

MAB Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2018
Hampshire Daily Gazette Conference Room
10:00am – 11:30am

Members Present: Jan Ameen, Kathleen Casey, Arlene Miller, Steve Ellis, Cristina Ferrera, Véronique Blanchard, Susan Waite, Tracy DeMaio, and John Alphin.

Guests: Ashley Muspratt, Mike Moores of Waste Management Recycle America

The meeting was called to order at 10:05.

Public Comment Period Ashley introduced herself. She was formally in human waste management and is an environmental engineer. She had run her own company in Rwanda, turning human waste into fuel pellets. She is now exploring solid waste management in our area.

Review and approve previous meeting minutes: Several edits were submitted; Jan moved to accept as amended, Arlene seconded and the amended minutes were approved unanimously. Véronique and Kathleen abstained.

MRF & Automated Operations / Markets Update: Mike Moores reporting

Waste Management recently shipped about 300 bales/80 tons of mixed plastic (which they call mix mix). This is good news because it's been a struggle for the last three months to move the material. Some of the mixed plastic was sent to Waste Management's facility in Syracuse, NY to break it down and re-process it. Mike will report back later as to how that experiment went. The Syracuse facility has TTech sorting technology, so their system can extract and isolate PET, etc. Mike reported that OCC was at \$75, news (#56) is at \$25.

Dual Stream: The MRF had some down time due to equipment issues, on the fiber side there were some broken shafts but they are now fixed so operations are now proceeding well. Arlene asked about glass markets. Mike replied they're shipping clear glass to South Windsor, about 60-80 tons per month. He said they do get paid for it, so the transportation and processing costs are covered. Waste Management is still sending beneficial use glass to landfills but that will be ending soon. Glass will become an issue in the next couple of months. Beneficial use glass has been going to the Chicopee landfill which is closing, so soon they will switch to Fitchburg. He also mentioned that the large amount of rain over the last few months has influenced operations.

Cristina asked about Waste Management's national quality control forms, as they are now grading loads and have downgraded a few loads. Mike responded that they are still having talks about how to proceed with quality issues. Moisture in fiber and trash bags in co-mingled are their major issues.

Steve said there are some outstanding bills for contamination, but they put a stop to billing and are sending out more clear information about how and why the billing is happening and how the fees will be assessed. Dual stream communities which have incurred fees will have them deducted from the revenue payment, and single stream communities will be invoiced. Steve reiterated that the larger issue is that the quality of incoming materials. Waste Management is under pressure to sort to the best of their ability and the MRF communities are under pressure to provide the highest quality materials possible. The result of this is a closer inspection of loads coming in to the facilities. Steve said Mike is doing a good job of conservatively assessing contamination in loads. Assessed contamination fees are \$155 per ton, which includes both a disposal charge and a handling charge. Steve and Arlene talked about how communities will be informed about the rejection process. Who will the letter come from? Will there be a joint letter? John discussed billing he had gotten in the schools from Waste Management and how

pg. 1 [MAB meeting minutes, 9/27/18](#)

informing customers ahead of time about the process is very important. John was particularly concerned about informing customers that they need to protect cardboard and paper from water damage. Tracy says a letter needs to be sent from someone other than the MAB. Arlene suggested that a letter come from MassDEP, Waste Management and the MAB together. Susan asked who would write the letter, and Tracy suggested that it come from directly from Waste Management. It was suggested that Waste Management could draft the letter and then MassDEP and the MAB could review it. Steve suggested that the same letter could be sent from multiple parties. Steve offered that perhaps the letter should come from MassDEP, and would discuss the current market situation and the importance of quality control, and include the fact that as 10% contamination is the threshold, this shouldn't happen that often. Susan likes the idea of the letter coming from MassDEP. Véronique asked about methods for preventing curbside moisture damage. Steve said that it's possible to put a piece of cardboard on top to keep out the weather, and make sure to put it out in the morning instead of the night before if rain is expected. Steve said an insert could be sent out with the revenue checks, and the MRF could also give the information to the haulers coming in. The decision was that Steve will draft the letter. It was also suggest that the letter could be posted on the MRF website and in the Western Mass Recycling newsletter. Chris Lucarelle of Waste Management would like to attend the October 25th meeting.

Single Stream: No updates

DEP Update: Steve said the issue has been resolved on Waste Management's request to increase tip fees, as the request has been withdrawn. Waste Management has committed to maintaining the terms of the contract until 2020, and they will be a potential bidder on the new contract.

The revenue checks are approved but Steve doesn't have them yet, so when they go out an insert on quality will be added in with them. Jan asked if all the dual stream towns will have enough revenue to cover their education fee, and Steve said he believes so. Jan then discussed her request to MassDEP to allow RDP funds to be used to help cover the education fees. She had put together the information on which municipalities have made use of the public education materials from the menu the MAB puts out annually. She obtained permission from MassDEP for municipalities, primarily those using single stream (Agawam, Chicopee, Springfield, West Springfield and some HRMC towns as they will be invoiced for their MAB education fees), to use their RDP funds to help pay the assessed education fees. Altogether about \$14,000 in RDP funds can be used, which amounts to a third of the public education fee assessments. Jan and Tracy have translated the monetary value of the materials ordered by each municipality from the Outreach and Education materials menu. MassDEP has agreed that municipalities may use RDP as an equal match for those amounts. Springfield had ordered \$6,000 worth of materials but their public education fee assessment is \$7,600, so Springfield will owe \$1,600. All other municipalities should be able to cover their fees either through the revenue assessments or RDP funds.

Steve then discussed the update on the Request For Response process. When Peter Engel was at the MAB meeting, he has raised some questions for the MAB, how do we get the MAB's response back to Peter? Steve has a first draft of the RFR and will get some comments back to Peter, and then get a second draft in which will be integrated the comments of the board and the RFR subcommittee. That version will then be distributed to the MAB for comments. Steve suggested that the MAB talk some more about which recyclables are acceptable in the new contract, and said there is something to be said for the sticking with the basics. It was asked if the State's waste ban on plastics was for single resin plastics or #1-7? John googled it and the language in the waste ban is for single-resin narrow-necked plastic containers. Jan wondered if we could do something in the evaluation criteria which gives more points to the bidders if they will accept more materials. She suggested the bidders would get a better evaluation if they take more items. The minimum materials list should be matched to the waste ban materials. John wondered if we could develop a core list and add a preferred extras list. Steve said the bidders have to bid based on an average weighted scale so then the bids won't be apples to apples. Susan asked about

which materials are the most problematic. Steve responded they are hard-to-market materials, and materials that aren't clear about what is recyclable. In the scheme of things it's a small amount of material in terms of tonnage, and therefore Steve thinks a simplified list is best. Jan handed out a memo which was written from the RFR subcommittee to MassDEP and Peter Engel, which the board reviewed mostly point by point. 1. Receiving location: a point system for judging RFR responses is very difficult. Steve said Springfield is the clearest solution, saying 'approximate' is too vague. 2. Load Acceptance: is thirty minutes in the current contract as a maximum wait time? There was some discussion of the need for municipalities to have a maximum wait time in order to keep costs down. 4. Billing: will be based on a three month historical and then a reconciliation will be done.

This memo will go out to DEP and through DEP to Peter Engel for comments. Jan said we need to decide, does the whole board receive the RFR? Steve said he will send it to Tracy. The board will send the memo as is to DEP for comments by Peter Engel. Steve said #2, #3 & #5 can be taken out of the memo because they're already being taken care of. Jan suggested we send the memo in as written, as a formal response to the July meeting. John moved to send in as written, Susan seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

MAC Update: Véronique asked the MAB members for their opinion on the discrepancies between the new Recyclesmartma recyclopedia and the MRF's list of accepted materials, and handed out a spreadsheet outlining the differences. John moved that we ask DEP to add language to Recyclesmartma which directs the public to check with their local outlet. The MAB wants to clarify with Mike Moores about clear egg cartons.

Jan suggested why doesn't DEP add in a link to MRF website? Steve said in theory it should be a universal list and the discrepancies are small in terms of tonnage, but he does get lots of calls about cups and egg cartons.

Tracy will clarify with Mike Moores about the list of acceptable items, and contact DEP about discrepancies of both accepted and not accepted materials, and ask for a clear message 'please check with local MRF'. Arlene seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Treasurers Report: Jan reporting No report this month.

Education & Outreach Committee Projects

Facebook subcommittee update: MAB members had been sent the link for the new MRF Facebook site to review prior to this meeting. Kathleen asked about a photo graphic with green bottles she thought was confusing. Jan said that the site wouldn't let her on, it kept prompting her to log in. For members who don't have Facebook pages they are unable to get into it. The site is blocking people who don't have Facebook accounts. It was also requested if possible to crop the men who can be seen in the banner. On the 'About' page under 'More info', when you click 'community' on the desktop version, it's a broken link. (it does work when you're a Facebook user) The Facebook subcommittee will investigate these concerns.

Public Education Material: Tracy reporting The Spanish version has been edited and sent to Nancy, is the target date October? Tracy has already contacted vendors for pricing, she will talk to Amy and hopes to have the letter and information ready for October meeting, to be sent out before America Recycles Day (November 15th). The most popular items are the postcards, magnets, trifolds and bill inserts. Amy will call around to three vendors to see about better prices for corrugated signs.

Radio Ads: The question was asked if we are doing another round of radio ads? If so, when? There were questions raised as to the effectiveness of the ads. Susan reported that she researched independent on-line sources. Nielsen indicates that over 90% of adults in all age ranges listen to the radio. Other sources say that 25% of adults listen to the radio at work, and that those businesses which cater to all demographics (not highly specific

audience) are best suited to radio advertising. Ads purchased at radio stations with an audience of people ages 24 to 54 cost more because that age demographic buys more, and during the morning drive time our brains are fresher and more receptive to messaging. The “magic” frequency number for ads is 3.4 impressions per person per week, and a high frequency for short time periods is better than shorter frequency over longer time periods. The question was raised, are the ads a value for our money? The subcommittee has recommended the ads be run again, with the plastic bag ad running 75% of time, and the wish-cycling ad running 25% of time. The cost would be \$10,000 to run for 6 weeks. Jan suggested we branch out to other radio stations to get the message to a different audience. Tracy wondered about how often one needs to hear the message not to recycle plastic bags in order for it to be effective. Susan responded you need to hear the message even more often if you want to change behavior than you do to get someone to buy something on sale. Jan and Arlene mentioned that we have no real evidence that our message is being received, as we have no metrics to fall back on, and this makes the decision hard. Susan said the reason we picked the stations we did was for the target audience and range of coverage. Tracy suggested we wait to decide until after the education materials menu comes out, after which time we can reassess the budget. There was no motion, so a decision will be tabled until the next meeting. We can put the radio ad audio on the Facebook page and it is already on the website. It was requested that at the next meeting we limit discussion to five minutes as there has already been extensive discussion on the subject.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05.

The next meeting date is October 25th at 10 AM in the Daily Hampshire Gazette conference room

Respectfully submitted,

Véronique Blanchard, Clerk