 5 cent "tax" is low based on business not collecting the fee (based on IG report). Will the same thing continue? A: Dedicated staffer conducting outreach; fee remittance requirement has been changed to assist businesses in collection

#### Presentation by SWAC member Andrew Cassilly on Anaerobic Digestion (5:57-6:46)

- Devco converts food waste to useable
- Received unpackaged food stocks from producers, packaged from distributors, and pickup from private haulers from restaurants and residents
- 110k tons of pickup, ground up and pulverized, and stirred with anaerobic bacteria that consume the waste and process the solid digestate at the bottom.
- Methane is captured at the top, filtered to reduce corrosivity, and turned into renewable gas
- Water is diverted so it does not become landfill leachate, is cleaned for use in irrigation or for further cleaning for human consumption
- Digestate can be used as soil additive
- Jessup is urban design (due to size restrictions). Other types of facilities are rural design (being built in DE from existing compost facility) and co-digestion (like in EU, with multiple farms and community food scraps providing materials)
- Goal is to displace landfill land application; incineration
- Priority is reducing waste (reduce consumption), feed (animals) or leave unharvested; compost or digest anaerobically with beneficial use of digestate; digest with disposal of digestate; discard via drain, landfill
- Co-digestion of manure with food waste allows continuous addition of beneficial microbes
- Efforts to promote use of digestate include engineered topsoil and substrate media; pilot program with Howard co to combine compost with anaerobic digestion.

#### SWAC Questions re Anaerobic Digestion

1. Does bacteria end up in water or in solids? A: Remains in digester, harmful bacteria are cooked out during the process. Bacteria is monitored for health and performance
2. What is the process of cleaning up? Onsite wastewater treatment meets irrigation standards and is piped to Howard co wastewater treatment facility for additional cleaning. Treatment will vary depending on facilities.

3. What are differences between composting and digestion? A: Challenges of AD – cannot process wood waste; green waste best sent to composting facility, high water material is also best for compost. Fats (oils, grease) are best processed through digester
4. What testing procedures are used for leachate? A: Leachate is produced in landfill, water extracted in AD is tested and sent to wastewater treatment and tested again, then sent for use as appropriate
5. How much de-packaging is done and type? A: Varies. Dogfood, for example, requires intensive depackaging such as alum cans or very thick bags, and may include plastic contamination); non-organic material is removed and sent to compactor
6. How to implement without extreme cost? How can municipalities get involved? A: Waste facilities charge tipping fees at time of disposal. AD facilities have tipping fees that are slightly lower due to revenue from selling resulting materials. Municipalities can build facilities, but this is expensive. Other alternatives include sorting centers at existing sites, to separate materials by type and send for processing and appropriate locations
7. Does AD facility assess food stuff? A: Urban facility is particularly challenging due to variety of food stuffs that are received. Rural design is more cohesive feedstock. However, because Urban facility is all food waste, the digestate is a soil amendment (highly usable end product). Some product is sold to farmers for direct application, some is sent to compost (farm).
8. Challenges in removing contamination? High in areas where food scrap pick-up is compulsory (voluntary participation has very low contamination). Separation is easier in liquid form
9. What are additional hurdles? Residents have toured the facility and recognized advantages. Hurdles continue to be cost, thus diversion facilities are recommended.
10. Have you looked at county land to build facilities? A: Feedstock study is required
11. Lessons learned from other examples? A: Data says renewable fuel as replacement for diesel is 1:1 trade (comparable cost). Federal agencies are starting to offer grants to assist with fleet conversion. Use in thermal heat and for electricity are other uses.
12. Any pilot plan/proof of concept that can be demonstrated in MoCo? A. No, but happy to offer tours in Jessup! There are small farm digestors in Cecil County that can serve as models for small scale. Large scale poses more issues (requires greater regulation).
13. Green hydrogen concept – is this being produced? A: Yes, produced in multiple locations, but still at the experimental stage. Not currently cost effective, but will become more so over time. Subsidies are required to keep this going at present. Trying to produce at increased scale.

RRMD Updates from David Frank re food waste (6:45-6:49)

- Four drop-off sites at farmer's markets with three running throughout the winter (Bethesda, Silver Spring, Olney; Derwood is closed)
- 13.27 tons collected, 3.8k residents dropping off

- Volume will likely maintain through holidays and taper off during winter months
- High demand for compost bins (for leaves)
- America recycles day on Nov 15

#### Agenda Review and Approval of October meeting minutes (6:50)

- Motioned, seconded
- Quorum of members (15) voted and approved

#### Discussion of biennial report and future SWAC priorities (6:50-7:15)

- Motion to approve report for submission to council, seconded; voted and approved by quorum of 14
- SWAC Priorities
  - Diversion of materials currently being sent to incinerator
  - Materials recovery facility (MRF/recycling center) discussed – replacement of existing facility that is outdated was approved four years ago. RFP is needed
  - Monitoring changes to waste management system – RFP scheduled to be out by now but is not
  - Consolidate trash collection for subdistricts A and B
  - Plastic bags: submit testimony? Recommendation is to consider after reviewing the bill

Housekeeping: upcoming meetings for 2025 agreed upon: January 22; February 5; March 12; April 2; May 7; June 4; Sep 3; Oct 8; Nov 5

Public Comment (7:15) Sofya Orlosky – no comment, just thanks for letting her observe. She is part of the county staff reviewing all boards and commissions.

Adjourn: motion, seconded, approved (approx. 7:15 pm)

#### **ACRONYMS**

AD	Anaerobic Digestion
C&D	Construction and Demolition
CC	County Council
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  
OLO Office of Legislative Oversight  
PAYT Pay-As-You-Throw  
RRF Resource Recovery Facility  
RRMD Recycling & Resource Management Division  
SA Service Area for County collection  
SAYT Save-As-You-Throw  
SCA Sugarloaf Community Association  
SF Single family  
SWAC Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
SWMP Solid Waste Management Plan  
T&E Transportation and Environment Committee  
TPD Tons per Day  
TPW Tons per Week  
ZWTF Zero Waste Task Force