

**October 25, 2018**  
**Integrated Waste System Strategic Plan Task Force<sup>1</sup>**  
**4:30 p.m.**

**Called to order:** by Chairperson Chaz Miller at 4:30 p.m.

**Attending in person:**

- Attending in person: Chaz Miller, Keith Levchenko
- Attending by phone: Robin Wiener, Sara Bixby, Lauren Greenberger, Ken Lavish, Peter Ettinger, Caroline Taylor
- Staff: Marilu Enciso
- Public: Mike Ewall, Joy Nurmi, Susan Eisendrath - Council Sustainability Working Group and Sierra Club, Andrea Nunez - Huckers Office

**Minutes of the June 5, 2018 meeting:** Motion by Ettinger, second by Taylor to approve. Carried unanimously.

**Secretary:** Sara Bixby volunteered.

**Agenda:**

- Approve July 18 meeting minutes
- Select Secretary for the meeting
- Discuss Draft Task One Report
- Review plan for next meeting

**Discuss Task 1 – Current State Assessment Draft report**

Miller reviewed the purpose of each task from the current HDR scope of work (full scope found on the website at [HDR scope of work](#) .

Task 1 is the Current State Assessment, which includes:

- 1a. Waste Sort Review
- 1b. Comprehensive Description of the Existing System, with a lengthy list of topics and issues to be covered as part of this description.

Task 1 is considered simply a background document of the current programs and their current state. Everything builds on task 1.

He noted the staff received more than 130 comments on the Task 1 draft that fell into three common areas:

- Typos

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<sup>1</sup> May 30, 2018 Memorandum from Isiah Leggett, County Executive, to Hans Riemer, President, Montgomery County Council

- Policy issues
- Questions about data and statements in the report

Miller suggested that for the purposes of this meeting and as proposed in an email earlier, that the discussion concentrate on the text of the report as it relates to the EXISTING system; rather than a more philosophical discussion of how or what we want the system to be in the future.

The group discussed that the Maryland legal and regulatory framework were not described in the Current State Assessment with some task force members saying it should be present (per the list of items in the Task 1 scope – “applicable legislative and regulatory policies”) and others saying it is included in the County Solid Waste Management Plan. Greenberger suggested the Task 1 Report provide a link to the documents. Bixby suggested including a matrix that listed applicable laws/rules and Montgomery County’s current compliance status. Miller cautioned that going too far down the path of including laws and regulations could require a scope change.

Miller asked each task force member to identify his/her key concerns (1 or 2 most important) about the report and the key things that should be fixed or added:

- Miller: frustrated by trying to follow the tonnage table 3-6 (state form), which was confusing to follow. Also confused about the status of waste generated, disposed, recycled in the incorporated areas and if tonnage is included wholly or partially in the report. (Enciso said the tonnage was complete.) How much is MSW, C&D. Compliance with state laws, particularly Maryland Recycling Act.
- Wiener: My big issue related to the fact that terminology was inconsistent and wasn’t defined upfront. Pretty uneven report – some sections had a simple conclusion but no explanation of how it was made.
- Ettinger: Agree with the prior comments. It was hard to follow the tonnage numbers. He would like to see more on the pricing and money flows. From a pure formatting status, he wanted to see consistency on definitions, an intro in each section – what we did, assumptions, how we checked them, and a summary.
- Greenberger:
  - Question: Will HDR receive all comments? Answer: Enciso said HDR expects to receive consolidated comments.
  - Lacking cost data for the current system. Missing entire bits of information about component costs of current system, facilities and existing partners.
  - Doesn’t explain the role of Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority – services and costs.
  - Can we use the 30-acre next to the Transfer Station for a Resource Recovery Park?

Miller referred to the HDR contract where he said page 4 identifies what HDR is supposed to put in this task:

- Historic and current tons
- Tons by sectors
- WM services to sectors and demographics
- Waste generation rates
- Financial information – collection, processing and disposal costs

Tasks 5 and 7 and 9 will get into the cost per ton

- Bixby: Missing material flows the diagram does not capture Penn Waste where the County send some materials. Some items included in the comments apparently are supposed to show up in later tasks, not Task 1 (e.g., discussions about facility constraints).
- Levchenko:
  - Re facilities, in Task 1, expecting some sort of leading findings on facilities. At the end of the section there are few findings thrown in. A little confusing for him to try to identify what HDR intends to discuss in task 1 and what they intend to return to later.
  - DEP has a material flow diagram on their website that is much clearer than what is provided in the Task 1 report. Why didn't HDR replicate it in this report.
  - Q: Why is HDR breaking the material composition findings out? A: Enciso: we told them to investigate some larger categories i.e. organics since that is a priority for the County. Levchenko: Past composition studies have said the major opportunities are mixed paper and food waste. The Task 1 Report This doesn't say that anywhere. They could repeat those conclusions. If there are things here, they should explain why – missing context.

Miller: The County and contractor had modest goals for this task – to set the background without going into a deeper dive. Some of what we've been requesting is in the County 10-year Solid Waste Plan. He suggested the task force members to read the 10-year Solid Waste Plan, where they can find answers to some of the questions raised.

- Taylor: Concur with Keith who was being perplexed that some findings were included and others, oddly, not. Miller's explanation is that this wasn't geared to findings. Consistency; addition of the materials; removing findings if they shouldn't be here. Accuracy.
- Lavish: Concerns with overall readability and finding the waste flows – sometimes totally lost.
- Levchenko: made a specific comment about the waste projections and discussion about population and employment increases. Waste generation is not trending the way those are, but they don't explain how we currently project waste flows. What are the current assumptions being used by the DEP in its models?

Miller reminded the Task Force members that we need to be mindful of what is supposed to be in section 1 and the available hours and budgets. Miller offered his help to DSWS and HDR to classify the comments into the different categories.

The November 15th meeting will be used to discuss the findings of the benchmarking from the communities we identified with their best practices, which should lead into the heart of the project, Miller said. The Task Force is expected, on behalf of the County, to give thought on where this is going. What is our approach to review, comment, direction, meetings, schedule, directions to follow. He proposed establishing a more consistent meeting structure and to pull in outside experts by webinar on some things if that is the desire of the task force.

Scheduling: It appears Task Force members prefer to meet late afternoon/early evening – avoiding significant effect on day jobs – though this schedule is admittedly inconvenient for County staff.

Input Processes: Task Force members had a lively discussion about ways to provide input on upcoming tasks and feedback/responses to the task deliverables, because, as Greenberger noted, clearly every read and spent time reviewing the written output.

In going forward, there was interest in:

- A process for the Task Force to provide Input and expectations before and/or during development of the task deliverables.
- A method to help Task Force members focus on the purpose/scope of each task (maybe an excerpt from the HDR scope and an explanation of the County's expectations) in conjunction with receiving the Task deliverable so the review is consistent with the scope.

Then the Task Force circled back to the handling of the 130 comments received on the Task 1 Report. There was consensus that the comments provide value added and the group wants HDR to view the input.

Levchenko proposed that **HDR and DEP (and Miller and Enciso) work together to assign Task Force comments from the Task 1 report to the appropriate tasks with a report back to the Task Force by DEP.**

Nurmi, from the County Executive's Office asked who was attending from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and asked to give the Task Force the DEP viewpoint.

As requested, Enciso described the review process of Task One Report: Since we received the report, it has had two rounds of reviews by all five DSWS Section Chiefs. We compared the scope of work versus the content of the report and concurred with the scope requested from the consultant company. Similarly, County staff had reviewed the task force comments received, since Monday to today. As you may recall at the Task Force kickoff meeting back in June, it was said that the expectation was to receive task force input in a set of consolidated comments through the chairperson, rather than individual documents.

Enciso also said that the comments received were grouped into three categories, comments and edits, comments about future tasks, and comments out of the scope of work. Except for correcting mistakes and typos, other changes in the Task 1 text would be out of the scope of work and these changes would incur additional costs.

The budget for each Task is driven by the number of hours assigned to a specific task, i.e. 139 hours of HDR Staff was assigned to Task 1. County's view of Task 1 is supposed to be an overview of the system not the Master Plan, based on secondary information like the 10-year solid waste plan, and other reports we submitted to regulatory entities. The question is do we want to focus on Task one where there are not more hours left to expand the scope of work, or Focus on the upcoming tasks 5, 8, 9 and 10, which are the core elements of the Master Plan.

Wiener expressed the confusion shared by many Task Force members at that statement – what was the purpose of giving Task Force members the report to review only after County staff had found it acceptable and when there was no money left to address Task Force concerns other than typos.

Nurmi said she was aware Miller had asked a lot of questions about the process and how the committee could make best use its time and resources. She offered to see if she could get a better handle on this and follow-up.

The Task Force expectation is that all Task 1 comments will be shared with HDR. DSWS staff agreed to send all comments to HDR.

**On future task deliverables, it was clarified that Task Force members are expected to consolidate their individual comments into a single Task Force response.**

### **Review plan for next meeting**

The next Task Force meeting is Thursday, Nov. 15, at which we discuss Task 2, the benchmarking task and the data from the five chosen governments. The HDR deliverable is expected at least a week in advance of the meeting, though on Oct. 25 it was not yet in County hands.

Greenberger said HDR staff told her at an open house they were having trouble getting benchmarking data from all cities. She asked if HDR was able to connect with the contact person she gave to HDR. Enciso answered: yes, she was able to contact the person, and thanked Greenberger for the info.

Miller suggested we not meet Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> if the benchmark data and deliverable are not available.

Lavish reiterated that it would be useful to have a pre-task discussion before the task deliverable arrives, so the Task Force members can focus appropriately.

Levchenko asked about the webinar that Tim Townsend did (shared with Task Force members). He found it very interesting but wondered how those kinds of things shape our efforts? Miller clarified that the state of Maryland working on updating laws/policies related to measuring diversion/progress. Task Force members said they were interested in diving deeper into that discussion including talking about environmental impacts of materials not recycled, composted or handled via anaerobic digestion. Miller said he thought the discussion would fit with Task 9.

### **Future Task Force meetings:**

The Task Force agreed that it needs to meet more regularly and in person at the DEP to be effective. Ettinger thinks a combination of a phone call pre-deliverable and a meeting in person monthly makes the best sense for optimizing.

Miller encourages everybody to review the County's solid waste management plan – the baseline document, which is found: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/SWS/master-plan.html>

### **Public comments:**

- Susan Eisendrath: commendations on working through a lot of problem solving; echo suggestion of assigning current comments to appropriate tasks. Question: What happens if we submit the comments and then later we find out that there are a lot of questions that need to be answered in sections where the box was already checked. Second comment: Remind everybody that other groups worked really hard with DEP on legislation and composting strategic plan. That should be a link sent to everyone to review. Not clear that a lot of that got picked up in the task

one output. Finally, the MDE Sustainability Working Group has a report about changing the environmental performance is measure and focus more in reducing the carbon foot print.

- Ewall: Sent his comments on Task One report to Lauren earlier today. He wanted to make the Task Force aware that an identical bid to develop a Solid Waste Master Plan for Baltimore City was going on. Also, that MSW Consultants, the current HDR partners to develop Montgomery County Master Plan, submitted a proposal for that work. So HDR is going to be paid double for the same work, they (HDR) should not complain about some extra work here.

After the Task Force meeting, the County received clarification from the Authority, that Baltimore City selected for their master plan effort are led by Geosyntec Consultants, with Nexight Group, Deltaway Energy International and Second Chance as their subs. None of these firms overlaps with the planning effort being undertaken in Montgomery County by HDR.

Meeting Adjourn at 6:05.

Submitted, Sara Bixby