

# MRF Advisory Board (MAB)

## Meeting Minutes

Date: February 23, 2017

Location: Northampton Department of Public Works Meeting Room

Present: Jan Ameen, Veronique Blanchard, Kathleen Casey, Tracy DeMaio, Amy Donovan, Steve Ellis, Cristina Ferrera, Arlene Miller, Michael Pattavina, Susan Waite and Heather Wasilewski

Guest: Mike Moores, Springfield MRF Plant Manager

Agenda:

Tracy DeMaio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

- A. Meeting Minutes: The minutes from January 19, 2017 were approved (Michael/Amy) with minor modifications.
- B. Public Comments: There were no public comments offered.
- C. Treasurer's Report: (Jan Ameen) There is very little change from last month. Annual revenue share checks have been sent out. The MAB is still waiting to receive a check from Waste Management for Springfield's for public education funds.
- D. MRF Operations: (Mike Moores)
  - a. Commodity prices have been improving, especially plastics. The revenue share for January was \$17.50 and February was \$22.65.
  - b. Recent snowstorms caused 2 shutdowns.
- E. Topic: Jan Ameen has a list of private haulers for private residential recycling that use the MRF. She plans to check to see if they have unified specifications for what is accepted. She'd like to offer them educational materials. The topic was tabled for next meeting.
- F. 2020 MRF Contract Subcommittee: Our draft timeline starts 6 months earlier than the proposed timeline of DEP Boston, but primarily we concur. Now is the time to make larger decisions on what would be acceptable to the MAB. For example, if a bidder chooses not to use the current MRF facility, what distance would be acceptable? The responder may choose to use the current facility as a transfer station and process elsewhere. Would that be ok with this board? Unless the markets change significantly, we need to prepare ourselves for negative bids. Would we want to restrict communities from leaving the contract in order to reduce risk to the operator, in an effort to improve the offered prices?  
Jan Ameen suggested that the MAB might want to share the cost with the DEP of a consultant to help with writing the RFP. Steve Ellis suggested that the MAB might want to hire its own consultants.  
Michael Pattavina suggested that we hire a facilitator to help member towns to determine their goals before entering into this process.
- G. DEP Updates:

- a. Arlene thanked everyone for getting in their annual reports and surveys.
  - b. For all towns participating in the RRR guide, this could count as 1 of 4 times that they are publishing waste reduction and recycling info in a newspaper – a criterion toward earning an outreach and education point in the RDP program.
  - c. Another way to qualify for the outreach point is to adopt and publish an aspirational recycling rate goal. Recycling rate = recycling tonnage ÷ (trash + recycling) tonnage. Arlene recommends you consider setting a goal in your community.
- H. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Guide Update:
- a. Veronique gave a status report on the Community Information table data gathering. There was a suggestion to add bulky rigid plastic recycling to this table. There may not be time to make such a change. Maybe next year.
  - b. The “What to Do With...” guide is almost done. Thanks to all the contributors.
  - c. Hampshire Gazette has created some new graphics and has an additional focus on composting. They talk of a fourth R, standing for “Reclaim”
- I. Website update.
- a. Tracy gave a report from an alternate webmaster stating how our website could be redesigned. Suggestions were made about who should perform the work and it was agreed that we should get multiple quotes before moving forward. Veronique would ask a web developer that she has experience with.
- J. Radio Ads
- a. Susan presented evidence to support the effectiveness of radio ads. She asked for group approval to move forward (Arlene/Jan, unanimous approval). A \$10,000 budget was given to this project.
  - b. Heather proposed the committee consider NPR sponsorship with a simple message, like “Please recycle your plastic bags at your local grocery store, not in your municipal recycling.” There was some interest in this idea.
  - c. There was more discussion about what the focus of the radio advertisement should be. Some consensus was reached that there are two topics: 1. Don’t bag your recyclables, and 2. Don’t recycle bags with containers.
- K. Other Business
- a. Michael Pattavina mentioned that there is increasing public discussion of the ZeroWaste concept. What does it look like? Facebook is full of ideas.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30

Next Meeting 3/23 at 10am

Minutes recorded by Heather Wasilewski