



CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant

5001 N Columbia Boulevard, Portland, Oregon 97203 ■ Mingus Mapps, Commissioner ■ Michael Jordan, Director

Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant (CBWTP) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2021

Attendance:

Community Members: Matthew Denton, James Ellis, Michael Greenblatt, Cara Poor
Staff Members: Steve Behrndt, Debbie Caselton, Niel Curley, Robert George,
Michele Juon, Christa Overby
Guests/Presenters: James Hutton, BES O&M Group Administration

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements

Steve Behrndt, BES Operations & Maintenance Group (O&MG) Manager, welcomed the CAC members and thanked them for taking time to attend the meeting. He shared that community meetings have been in place since the 1990's, and that we had two main topics for today. These included a Resource Recovery Presentation and Updates to the Secondary Treatment Expansion Program (STEP).

Resource Recovery Presentation

Niel Curley, Resource Recovery Division Manager, shared a presentation on the Resource Recovery Division. He began by using the illustration of the life cycle of aluminum cans and how they can be recycled and reused repeatedly. This is analogous to resource recovery, which is the transformation of materials that were previously discarded as waste into something of value again. This is done through a circular economy that focuses on sustainability during its cycles of production and use. From this perspective, we view BES as owning resource recovery facilities that take wastewater from the community and then transform that material into valuable products through many different processes.

For instance, we generate energy that is used by the treatment plant which reduces our need for external electricity to keep our facilities running. Through our biosolids processing, we are a nutrient factory that transports useful nutrients back to the environment for more efficient land usage at two application sites in Eastern Oregon. We also produce clean water through our treatment processes and return it back to the environment, thereby improving water quality. These benefits are being achieved, in part, through our inheritance of past resource recovery practices and a commitment to beneficially using environmental material. This legacy of environmental stewardship began in 1952 with the construction of the CBWTP. This continued through the last 69 years with the operation of the Tryon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Biosolids Land Application program, cogeneration engines at CBWTP, the recent Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) Facility, and much more.

As such, we look at our BES infrastructure and assets through a lens of a triple bottom line. This perspective actively involves the protection of not only public health and the environment, but also provides solutions to many challenges that we face today. One being climate change and its accompanying greenhouse gas emissions. As previously shared, with our infrastructure and assets, we can change wastewater into things of value. By leveraging these resource recovery practices, our resiliency is increased, and our facilities are made more sustainable for future Portlanders. All of this is in alignment with Portland's values and goals and demonstrates our dedication to environmental stewardship as outlined in 2015's Climate Action Plan.

Moreover, the Resource Recovery Division, and all of BES, have placed a heavy emphasis on Equity. This is seen in our contracting opportunities that partner with companies that place a heavy emphasis on supporting minority and women-owned businesses and also providing equal access to resource recovery products.

Niel Curley concluded his presentation by sharing details on the division's three primary program areas. These include Biosolids Management, Biogas Utilization, and Energy Efficiency. BES currently has two biosolids application sites at Sherman County and Madison Ranches. Some benefits of this program included enhanced soil health, increased crop yields, recycling of nutrients, sequestering of carbon, and economic benefits to local growers. Biogas Utilization is made up of the RNG Facility, cogeneration engines, boilers, and a flare. While there are many benefits to each of these aspects of biogas use, the Renewable Natural Gas Facility is projected to cut 21,000 tons of climate-changing emissions each year, add \$3 million in annual revenue, and replace enough diesel to power 154 garbage trucks for a year. Finally, in regard to the Energy Efficiency, The Resource Recovery Division has active engagement with employees to identify operational changes that lead to increased energy efficiency. These have resulted in a savings of \$255,000 in energy costs over time. Finally, future resource recovery opportunity at BES were shared, which include water reuse, co-digestion of food waste, nutrient recovery, and vehicle fleet conversion.

Updates to STEP

Debbie Caselton, Community Outreach, shared an update on STEP, which is mandated by DEQ. It is to be completed by December 2024.

Upcoming Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 19, 2022.