

**MAB Meeting Minutes**  
**June 24, 2021**  
**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**  
**9:30 am – 11:00 am**

**Members Present:** Jan Ameen, Véronique Blanchard, Kathleen Casey, Tracy DeMaio, Amy Donovan, Steve Ellis, Juliette Haas, Abbey Massaro, Arlene Miller, Mike Pattavina, Mary Stucklen, Susan Waite

**Others Present:** Chris Lucarelle of Waste Management Recycle America (WMRA), Rene Wood of Sheffield

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 AM. Amy volunteered to take the minutes, as Véronique usually takes them but this is her last MAB meeting.

**Meeting Agenda**

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

**Review, approve previous meeting minutes (VOTE)** A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as previously edited. Amy abstained because she is on vacation and did not have a chance to review the previous meeting's minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**MRF Update** Chris Lucarelle reported that the MRF is "hitting its stride" with the new sorting equipment. They have been working to optimize the Tomra unit and the optical sorter is working well now. They will be working on the glass crusher in August. The glass market is seeing more activity in the last 60 days than in the last several years. WMRA is in the process of figuring out what glass products these new end markets want. The rising average market value (AMV) gave a net \$13/ton to the member communities in May, and there has been a \$26.79/ton improvement in the AMV from May to June. Commodity pricing is up for OCC and fiber. HDPE pricing is rising like "a rocket ship" at over \$2,000/ton, or \$1/lb. HDPE's current value is double that of aluminum (previously the waste item with the highest market value.)

Member communities will not receive an invoice for June but will instead receive revenue checks. When WMRA usually sends invoices, they include backup documents. However, the paper check that towns will receive has no backup because checks will come directly from the bank. The settlement spreadsheet shows the check number referenced, date, amount, loads delivered, etc. The settlement won't go with the check. It will be emailed separately. It would be helpful to get the email addresses of town clerks and others who might be receiving this check, so that the backup can be sent to them.

Rene Wood asked if more language could be added to the email that is sent to towns, instead of just sending the settlement. Arlene suggested that the DPW contact could potentially forward the email to the appropriate person. Tracy added that the person who signed the contract would be on WMRA's email list. Chris said he will send the settlement data to the email address list that he has,

along with some introductory text and a note that recipients should let him know if it should instead be directed to someone else.

Amy asked who receives the monthly AMV report. Mike Moores sends it to towns and Arlene forwards to the MAB members.

Chris added that we may see another bump in OCC pricing, resulting in a price increase on the fiber side. It looks like pricing will hold for the rest of 2021. Inflation pressures are mounting, wages are going up, transportation and fuel costs are rising. Demand is still going up but since costs are going up, things might remain where they are.

Jan asked if Chris could give the MAB a heads up so that we may notify our towns about the checks coming. Chris provided a monthly schedule; WMRA has to cut checks by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, so they have to send the email by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Amy asked Chris for more detail on the new optical sorter. Chris replied that PET and PP are being sorted with optical sorting equipment for the first time at the MRF. HDPE and gabletops are being hand sorted. The residue is made up of “off-spec” plastics, and plastics with liquid or food in them.

Susan noted that the Northampton plastics ordinance specified that PP #5 containers are allowable but asked if black plastic is still unwanted because it cannot be sorted effectively. *Chris said that he would observe the equipment to gauge if the system is putting black plastic in the residue or the PP mix. (Update: Chris clarified in the 8/17 meeting that the optical sorter can't detect black plastic, an “inflight separator” would be needed for that.)*

Susan said that she created an AMV graph for the RRR North guide article about the MRF. It can be used to educate about the rising AMV; she will send to MAB.

**Treasurer's  
Report (VOTE)**

Jan reported that recent MAB expenses were for the Social Media Manager and Website Technician. Ludlow and Pittsfield were reimbursed for their equipment grant expenses, as part of the current educational materials menu. Approximately \$82,000 is being carried over from FY21 to FY22; the majority of that will be used for the current educational campaign. Jan put the \$5,000 grant from the Carton Council in the \$10,000 “WMRA” line, as both will be used for the upcoming MRF video projects.

In the MAB's draft FY22 budget, there are two separate columns which show revenue/expenses for current designated member communities versus single stream communities. The \$10,000 annual funding from WMRA is used for education and outreach, so it only shows on the current designated communities column in the draft FY22 budget. Jan noted that we had not yet discussed if there will be a public education fee for member communities in FY22. Outreach expenses in FY21 totaled \$5,000 and included full page advertisements in the two RRR guides. There were \$47,00 in grant requests for the current education campaign.

Kathleen made a motion to accept the FY22 budget as presented and to increase WMRA line to \$25,000 (to accommodate the current video projects). The motion was seconded by Mike.

Discussion – Jan noted we would be spending the accumulated funds from the single stream towns, not holding them, and that we should discuss the public ed fee at a future meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**MAB Member  
Review (VOTE)**

Rene Wood of Sheffield would like to join the MRF Advisory Board. Having three representatives for the Berkshires would change the current towns represented by Juliette and Mary. Juliette, Mary and Veronique have all worked with Rene in the Berkshires and all three enthusiastically recommended Rene for the MAB. Jan made a motion to appoint Rene to the MAB, and Juliette seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Video Committee  
(VOTE)**

Abbey reported that the committee has been working to select the film production companies that will make our upcoming videos. The committee had sent a round of additional questions to the finalists and also checked their references. The companies' answers and the content from their references further confirmed that the finalists were appropriate for their respective projects. The Rendon Group, which coincidentally made the MRF's 2002 video, is the committee's selection for the longer MRF video (8-10 minutes), at a cost of \$13,450. Local production company Reelife is the pick for the 4 shorter (2 minutes each) "material specific" videos, at a cost of \$4,600. Arlene made a motion to accept The Rendon Group for the MRF video, and Reelife for the material specific videos, Mike seconded the motion and all approved.

**Public Education  
Committee  
(VOTE)**

Most of the member towns that responded to the current Educational Materials Menu requested equipment (recycle bins, etc.) to be reimbursed by the MAB. 15 communities only wanted the equipment reimbursement, not any of the educational materials (brochures, signs, stickers, etc.) October 1 is the deadline for communities to submit an equipment reimbursement request. If all communities took advantage of the current educational menu of offerings (they usually do not), the total would amount to \$75,000. Jan made a motion to not exceed \$50,000, Susan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**MAC Update**

Véronique Blanchard, who has served on the MAB since 2007, is stepping down from the MAB to transition to her new position as Conway Town Administrator. This is her last MAB meeting. Everyone congratulated Véronique on her new role; we will miss her as our Western Mass Municipal Assistance Coordinator (MAC) for MassDEP. Véronique reminded the MAB that her MAC email is on the MRF website in a few places and should be changed to someone else's email address. Véronique had been setting up the MAB's Zoom meetings with her account and asked if anyone else can be the host. Susan has a paid Zoom account and can be the host for future meetings. The MAB presented Véronique with a custom "garden themed" card and gift to thank her for her 14 years on the MAB.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.

The next MAB meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2021.

Respectfully submitted, Amy B. Donovan, Franklin County Representative