

**FINAL MINUTES**  
**Waste-to-Energy Facility Monitoring Group**  
**MEETING**

**February 8, 2023**  
**Covanta Alexandria/Arlington Waste-to-Energy Facility – Eisenhower Avenue**  
**8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting**

The Facility Monitoring Group, City and County Staff, and HDR representatives present for the meeting included Helen Lee, Erik Grabowsky, Vijetha Huffman, Alaeedin Mohamed, William Skrabak, and Dan Domato. Don Cammarata and Kelly McLaughlin attended the meeting from Covanta. This FMG Meeting was held as a virtual meeting.

**I. Comments on Agenda**

There were no edits made to the agenda. Grabowsky made a motion to approve, Huffman seconded. All in favor of approval.

**II. Approval of Final Minutes from the November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Facility Monitoring Group Meeting.**

There were no edits to be made to the minutes, Grabowsky made a motion to approve, Skrabak seconded. All in favor of approval.

**III. Requisitions for Payment**

The requisitions for payment that were submitted for approval totaled \$18,887.88. The sole invoice was the invoice for HDR Engineering, Inc. for the period October 23, 2022, to January 28, 2023, in the amount of \$18,887.88.

Mohamed had received and reviewed the invoice from HDR and had no comments. Grabowsky made the motion for approval. Huffman seconded. All in favor of approval.

Lee stated that the vote for the HDR CPI rate increase will be completed electronically as discussed in the pre-meeting. An email will be sent out after February 14, 2023 when the CPI is posted for January.

## **IV. Operations and Facility Status**

### **A. Summary of Plant Operations (by Covanta)**

McLaughlin provided a brief update on the Plant Operations. McLaughlin discussed Facility Operations and Maintenance: The Plant's performance during the last quarter was negatively impacted by the T-G no. 2 failure and subsequent repairs, and investigation. Covanta successfully restored normal plant operations 28 days after the failure. In December, Covanta performed black plant repairs, and completed testing without any major issues. Covanta was proactive with coordinating and communicating the timing of these outages. Due to the T-G no. 2 failure, production was down overall, but had recovered in January (in regard to permit limits).

McLaughlin discussed the Facility's Staffing: There are four auxiliary operator positions open. For these positions, one offer that has been accepted and should start in a couple of weeks, two offers are in currently in the process of being approved. There is one electrical and instrumentation position open, but a recent offer has been accepted, that is expected to started in April.

McLaughlin discussed the Facility's Environmental and Safety Highlights: There were no environmental exceedances during the previous quarter. There were no injuries or incidents during the previous quarter.

### **B. Discussion of Quarterly Report and Facility Performance to Date (by HDR)**

Domato discussed the Quarterly Report and Performance Trends. Domato reviewed the deficiency list noting a few items were completed: item 7 (roof exhaust fan over Boiler 3), item 14 (leak near Boiler 2 gen. bank hoppers. One new item was added to the deficiency list: there is a minor leak on the Boiler 1 mud drum drain piping.

In Q2FY23, the average boiler availability was 91.2%, this is in line with previous fiscal years; this is the lowest period of availability during the year due to the scheduled outages. The average T-G availability was 67.1% during the quarter and the downtime was primarily for the unscheduled outage on T-G no. 2 (T-G no. 1 availability was 94.7% and T-G no. 2 availability was 39.5%). In Q2FY23, the Facility processed 83,527 tons of waste. See in Chart 1, the monthly MSW processing rate was in line with previous fiscal years (despite the higher downtime in Q2FY23).

In Q1FY23, the ash generation rate was 20.3% which is down 1.3 percentage points from Q2FY22; this is partially due to the new magnet installed in February 2022, as compared to running with a temporary drum magnet in Q1FY22. Current metals recovery increased by 0.5 percentage points compared to last year (Chart 3 Page 10). In Q2FY23, ferrous recovery averaged 3.2% (as a

percentage of waste processed), this is more in line with historical data with the new magnet in place of the temporary magnet that was running with lower efficiency of the temporary magnet.

In Q2FY23, the steam production was consistent to the previous Q2s. The boiler steaming rate (how much steam is created per ton of waste) was 2.88 lbs. steam per ref. ton during the quarter. This a 10+year high (since FY10), and 2.5% higher than the historic average. In Q2FY23, the gross and net electric generation were significantly lower than Q2s in previous fiscal years due to the T-G no. 2 downtime. See Chart 12 (Page 19), the Facility averaged 362 net kWh/ton which was more than 15% lower than previous fiscal years. Turbine Steaming Rate at 14.2 lbs/kWh is significantly higher (lower performance) than the previous two fiscal years. However, coming out of the T-G no. 2 outage, the Facility experienced a 3-year high for gross electric generation (due to T-G and Boiler performance).

In Q2FY23, the fuel oil usage was 20,150 gals. This was nearly double the amount used in Q2FY22; however, given the number of separate boiler outages, this usage was not excessively high.

## **V. Covanta Items**

### **A. T-G Failure and Corrective Actions**

McLaughlin discussed the recent T-G no. 2 overhaul and subsequent failure in their summary of plant operations discussion.

### **B. Supplemental Waste**

There is no update on this matter.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. Battery Education**

COG (with McAndrews and Consulting) is working on a battery education campaign. The campaign has applied for a grant to the EPA. Covanta is willing to participate and support the campaign, they just need further information. Cammarata stated that there were funds in last year's budget, however Covanta had not received any information prior to the end of the year. Grabowsky will reach out to COG to provide necessary information to Covanta.

### **B. Residential Drop-off Procedures**

Covanta has not yet moved the drop box past the scale house because of the fill sitting in

the back parking lot. Covanta had terminated a subcontracted employee who had multiple disputes with residents there for drop-off. Covanta has been doing periodic surveys with residents and the consensus is that they are happy with operations.

C. Communication following Forced/Unscheduled Outages

McLaughlin provided an update on the notification list: Covanta is waiting on the finalized updated contact list from the Jurisdictions. Covanta has set up a notification short cut in their personal email that captures key personnel that they currently are aware of, but are waiting on the FMG to provide the updated list. Lee stated that there have been some leadership changes within the City: the new interim director is Torrence Moore. Lee will work with Grabowsky to update the notification list as soon as possible.

Cammarata added that part of the communication was proactively communicating with neighbors, if there is an unusual noise heard during that period, they were aware of it. Those communications went out and received positive feedback from Summer's Grove. Cammarata is in communication with Cameron Station, a civic association. He has not heard any desire for future communication regarding outages from them.

**VII. New Business**

A. eRINs Discussion

Cammarata discussed the renewable fuel standards that were enacted years ago when ethanol was added into gasoline in order to improve environmental performance. With the rise of electricity becoming the fuel for vehicles, there has been a question posed of how does WTE fit into the renewable fuel standard. From a landfill perspective, landfill will generate a natural gas to be used to generate electricity. The way rules are written today, it is clear that landfilling can participate in a relatively new eRIN program, similar to ethanol; a tool encourage automobile manufacturers to produce more electric vehicles and lower the cost of electric vehicles. As they show they are consuming green energy, they can qualify for these credits which can lower their overall cost. It is not clear that WTE fits in the current definition. Covanta and WTE advocates are trying to work with the EPA to make sure that when the rules are written and clarified, that there is a pathway for WTE to qualify as a power source for the generation of these credits. These advocates are looking for WTE hosts such as City of Alexandria and Arlington County, and WTE owners to provide comments to the EPA to ensure that there is a pathway for WTE to participate.

Grabowsky asked to clarify the biogenic portion; do you get credit for all material that is burned,

or only the biogenic portion, and how would you calculate that? Cammarata stated that the biogenic portion is the portion of the power that is not produced from fossil fuels; portion of fuel stream that is already part of the CO<sub>2</sub> cycle, organics/food waste all part of the current CO<sub>2</sub> cycle (biogenic). How is it calculated: we measure annually in our stack tests the amount of (based on emissions) what is biogenic/not biogenic. Grabowsky asked if they knew approximately what that percentage is. Cammarata answered saying it's around 60/40 biogenic/fossil fuels. Domato asked Cammarata how eRINs/biogenic portions play into zero waste plans and specifically, looking at organics as part of these plans is to separate out organics which would lower their biogenic fraction that is processed. Is there any adjustment to the calculation that look at the upfront recycling? Cammarata stated that the rules are not clear. There is separation that occurs, landfills do not do any additional separation, however they qualify. As far as supporting zero waste, this more supports the reduction of fossil fuels for energy through the promotion of electric vehicles. Lee asked how these costs affect the consumer, does it help reduce the costs of electric vehicles/charging infrastructure? Cammarata stated that that is all unclear. The intent is for a net reduction in the cost of the vehicle which would benefit the consumer in that manner. Trying to make sure the industry is being treated fairly, treating WTE as a participant as landfilling is clearly considered a participant. Lee asked if this were to happen, there would be additional eRINs available because its coming from the WTE facilities, does this then dilute the RIN market and then impact the price of gas fueled cars? Cammarata was unsure of the answer to that question. Huffman asked if EV manufacturers themselves get eRIN credit? Cammarata understands that the credits go to the vehicle manufacturers based on their ability to show green energy consumption tied to green energy created. Huffman asked for clarification if WTE themselves do not get the eRIN credits, it's the EV manufacturers that would through WTE facilities. Cammarata confirmed, and said that manufacturers would have to buy the credit and there is revenue associated with that. Lee said that it was previously discussed with Cammarata that this is separate from RACs, and essentially you can earn both. Grabowsky asked how they would measure from the EV perspective and how they are going to grade this market (is it by kW)? Given the status and timeline of the program, Cammarata stated that the market perspective and calculations were unclear. Some speculation on the way that they are going to measure it conceptually is by the number of cars manufactured, making an assumption the number of miles that car has driven in each year, which equates to an electric consumption. McLaughlin mentioned they heard that to start, the market will be oversaturated, and by 25'-26', the market will be a lot more competitive. Lee asked if there would be opportunities for jurisdictions to share eRINs for transportation/electrification projects. Cammarata confirmed, and stated that if they receive a revenue stream from this, they would come

up with a sharing mechanism, but unsure what that would look like at this time. Lee asked Skrabak if there is anything foreseeable that would be unsupportive of the climate EAP 2040 perspective. Skrabak does not, other than the environmental policy commission is not a fan of the RECs concept versus doing actual environmental acts. Regarding the EPA request for comments on eRins, Lee stated they would try and submit comments by February 10, 2023. Cammarata mentioned that because of the quick deadline, if the FMG were able to develop comments after the deadline, Covanta would work with them to get those comments in front of the right people. Stated that Fairfax did submit comments to the EPA and will send their letter to the FMG.

**B. Public Initiatives**

Lee thanked Cammarata and Covanta for hosting the city manager’s office for the tour. The manager was very impressed with the cleanliness and order of the facility, as well as the timeliness of the slides that were provided. There is a new climate officer that Lee is hoping to schedule a tour at the facility with along with other council members in the spring.

Cammarata asked Skrabak about Earth month for the facility. Skrabak stated that instead of having the in-person Earth Day festival, they plan to repeat the past year’s activities of having a series of small Earth Day related events over the month of April. Skrabak requested that if Covanta is planning to have any drop-off events to add them to the list of events. Covanta has brought up the idea of a shredding event, however, shredders are booked up to six months in advanced. In the past, there have been “tokens” for residents to drop off mercury switches, it was suggested that these tokens could include batteries. Covanta has done this before at the Arlington E-care and gave out gift cards. Lee stated that the FMG could reach out to COG if the battery campaign happens in April, that that would be a good partner. Grabowsky will reach out to the arborist about a tree sale and see if they are looking for a potential partner.

Covanta’s Public Outreach Initiatives:

<b>Tours</b>			
3-Mar	Catholic University Environmental Science	10	Students and Faculty
14-Mar	Alexandria High School - AP Environmental Class	26	Students and Faculty
15-Mar	Alexandria High School - AP Environmental Class	47	Students and Faculty
16-Mar	Washington Latin PCS - AP Science Class	28	Students and Faculty

13-Apr	Northern Virginia Community College - Environmental Science	15	Students and Faculty
24-Apr	Junior Girl Scout Troop 60134	17	Scouts and Leaders
2-May	DC International School - AP Physics	22	Students and Faculty
9-May	AIHA Potomac	10	Association Members
<b>Events/Sponsorships</b>			
6-Apr	COG Battery Disposal Campaign		
6-Apr	Alexandria ACT Sponsorship		
22-Apr	Earth Day - Sustainability - E-Waste and Battery Collections		
6-May	Accotink Creek Clean Up		

C. Open Discussion

Domato will send the final revised quarterly report to Lee with corrected data and updated graph scales. It was noticed that the front of the report has the official seal of Arlington and there is a new logo for most correspondence that will be provided.

**On a motion by Skrabak, seconded by Grabowsky the meeting adjourned at 10:12 a.m.**

**The next Facility Monitoring Group Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10, 2023, and will be held as a virtual meeting.**