

Montgomery County
Integrated Waste System Strategic Plan Task Force¹
Meeting Notes
July 10, 2019

Attending: Chaz Miller, Sara Bixby, Ken Lavish, Caroline Taylor

Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)- Division of Solid Waste Services (SWS): Patty Bubar, Marilu Enciso, Willie Wainer

- Montgomery County Staff
 - Adriana Hochberg, County Executive Office
 - Lillian Cruz, Councilmember Albornoz' staff
- MES: Lori Scozzafava
- Montgomery County Sierra Club: Amy Maron, Debbie Cohn
- Sugarloaf Conservation Area (SCA): Ellen Polishuk
- Energy Justice Network: Mike Ewall
- SWAC: Kelly Doordan
- Adam Diamond
- Speakers: Patrick Serfass and Caroline Peat, American Biogas Council
- Speakers: Scott Woods and Brett Hoyt, Sustainable Generation

1. Called to order by Chairman Miller at 5:30 p.m.

2. Patrick Serfass, Executive Director, American Biogas Council

Serfass said his purpose was to introduce the Task Force to biogas systems, their importance and how they work if the industry is to move beyond composting. The American Biogas Council (ABC) is a trade association for the biogas industry.

There are two methods to recycle organics, both of which have useful features:

- Biogas systems, which in the United States range in size from 24 to 400,000 TPY handled with a 50,000 TPY average facility size. Biogas systems scale up well, meaning it is possible to add more processing modules to expand operations.
- Compost systems, which in the United States range in size from 30 to 300,000 TPY handled with a 30,000 TPY average facility size. Compost systems have benefits when handling small volumes of organics.

Serfass said he would present to the Task Force that biogas and composting system work well in collaboration with each other (not an either/or requirement). A few points:

- Biogas is a hydrocarbon, usually but not only used in the production of energy.
- Digestate is a term referring to the digested material produced in a biogas facility

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

- Contamination is a problem economically (requiring more money for equipment), rather than technically
- Systems work better now with commercial feedstocks than with residential feedstocks because the feedstocks are cleaner/more consistent and there are better economies of scale
- Problem materials: wood wastes and natural textiles, because the lignin does not break down and the material takes up space
- Proximity or access to a WWTP is a benefit in siting
- Odor control is an important requirement

See Serfass' presentation here: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/SWS/Resources/Files/master-plan/The%20Future%20of%20Anaerobic%20Digestion%20in%20Minnesota%20by%20American%20Biogas%20Council.pdf>

3. Brett Hoyt, Western Area Sales, Sustainable Generation

Sustainable Generation provided the Gore Cover System technology used in the Prince Georges County Organics Composting Facility. The system is an in-vessel aerated static pile (positive aeration system) in which organic wastes are placed in bags/bunkers enclosed with Gore fabric and the evaporating moisture from the feedstock is captured to fall back down on the composting material. Material reaches the point of being screened as compost at 35 to 40% moisture in about 8 weeks. Hoyt identified system benefits as:

- Scalable
- Useful in any climate
- Producing a consistent product
- Requiring a low energy input

Very successful programs use source separated organics and a strict up-front "policing" policy to accept only compostable materials. Prince Georges County rejected loads and trained haulers about proper materials from the start of its program. He also spoke about beginning with industrial and commercial feedstocks and bringing in residential feedstocks last. Systems must also have surge capacity to accommodate seasonal variability in generation.

See Hoyt's presentation here: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/SWS/Resources/Files/master-plan/aerobic-composting-sustainable-generation.pdf>

4. Approval of June 10 meeting minutes

Lavish moved, Taylor seconded to approve the June 9 (corrected date to June 10th) Task Force meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

Next meeting will be held in late August after the next report draft is received from HDR.

5. Public Comments

Amy Maron asked about the status of the subdistrict A and B consolidation study.

Lori Scozzafava asked what other technologies are being considered by the Task Force.

6. Adjourn. Moved by Bixby, seconded by Taylor to adjourn at 7:18 p.m.