

MEETING MINUTES

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY GROUP (SWAG)

January 11, 2024

ATTENDANCE

SWAG Members:

Present: Mark Bonner, Keisha Strand, Lynn Meadows, Joel Becker,

Absent: Richard "Buck" Arvin, James Gestrich, Ned Greene, Virginia Douglas, Harry Glasgow, Tiziana Bottino, Jane Wyman

Solid Waste Division Staff: Monica Gorman, Bernard "Bernie" Osilka, Trent Magill, Deborah Campbell

Other County Staff: Domonique Ward, Acting Director, Department of Public Works Business Services Administrator

Guests: None

OPENING

Ms. Gorman called the meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Group (SWAG) to order at 7:09 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

AGENDA TOPICS

INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Gorman welcomed everyone to the meeting via Microsoft Teams. Domonique Ward, the Acting Director for the Department of Public Works, was present as a guest.

APPOINTMENTS

Ms. Gorman announced the retirement of Will Lintner, SWAG member for the Potomac District, at the end of December 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

No minutes were taken at the last meeting, which was the annual landfill tour and picnic held on September 14, 2023.

REVIEW OF DRAFT CY2024 WORK PLAN

Ms. Gorman provided the Draft CY2024 Solid Waste Advisory Group Annual Work Plan document by email to attendees prior to the meeting. During the meeting, Ms. Gorman displayed the Work Plan and explained that meetings have been divided by quarters, with one planned meeting in the first month of each quarter. The Work Plan also allows the option to schedule extra meetings during the other two months of each quarter if needed. All meetings are virtual via Microsoft Teams from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., except for the SWAG annual landfill tour and picnic, which will be held in person at the landfill on October 10, 2024.

Ms. Gorman called for suggestions of other topics to add to the planned 2024 agenda.

Mr. Bonner asked if the general updates would include information on recycling, glass, and the new facility for mulch. Ms. Gorman confirmed that more details will be provided tonight and offered to follow up on information not covered in the next SWAG meeting on April 11, 2024.

Ms. Strand said the draft agenda looked good, and she has no suggestions at this time.

A copy of the FY2024 Work Plan is attached to these minutes.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Recycling/Diversion Outreach Programs

Ms. Campbell discussed the Voice of America video that showcased the Prince William County Landfill, which was filmed in May 2023. The link to the video was provided to the Division in October 2023. Ms. Campbell noted that the video is mainly in French because the intended audience was French-speaking audiences in Africa. Ms. Campbell shared that the video includes the original English spoken by landfill employees. Ms. Campbell offered to share the link if any meeting attendees were interested in viewing the video.

Ms. Campbell discussed a "Recycling and Diversion" slide with three photos. She noted that one of the photos showed Nathalie Barge, who filmed the video in May, chatting with one of the equipment operators. Ms. Campbell shared that during the filming, Ms. Barge spoke with several employees at the Landfill.

In November 2023, the Division received confirmation from DEQ that the CY2022 Recycling Rate was 38.6%, a slight increase from 38.2% in CY2021.

Ms. Campbell shared that a Prince William County resident won the "I Recycle" pledge contest sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. In the last ten years, this is the ninth time a resident has been awarded in the adult or student categories. The winner was awarded a \$300 REI gift certificate.

The recycling trailer formerly located at the Exxon station on the corner of Prince William Parkway and Old Bridge Road has been moved to the Chinn Library Parking lot. The move was made for safety reasons, primarily to provide more room to maneuver the trailer in and out for processing and more room for residents to utilize the trailer.

The November paper shred event collected 15,000 pounds and served nearly 200 residents. The next paper shred event will be on March 30, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Pfitzner Stadium parking lot or until the vendor's trucks are full.

Ms. Ward noted that the date for the next Paper Shred is well planned since it will coincide with tax season and the need to shred personal documents.

Mr. Bonner asked what the 38% is compared to. He also asked if it is 38% for the county versus 100% for everyone, like a barometer. Ms. Campbell clarified that 38% reflects the waste material the community generates and what percentage of it is recycled. Mr. Bonner concluded that the County has a long way to go in improving recycling rates.

Ms. Strand asked how far the new recycling trailer location is from the old location. Ms. Campbell said she estimates it is less than a mile.

Landfill Operations

Ms. Gorman noted that the landfill manager could not attend tonight's meeting.

Compost Facility Operations

Mr. Osilka noted the interchange at 234/Prince William Parkway and Balls Ford Road has been changed due to the elimination of a traffic light, and the facility address is now 13000 Hansen Farm Road. The new road realignment has made finding the facility somewhat confusing for customers. Mr. Osilka believes the new alignment has reduced traffic on the road, and it is now safer for customers to enter and exit the site.

Regarding operations and compliance, Mr. Osilka said there is a state inspection of the facility twice a year, which is the responsibility of the contractor that operates the Compost Facility.

Mr. Osilka mentioned that the Division is required to sample stormwater discharge from the Compost Facility on a quarterly basis. As part of an action plan to reduce nitrogen and total phosphorus, the Compost Facility will utilize straw bales and keep grass around stormwater ponds higher to slow the water down.

The Fire Marshal visited the Compost Facility in mid-December and raised concerns about accessibility due to the amount of material at the site. Mr. Osilka explained that the Fire Marshal looks at how they would approach handling a fire event and access for moving equipment and people in and out safely. The vendor has been working to reduce the amount of material on site, and the Fire Marshal has been visiting weekly.

Mr. Osilka explained in FY2022, the Compost Facility received approximately 53,000 tons of material. In FY2023, the amount received increased to about 74,000 tons. The closure of the privately owned and -operated Loudoun Compost Facility near Dulles Airport has contributed to the increase in material. Prince William County's curbside yard waste collection program, which started in October 2021, has also increased the amount of material coming into the Compost Facility between March 30th and December 1st.

Mr. Bonner asked for verification that since the tonnage is increasing, it should generate income. Ms. Gorman clarified that the Compost Facility does not generate revenue from Prince William County waste; instead, it is diverting from landfilling, which extends the County Landfill's life.

Mr. Bonner circled back to the discussion of total nitrogen and total phosphorus. He noted his friend was the Director of the Gulf of Mexico Project for the EPA, and their biggest problem was nitrogen, phosphate, and potassium, which sounds like a similar problem to the County's nitrogen and phosphorus levels. He asked if the Division knew of any programs the County had to limit or target this problem, such as regenerative agriculture. Ms. Gorman mentioned those actions are typically governed under the County's MS4 permit, which a different Division handles. She further explained

that part of the permit is to develop ways to improve water quality. Mr. Osilka confirmed that DEQ is aware that processing grass causes high nitrogen levels.

RNG Facility Operations at the Landfill

Mr. Magill shared a slide presentation on the RNG Facility that will be opening at the Landfill (presentation attached).

Slide 1 – Title slide, “Prince William County Landfill Renewable Natural Gas with OPAL Fuels.”

Slide 2 – Mr. Magill noted that the County has a contract agreement with OPAL Fuels and its companies to manage landfill gas.

Slide 3 – Backstory: OPAL Fuels, previously known as FORTISTAR, became a partner to the Prince William County Landfill in the mid-1990s. Per the contract, they own the gas generated at the Landfill, which they collect, use, or sell. The building on the far right in the top photo on the slide was the initial one built in the 1990s; it houses two 16-cylinder CAD engines. In 2013, the building in the center in the top photo on the slide was built; it houses three larger 20-cylinder engines. The five engines consume approximately half of the gas produced by the Landfill today. The gas is consumed by turning turbines to produce 6.7 megawatts (MW) of electricity, which is enough to service 5000 homes annually, according to the EPA’s conversion. To handle the other half of the gas produced, the Landfill has been using flares to destroy the methane for the past several years.

Slide 4 – The photo shows the location of the old engine buildings in the upper left, marked “Electricity Generation Plant,” and the new facility in the bottom center, which is the Renewable Natural Gas Facility. The new RNG Facility will be capable of processing all the methane gas produced by the Landfill for years to come. The new facility will remove impurities to bring the gas up to consumer-grade and is expected to produce enough natural gas to service 10,000 homes for the local utility company. The plant is scheduled to be commissioned at the beginning of March 2024. To handle the delivery of the natural gas, OPAL Fuels has been authorized to use some of the land near the old Electricity Generation Plant as a fuel transfer station, which will enable OPAL Fuels to truck the RNG to a Washington Gas injection site while construction of the natural gas line is completed.

Slide 5 – The photo on the top right shows an overhead view of the Electricity Generation Plant. The blueprint shows the plans for the area marked in purple on the overhead photo. Mr. Magill explained the blueprint. Landfill gas will be compressed and loaded on the vendor’s transport trucks. The vendor is anticipating about 12 truck trips daily. There will be additional security to allow passage at the Landfill gate throughout the night while keeping the site secure.

Slide 6 – The map view photo shows the proposed approximately 7 ½ mile natural gas line route in blue. This route will take gas from the Landfill to the injection site near where Hoadly Road meets Prince William Parkway. The gas will be added to Washington Gas’s distribution network at the injection site.

Slide 7 – The slide includes a video provided by OPAL Fuels of the facility in November 2023.

Slide 8 – Mr. Magill reviewed the projected project timeline for the facility, which is anticipated to be commissioned in March 2024.

Mr. Bonner asked if the County would make money from this agreement with OPAL Fuels. Mr. Magill affirmed his understanding that there has been a profit share agreement in place with OPAL Fuels, which will continue. Ms. Gorman elaborated that the profit share for the Electricity Generation Plant

was about \$250,000 annually. The profit share for the RNG Plant will be a minimum of \$400,000 annually and can be upwards of \$1 million, depending on the vendor's gas sales.

Mr. Bonner said he got involved with the Landfill several years ago. He has seen that the Division is very progressive and on the cutting edge of doing everything possible with the resources at hand.

Ms. Strand asked if the return was from the gas companies and NOVEC. Ms. Gorman said the County has a public-private partnership with OPAL Fuels, a private company that has been partnering with the Landfill to manage gas for over 20 years. OPAL Fuels constructed the Electrical Generation Plant and RNG Plant using private funds. The contract agreement includes a revenue share to the County based on the vendor's energy sales.

Ms. Strand asked if OPAL Fuels has RNG Facilities anywhere else. Mr. Magill explained that OPAL Fuels is an energy company that has converted landfill gas for beneficial use for decades. This is their third RNG Facility in the past several years. He noted they are opening one approximately every 15 months.

PROJECT UPDATES

Division Staffing

Ms. Gorman reported the County made a salary adjustment for existing staff last year, which also enabled the Division to offer higher salaries to fill vacant positions. She has noticed more applicants for each vacancy, and the quality of the applications has improved. The Division's vacancy rate has been reduced from over 20% at the beginning of last year to approximately 12% as of the beginning of 2024. Ms. Gorman is confident the vacancy rate will continue to go down.

Notably, all vacancies for the Scalehouse and CDL drivers have been filled. Recruitment efforts are ongoing for two important supervisory positions at the landfill, one heavy equipment operator vacancy, and a few vacant administrative positions.

New Tipping Fee

Ms. Gorman noted the new Landfill Tipping Fee for regular commercial refuse went into effect on January 1st. Ms. Campbell and other staff worked hard to inform customers of the change in advance by letter, email, and the display of lighted signs at the Landfill. As a result of the multi-pronged notification strategy, there have not been any issues with customers at the scalehouse.

SWAG MEMBER GENERAL QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mr. Bonner has been following news on electric automobile battery disposal. He asked if a sign had been posted about not accepting larger batteries at the Landfill. Ms. Gorman said there were no specific signs about electric car batteries, but if a customer is disposing of something of that size, they would have to pass over the scales, and staff would inform the customer that electric car batteries were not accepted. The Division also has employees monitoring such activities. Since Ms. Gorman has been part of the Division, she is only aware of two electric car batteries improperly brought to the landfill.

Ms. Strand noted that Keep Prince William Beautiful had their end-of-year meeting in December 2023. During the meeting, goals for 2024 were discussed, including more beautification projects and education projects. It was mentioned that the plastic bag recycling program was doing well. There was a discussion about using the old Prince William County Landfill Donation Centers, so Ms. Strand

believes the Division will be contacted about that. The program will hold a conference again this year on March 14, 2024. Ms. Gorman noted that Rico Fleshman had already reached out and mentioned TREX, a decking manufacturer. TREX collects clean plastic, so Mr. Fleshman wondered if the County would be interested in a partnership. The Division will conduct further research on program viability.

Mr. Bonner asked how the glass recycling program is going and if it has grown. Ms. Gorman did not have the numbers ready at hand. Ms. Campbell said anecdotally that it has been surprising how many people take advantage of the opportunity to recycle their glass in the purple bins. Ms. Strand asked how many purple bins there are now. Ms. Campbell said there are five: at the Landfill, Compost Facility, Dr. A.J. Ferlazzo Building, James S. Long Regional Park, and Richter Way Parking Lot at the Prince William County Government Center.

Mr. Becker brought up a concern from Nokesville. When he saw it last weekend, he noticed the recycling bin at the park looked like it had suffered fire damage. Mr. Becker said he saw the bin pulled on Saturday. He said the Nokesville community page stated that the fire department was called, and the doors were melted off the bin. He wanted to know if that meant the bin was lost completely or if the doors could be replaced. Mr. Osilka saw it at the Landfill on Monday and noted it was severely burnt. Ms. Gorman verified the Division has extra bins. Mr. Osilka said it is likely the bin will be replaced entirely. Ms. Gorman noted that fires like that, if not intentionally started, can occur because of certain types of batteries.

ADJOURNMENT and NEXT MEETING

The next SWAG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Gorman adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Attachments:

- CY2024 Solid Waste Advisory Group Annual Work Plan
- Recycling and Diversion slide
- RNG Facility presentation

**Prince William County
CY2024 Solid Waste Advisory Group Annual Work Plan**

1st Quarter

January 11, 2024	February	March
Draft Work Plan Review and Discussion; General Program Updates	No meeting unless needed	No meeting unless needed

2nd Quarter

April 11, 2024	May	June
FY24 Division Budget Review	No meeting unless needed	No meeting unless needed

3rd Quarter

July 11, 2024	August	September
Annual Recycling Program Update; Technology Update	No meeting unless needed	No meeting unless needed

4th Quarter

October 10, 2024	November	December
Annual Picnic and Landfill Tour	No meeting unless needed	No meeting unless needed



Recycling and Diversion

- In October we received a **VOA video** filmed at the landfill in May.
- CY 2022 **Recycling Rate 38.6%** up from 38.2% in 2021.
- **Received 576 Recycling Reports** from PWC businesses in preparation for 2023 Recycling Report submission.
- A Prince William County resident won the "I Recycle" pledge and received a \$300 REI gift certificate!
- The **recycling trailer was moved** to Chinn Library Parking lot.
- **November Paper Shred** we collected 15, 000 pounds and served almost 200 residents.
- **Next paper shred** will be on March 30 in the Pfitzner Stadium Parking Lot

**Prince William County
Landfill
Renewable Natural Gas
with OPAL Fuels**

SWAG Update January 11, 2024

Transition from Electricity to Natural Gas

- Late 1990s: Engines 1 and 2
- 2013-2014: Engines 3, 4, and 5
- 6.7 MW of electricity = 5,000 homes
- Flares destroy the methane
- December 2023: complete engine shutdown



RNG Facility

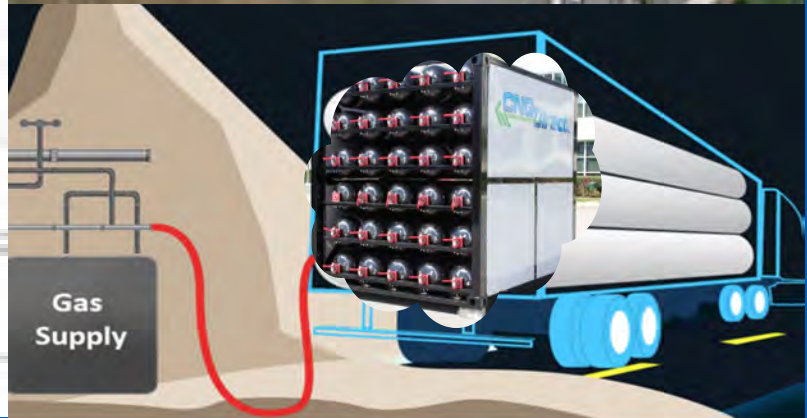


RNG Facility



Temporary Fuel Transfer Station

RNG from the new plant will be trucked to a utility distribution network injection point.



RNG Facility Flyover

Projected Timeline

- March 1, 2024: RNG Plant Commissioning
- February 2024: Public Notification of Construction for Gas Pipe
- March 29, 2024: RNG Trucking Operation Begins
- December 2024: Pipe Construction is Complete
- January 2025: Trucking Operations Cease and Piping begins