

MAB Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2020

Virtual Meeting via GoToMeeting

10:00-11:30 AM

Members Present: Véronique Blanchard, Arlene Miller, Tracy DeMaio, Jan Ameen, Mary Stucklen, Susan Waite, Amy Donovan, Kathleen Casey, John Alphin, Cristina Ferrera

Others Present: Mike Moores, WMRA; John Pepi, Umass Amherst

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

Public Comment Period: No members of the public had comments.

Review and approve previous meeting minutes: Minutes of February 20, 2020. These minutes were edited for grammatical errors online prior to the virtual meeting to save time. Jan moved and Susan seconded that the minutes be accepted as amended, the vote was unanimous with Arlene and Mary abstaining.

MRF Update: Mike Moores reporting. There have been some changes in the facility due to COVID-19, everyone is wearing protective gear and staying at least six feet apart. All staff members are healthy and doing well. In the market report, #1-7 are not moving at all, PET is not moving and Mike expects a slow down is coming. The good news is that OCC is now \$85 which is up from \$35 previously. ONP has also increased by \$5 and is now \$10.

Jan asked if the MRF is experiencing any contamination from discarded gloves and masks; Mike said he has not seen this happen yet. Arlene asked if the volume of material has increased, and Mike responded that volume is up about 5 tons per day. He also mentioned that the Avon and Billerica facilities are seeing even bigger increases. There have been no issues around increased contamination. Amy asked what had happened to the #1-7 market, and Mike said the facility in New Jersey has currently shut their doors. Mike said there are a few other outlets but those are also shutting down. The MRF currently has 140 bales they cannot sell. PET is used in carpet and home furnishings, but those manufacturers are also closing down due to COVID-19. The MRF is stockpiling as much as possible for now.

MAC Update: The new SMRP grant application and guidelines went 'live' on April 6th. Some of the RDP criteria have been revised to allow for complications due to COVID-19. Mostly this consists of giving credit if an event was scheduled but had to be postponed. Jan mentioned that she searched for the word 'COVID' in the document to find all the applicable sections.

Treasurers Report: Jan reported that there have been no changes to the budget, no bills have come in to pay and the total still stands at around \$90,000. Arlene mentioned that she has some invoices to turn in from the RRR guide. Tracy proposed that with so much money still left in the MAB account the MAB waive the education fee for FY21. Asked how much that amounts to, Jan said that \$36,000 comes into the account from the education fees. Mary asked how much would that amount be reduced without the single stream communities, and Jan estimated that about half of the \$36,000 comes from single stream member communities. Susan expressed concern that waiving the fee could set a precedent.

Arlene moved to waive the education fee for FY21, Cristina seconded. During the discussion Kathleen asked how much it would cost to provide up-to-date education materials. Jan replied that the MAB has spent just under \$40,000 for the last few years. The \$90,000 currently in the budget would be put into a separate account which would be used for both dual stream and single stream communities, and the \$10,000 from Waste Management would go into a different account. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Guide Update: The RRR insert for the Daily Hampshire Gazette has been postponed due to COVID related staffing issues and will now be published in 3 newspapers on June 3rd (Daily Hampshire Gazette, Greenfield Recorder, Athol Daily News) and one on June 5th (Amherst Bulletin). Publication is still contingent on finding enough advertisers. The RRR insert in the Springfield Republican will be published on April 17th, 2020. Brooke Nash has submitted an article for the RRR, and two reporters have been working on feature articles. One article is focused on the contract with the Springfield MRF, and they are making use of the press release provided by Susan and Amy in their research.

Public Education Message: Tracy commented that Facebook has been a great tool to get out the message, and that Jessica Wozniak's posts are so helpful. Susan mentioned that she does not get the Springfield MRF posts popping up in her feed and wondered Jessica might have some advice about how to improve visibility of MRF posts.

Juliette suggested that there be a letter from DEP and the MAB to let the public know that recycling is and should still be happening and that the State has waste bans in effect. Jan and Amy have submitted information about this to the Greenfield Recorder. Tracy said we need to emphasize that recycling is still happening in Massachusetts, since the public gets the impression from the national news that recycling has ceased in some areas. Amy and Arlene will help Tracy write a press release outlining these issues. The board also discussed the effect of COVID on transfer stations and curbside collection.

Review of MAB By-Laws: The makeup of the MRF Advisory Board will be affected by the fact that single stream communities as of July 1st will no longer be a part of the MRF contract. Jan presented a working draft of changes to the by-laws that would keep the MAB name and structure but would add in non-designated communities. Arlene said the goal is to keep single stream and dual stream communities working together to serve the region. Tracy recommended having an equal number of voting representatives in each county for the dual stream communities. DEP may not need voting privileges as this is a community advisory group representing the designated communities. Recommendations are often brought back to DEP and the MRF for consideration. This seems like a conflict of interest for DEP to vote on some issues or recommendations. Jan agreed and Arlene disagreed. There will be further discussion on this issue. Susan suggested looking at the purpose of the group section, as it references the MRF. Do the single stream communities see value in the MAB? Jan said Letter E of the Purpose section reflects the purpose, not specifically to the MRF. Tracy and Cristina both feel single stream communities see value in the MAB as a regional group and cited educational materials, information sharing, updates on markets, and the relationship with DEP as benefits. John Pepi said Umass has expressed an interest in participating on the MAB and sees the value in participating. A subcommittee group to review bylaws (Tracy, Arlene, Jan, Susan and Kathleen) will take into consideration all comments made at this meeting and will meet next week to make updates for recommendations to the board. A motion to update the bylaws needs to be made in May, for a vote in June. Jan said the changes to the by-laws must be read at a meeting preceding the vote, as changes and a vote on those changes cannot occur at the same meeting.

Amy reported that she has posted the updated 'What Do I Do With' in a rough format on the MRF website. The format is being revised. She is also working on updating the MRF education materials. Nancy Turkle, the former graphic designer, is collecting and sending the original graphic files to Amy and Tracy. Tracy has spoken with a new graphic artist who has said that the changes needed would not be difficult to make.

Kathleen asked about regional Household Hazardous Waste events.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

There will be a Special MAB by-law review meeting on April 23rd, 2020 from 10-11:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting

Respectfully submitted,
Véronique Blanchard
Clerk