

**SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL – COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CITY AND COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2011, 3:00 P.M.  
KNOLLWOOD COUNTRY CLUB  
12024 BALBOA BOULEVARD, GRANADA HILLS, CA 91344**

- A.** The meeting was called to order by Chair, Becky Bendikson, at 3:05 p.m.

Roll call was taken by Agnes Lewis. Quorum established with 8 members.

**PRESENT: SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL – COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Members:** Becky Bendikson, Jeanette Capaldi, Gale Gunderson, Wayde Hunter, Josh Jordahl, Mary Anna Kienholz, Michael Hemming, Joe Vitti.

**Absent:** Larry Gray.

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CITY, COUNTY, AND BFI/REPUBLIC SERVICES:**

SCL-LEA: Martin Rose, Mark Como; SUPERVISOR ANTONOVICH'S OFFICE: Millie Jones; BFI/REPUBLIC SERVICES: Kurt Bratton, Rafael Garcia, Patti Costa, Becky VanSickle; SCAQMD: David Jones, Larry Israel; CITY COUNCILMEMBER, GREIG SMITH'S OFFICE: Nicole Bernson; LAUSD DISTRICT 3, Jennifer Brogin; LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING: Oscar Gomez.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Harvey Abrams, Wendy Boksenbaum, Bill Hopkins (GHNNC), Barbara Iversen, Rick Kotikian, Agnes Lewis (GHNNC), Ralph Kroy (GHNNC), Cherie Mann, Mike Mohajer, Robyn Reinhart, and Kathy Tyni.

Minutes of January 6, 2011 were reviewed, and minor changes made: The correct name for the biologist was Wesley Colvin. Josh Jordahl was late for that meeting, and the quantity of dirt excavated was 80,000 tons a day, not 800,000. **Motion** (Hunter/Capaldi): To approve minutes as amended **Carried 5-0-3.**

Ms. Bendikson thanked members of the public for attending. She asked all to sign in, but made it clear that the members of the public may remain anonymous if they so wish.

The Chair introduced the newest member, Ms. Gale Gunderson, Principal of Van Gogh Elementary School, appointed by Tamar Galatzan (LAUSD Board of Education) replacing Mary Wroblewski who had resigned.

**B. Old Business:**

**1. Discussion of any outstanding administrative matters (Chair):**

- a. Discussion of electing a new Secretary, to replace Mary Wroblewski. Ms. Bendikson read the description of the duties of the Secretary, which included keeping records of attendance, discussions and recommendations, maintain a permanent record of activities of the CAC, and make copies of documents available to the public. No one

volunteered, and the Chair announced that this discussion would be revisited at the end of the meeting.

- b. Posting locations were discussed for the agendas, because HOWS' market has closed. Currently the CAC posts outside of HOWS and have added the Knollwood Pharmacy ( Post Office inside the pharmacy, and the bulletin board next to the entrance), Sugar Suite, Bee Canyon kiosks, and the Granada Hills Public Library, although the library is not accessible 24/7. Mr. Vitti volunteered to check with the Chamber of Commerce about the possibility of posting there as well. There is now a new PO Box for the CAC; 11862 Balboa Blvd, **PO Box 412**, Granada Hills, CA 91344.
- c. Discussion to replace the previous Minute Taker, Beth Bunnell. Mr. Hunter commented that Agnes Lewis has produced the last several meeting minutes, all of which were well done and had been approved. He also commented that the rate of pay was \$25 per hour to continue taking minutes. **Motion** (Hunter/Kienholz): To approve Ms. Lewis  
**Carried 7-0-1.**

- 2. **Treasurer's Report (Ms. Kienholz):** Funds were finally received from Republic, after a series of errors with the wrong checks issued. It took three months to straighten it out, so there were three months of bank charges. Ms. Kienholz passed out a brief financial report. There were a very few checks written. Mr. Hunter added that there are two accounts, one with \$6,000 for Operating Expenses, and the other a Savings account with \$80,000, intended to be funds for hiring consultants and the like. The Treasurer's Report was accepted without objections. Ms. Kienholz thanked Ms. Bendikson and Mr. Hunter for lending their own funds to the CAC in order to be able to open the bank accounts and the post office box.
- 3. **Request to Deliver an Executive Summary (Mr. Hunter):** Participants were reminded of the request that, when giving reports, they should first send an executive summary a few days ahead (16 copies). There was also a reminder from SCL attendees that BFI notices may be obtained by signing up at their website. Also there was a reminder that more information is needed for the public on what progress is being made regarding the odor problems.

### **C. New Business:**

- 1. **BFI Report:** Mr. Bratton informed the CAC about organizational changes at BFI. They searched for two years for a General Manager, and in the end chose an internal candidate from Texas with 20+ years experience in both technical and business aspects. He had worked at several difficult canyon landfills. He had primary day-to-day leadership of a very large division of the company, and he is a long-term employee of the company. Mr. Bratton continues as Assistant Area Vice President. The current Area President becomes General Manager of the Long Beach facility. Eventually the company will address the Area President position. It's very difficult to find talent in Los Angeles because of the business climate. On the current project DTE (SL5000), there is no substantial change; it's still in the permitting phase.  
A significant event since the last meeting is another landslide. The area is full of ancient landslides that get re-triggered by current operations on the location of the ancient ones. Some landslides are expected events when millions of cubic feet of dirt are moved. They happen because the soil is not homogeneous. At the site of ancient landslides there is

slippery, semi-liquid clay. This has been noted in all development plans for years. The biggest current slide, over about 30 acres, is on top of an old one that wants to move south/southeast. The movement is blocked by giant buttresses designed by geologists. This usually works well. They have also found several smaller landslides, one of about 2 acres. The cure there is to put in a keyway and dig the dirt out and compact it. The smaller slide wants to move east. On January 11 at about 3 p.m. a very large section, including part of a hill and the County scale houses moved 35 feet down and 35 feet sideways over about an hours time. The company was going to move this area anyway, but now this had to be done immediately. From a safety perspective, this was not a significant event. One of the large gas collection lines was impacted. Gas system repairs had been deferred, and this was well documented by the City, the County, and the company's own geologist. Most of the mitigation is complete, but they'll "be mitigating" for several years. Where the slide intersects with roads, scales, or drainage, the mitigation is done. Question (Mr. Kroy): Have they consulted with a geologist on where the angle of repose is? Answer: Yes, it's at about 30 degrees. The direction of movement is toward the entrance. During the last few years of life of the landfill, they will build a giant buttress and fold in a big dirt berm closing the entrance. Question (Ms. Kienholz): would the earth have slipped if there were no landfill there? Answer: There is always potential movement during earthquakes and similar events. On the issue of SCL mailings, they agree that they need better quality and information. Rafael Garcia has volunteered to take this on. He will attempt to better communicate to recipients. The website [sunshinecanyon.com](http://sunshinecanyon.com) has been totally revamped to make it easier to find information. It also makes it easier to manage documents and suggestions. They have submitted a Grading Plan to the Water Board and to the County for cells CC2 & CC3a.

2. **SCAQMD Report:** (Mr. Israel): Larry handed out copies of several reports of complaints. In January 2011 there were 138 complaints. In particular, on January 28<sup>th</sup>, Van Gogh Elementary school was the focus of many complaints. In February, there were 173 complaints, by far the most ever. This led to 4 Notices Of Violation (NOV). On February 7<sup>th</sup> alone, there were 33 complaints from the school. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, there were 9 complaints in the evening hours. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, there were 21 evening complaints. On the 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, mostly morning complaints, and a few evening ones. The reports lists odor descriptions as the callers stated (described them). On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Inspector, John Anderson and Larry Israel collected air samples and samples of the neutralizer being used, Aero4, a botanical. Question (Ms. Capaldi): Is weather a factor? Answer (Mr. Israel): Generally not a significant factor. There were lots of Santa Ana winds at the time, but only verified significant odors on one windy day. After rains, the wet trash might be an issue, or other infrastructure issues might smell like trash.

Question (from the public): What does it take for a notice of violation? Answer (Mr. Israel): There have to be a minimum of 6 complaints that they are able to verify. Question (Jennifer Brogin, LAUSD): What is the effect of the neutralizers? Answer (Larry Israel): this will be addressed later today.

Question (public): Are any fines actually paid for these NOVs? Answer (David Jones, SCAQMD): All NOVs back to 2009 are still with their legal department, who is studying the matter. To follow on about last meeting's discussion of neutralizers, they are approved by the Water Board. They look at the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) provided by the manufacturer to determine that the compound will not harm water sources. They mainly look at the water impact. The MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) doesn't typically say exactly what the chemical is. The AQMD decided to analyze some, for the toxins that the AQMD looks at, contained in Rule 1401 for toxic risks, usually carcinogens like benzene and others. As it turned out, the landfill is not using one of the ones analyzed, but instead uses SL5000, or other botanical neutralizers, and then dilute them quite a bit. AQMD looked at a sample of the dilution, and did not come up with any concerns. Next they will try a concentrated sample. The sampler is a long, big plastic bag that can capture a sample of the air. Analysis for toxins does not necessarily tell you about everything of interest. Comment (Mr. Bratton): There were earlier complaints from immediate neighbors about odors from perimeter misters described as being "like Fabreze." They then went to chemical neutralizers, but some neighbors still complained. They petitioned to stop using the perimeter misters, instead using neutralizers.

Question (Mr. Hemming): What is the difference between deodorizers and neutralizers? Answer: Deodorizers are like perfume, pleasant odors introduced to mask bad ones. Neutralizers are supposed to have chemical reactions with odor molecules and eliminate them. Comment (Mr. Hemming): Sometimes it smells like strawberries, sometimes like citrus, sometimes like Fabreze. They are not successful in masking trash odors. The whole concept is not working. Answer (Bratton): This is all part of the working face study. Neutralizers work primarily on solids and liquids. When you start atomizing over a quarter acre of landfill working face, they can't support the idea, without a study, that neutralizers are the solution. Comment (Mr. Jones): The odor capture study was due in February, and the work face study is due June 14<sup>th</sup>. Question (public, Barbara Iversen): Wouldn't immediate dirt cover be a better solution? Answer (Mr. Bratton): Trucks at the working face are constantly coming and going, actively dumping. It is not possible to cover immediately, because another truck is right behind. Neutralizers are not the perfect solution because there are millions of molecules involved, over a relatively large area. They looked at sludge from the Hyperion plant, where neutralizers really helped. It's harder to neutralize in the air.

Mr. Israel returned to complete the balance of his report stating, in January there was a request for modification of the requirement by the Los Angeles Public Works Department for a 9" soil cover. That changed landfill operations and affected their odor studies; for example, studying using tarps over all trucks. A number of study items were removed as a modification. The public can contact the SCAQMD Hearing Board for findings, discussions, and changes. The contact person is Rosalinda Diaz; the case is AQMD vs. Allied Waste and Republic; Ms. Diaz is familiar with it.

Question (Mr. Vitti): Please explain the application of neutralizers? Answer (Mr Israel): There are two applications. A Dust Boss is like a cannon, and shoots out neutralizer in a

large fan shape over the working face. Comment (Mr. Bratton): You can't spray neutralizer directly on the trash because of Water Board rules; the chance is too great that it will run off and impact the water table. Instead they try to create a wall of mist, like a giant box fan 100' in the air, oscillating back and forth. There are three of these, two operational now. Comment (Mr. Hunter): Don't get too hung up on this; what's important is to take positive steps to prevent odors in the first place; trying to knock down odors after they escape is futile. The active mitigations include reducing the size of the working face to 30,000 square feet from about 12 acres [about 500,000 square feet]. They have also been ordered to stop partially uncovering the face early on Monday mornings. As a result, they have stopped having long-haul trucks early in the mornings. The community would complain more if they knew what number to call (for SCAQMD). Odors are detected even as far as El Oro Way School. Some people have complained about their inability to sell their houses because of the proximity to a public nuisance.

Comment (Mr. Hemming): He is one of the affected neighbors. There are only two words that describe the situation: it's either impossible or incompetent. Maybe "incompetent," because the order of abatement was issued one year ago; there have been lots of reports, lots of studies, but a complete unwillingness to do anything that actually helps.

Question (Mr. Kroy): Have they tried neutralizers on the trash as they're dumping it, at the source? Answer (Mr. Bratton): They're not allowed to spray neutralizers directly on the trash because of the possible run-off. Maybe they can move this back to the transfer stations trials are just finished, and the results will be available soon. At a transfer station in Gardena, they tried a mist system for the trash as it was being loaded. They tried four types. (They) also tried putting on a hard shell. They had trained engineers in blind tests to see if they could detect odors. The actual testing is being done by a third party, with five trucks of each type, treated or not. This will be published soon.

Question (from the public): So this has been going on since 2009, and nothing is settled yet? Answer (David Jones SCAQMD): It may be better not to settle too soon; there is more power and flexibility that way.

Comment (Ms. Kienholz): She has lived on Whistler, near the dump, for 43 years. The City side was closed once, and the odor went away. It returned as soon as the dump was reopened. Question (from the public): From the time the truck dumps the trash to the time the neutralizer is applied, how much time is elapsed? Answer (Mr. Bratton): It's done continuously, so no time is elapsed.

Question (Ms. Ziliak): This can explain odors during the day. What explains odors at night, when there are no operations? Answer (Mr. Jones): There were recent complaints in the evening when there was significant damage to the gas collection lines; collection efficiency dropped. They were repaired on an emergency basis, and are now back on-line. Any off-hour odors must be due to gas. The good news is that is a direct cause and effect and can easily be repaired. Republic agrees that complaints continue though lots of things were

done; they are disappointed. There are more things that can be done. At recent meetings with the County, they agreed to a list of action items. It has been reviewed with the AQMD. They have been proposing, for example, to use a system of horizontal collectors, unique at Sunshine Canyon; usually collectors are vertical, where you have to excavate a lot in existing raw trash. They chose to use that on cell CC2, so it will be completely different.; trying to capture all the gas, different compounds, by putting the entire working face under negative pressure. Comment (Ms. Ziliak): The odors are now worse than they have ever been, so this is going in the wrong direction. This should be resolved before the landfill is allowed to continue. This is more important than fines or legal issues.

Comment (Ms. Gunderson): She has been at Van Gogh Elementary school for three and a half years. The first year there was not a big problem. This year there were 15-20 people walking around holding their noses. It was really bad Monday and Tuesday. Comment (Mr. Hemming): He is glad that now the CAC is talking about issues that are actually relevant, not technical issues where they are not competent to comment.

Mr. Jones' returned to complete the SCAQMD's report stating that studies and reviews are basically due in May and June. The odor capture report due date was changed from February to May 16<sup>th</sup>. The agency is trying to solve this problem; they are very concerned with the number of complaints.

3. **Report from SCL-LEA (Mr. Rosen, inspector):** On January 2<sup>nd</sup> there was a violation, and on January 21<sup>st</sup> a problem with litter control. The LEA saw bags not confined to the dump area. On January 28<sup>th</sup> the problem was gas control, with three probes at greater than the 5% regulatory limit. One was at 18.7%. In February, there were no violations for the first two weeks. The third week the report was written and is in review; it has not been issued yet. Question (from the public): Do they check every day? Answer: No, there are a large number of probes. If there are lots of complaints then they physically check about once a month, and consultants sometimes check more often. When there is a violation, the operator is required to submit a remediation plan. The violations have mostly been on the north side near the freeway, presumably far from the neighbors. There is a perimeter probe to see whether there is off-site migration. Question (Ms. Ziliak, to LEA): Can the LEA confirm that there were broken gas lines? Answer (Mr. Rosen): He was not aware of that until now. (Mr. Bratton): they would not necessarily know until they do their monthly testing. (Mr. Garcia): Mr. Rosen might not know of it, but this was discussed at the LEA Board meeting. Question (Mr. Hopkins): So the area is not monitored automatically by instruments? Answer (Mr. Rosen): It has to be done according to State regulations; they cannot tell Republic to do that. (Mr. Bratton): There are over 400 wells, and they are not under continuous monitoring. There is whole-field testing the first and third weeks of the month. They then send out the data to consultants for analysis, to shorten the time for action.
4. **City and County Planning Departments:** (Mr. Gomez, LA County Regional Planning): There is no report this month.
5. **Other Persons present who represent the City County or State:** The Chair asked for other reports, there were none.



- 6. Report on Bull Creek Restoration** (Mr. Kroy): Bull Creek was a wetland area defined as a mitigation area for BFI. At the last meeting, he reported that there were many homeless people there and lots of trash. Ms. Jones (LA County) apparently arranged for a very aggressive group of people to take care of the problem. They cleaned up the area and got the homeless people out, but Mr. Kroy felt that they did as much harm as good, because they were so thorough in clearing debris and cutting trees that they were in danger of ruining the wetlands use. They agreed to get the advice of an arborist as to what constitutes proper cleanup in the context of a wetlands area. There is also a concern that grading of the dirt could interfere with drainage. The area begins at Balboa Blvd at the Methodist Church, then goes under Balboa through a drainage pipe and continues east. He is still waiting to get the legal status from the city and county regarding the use of the wetlands by the public. He also has a concern that landowners of the shopping center on the east side of Balboa, when expanding their parking lots, might have encroached on the wetlands area, and he thinks this should be further investigated.

**D. Public Comment:**

Comment (Mr. Kotikian): He has been literally driven away from his home because he made the mistake of leaving the window open when he left. What incentive does BFI have to actually stop these odors? Why does the CAC not meet with the City Attorney and get his office involved? This public nuisance has to be stopped! The neighborhood had only two days of no odors in January. This is beyond ridiculous, he said. Why can't something be done?

Question (Mr. Cash): He moved here in 1984, and is disgusted with the way things have gone. He suggests that when there are horrendous violations, as now, the dump should be closed until the violations are corrected. That would cause the operators to correct the problems quickly. When the trucks enter the facility and start dumping trash, especially on windy days, they create clouds of dust. There must be regulations with teeth. What power do the agencies have to put a lid on violations instead of constantly repeating this pattern?

**Motion** (Hunter/ Vitti): That the CAC send a letter to the appropriate City and County regulatory agencies, given the comments from the public, and ask what actions can be taken to get rid of the odors. [The intent is that the letter rejects the idea of endless studies and asks for some enforcement with teeth.] **Carried 7-0-1.**

Comment (Ms. Ziliak): Larry Israel should be commended for his good work in inspecting odor complaints. There was general agreement from the attendees.

At 5:05 p.m. the Chair advised that the main meeting was adjourned, and after a 5 minute break a Special Budget Meeting would follow.

**E. Special Overtime for Discussion Budget/Banking/Financial Matters:** There was another roll call; all CAC members present except Mr. Gray. The Chair commented that the meeting would discuss banking and finance issues.

Comment from the public (Mr. Kroy): He thinks the city attorneys are ignoring Brown Act violations. The Chair commented that this topic was not on the agenda and therefore cannot be discussed at this meeting, but she will put it on the agenda for next time.

Mr. Hunter: The CAC now has credit cards, but they're not functioning yet. Costs for copies at each meeting exceed \$200. Perhaps the CAC should consider buying its own copier. Suggestion (Ms. Capaldi) that the CAC should consider renting one, where all the maintenance is included. There was a general discussion of the topic, including that the CAC needs its own website. Then documents can be put there and interested parties can read documents and download only the ones they want. That should cut the number of copies significantly. There was also discussion of where to put the copier, if any; this was not settled.

The Chair commented that the CAC made 2,000 copies (pages) for this meeting. That should be cut at least in half. Comment (Mr. Hemming): What the County does is to put documents on the web for each meeting; people download their own. Mr. Hunter to investigate a possible copier solution.

Ms. Kienholz: There are no policies regarding reimbursement for mileage to meetings, which can be quite distant. The CAC members have talked about this before, without resolution. Ms. Capaldi volunteered to check with other volunteer centers to see what they do, especially on the rate. Mr. Vitti was of the opinion that approval of trips should be at the discretion of the Chair.

**Motion** (Hunter/Capaldi): That the CAC Chair and Vice-Chair develop a policy for reimbursement of mileage, parking, and other appropriate expenses when members travel to TAC, LEA meetings, City Council hearings, and other meetings directly related to Sunshine Canyon Landfill, at \$0.50 per mile, as approved by the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer **Carried 7-0-1.**

Ms. Kienholz asked for CAC approval to pay Agnes Lewis for producing the minutes of the past meetings. The Committee voiced in the affirmative and there were no objections.

Comment (Mr. Vitti): (In relation to use of funds for Consultants) The community is evidently in an uproar over recent odor problems. Perhaps the CAC should think about getting legal help. Mr. Hemming commented that this would not be getting legal help against BFI, but rather to get clarification on what is the CAC's operating authority. There was a discussion about hiring a consultant, maybe an environmentalist, who could shed light on the odor issues. The Chair commented that, when invited to the City Attorney's Working Group, she brought up the matter. Mr. Hemming commented that there is a



budget of \$20,000 a year for consultants, and the CAC should put that to use to help solve this problem. There was a general comment that the CAC perceives the SCL operators as taking largely meaningless actions; and that the CAC should get help in shaking things up so corrective action is taken.

Mr. Vitti asked about the possible formation of an ad hoc informal committee for the neighbors of the landfill to be able to voice their concerns, and perhaps the Neighborhood Council should be asked for help in this. There was a brief exchange of opinions and the Vice Chair indicated that this extended time period was for budget discussion only and that this subject was not appropriate, and would have to be agendaized for discussion.

**F.** Adjournment at 5:56 p.m.

**Minutes by Agnes Lewis. Minutes Approved by Committee as amended May 5, 2011**