

MAB Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2024
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

MAB Members Present: Jan Ameen, Linda Cernik, Tracy DeMaio, Amy Donovan, Steve Ellis, Arlene Miller, Susan Cooper, Ethan Tupelo, Mary Stucklen, Susan Waite.

Others present: Brendan Farrell (Waste Management Office Improvement Manager), Bernard Fosu (Waste Management Recycling Director).

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 am by Chair A. Miller. The following items were taken up.

1. Public Comment Period. None

2. Treasurer's Report. J. Ameen reports a quiet month. The Berkshire Eagle invoice for RRR Berkshire Guide sponsorship (\$2300) was paid. \$28K remains in the account, \$20K of which is Dual Stream Community Funds.

3. Board Vacancy Announcements

Janine Greaves is the new Executive Assistant for the Mayor of Greenfield. Rene Wood has also tendered her resignation due to a busy schedule and difficulty making meetings.

4. Review and Approval of Draft Minutes. J. Ameen made, and A. Donovan seconded, a motion to accept the 11-15-23 minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

5. MRF Update.

A. Miller reported that Mike Moores sent a brief update. Loose paper is up \$10/ton and OCC is up \$5/ton. Material is moving and no issues at the MRF.

B. Fosu introduced B. Farrell and provided a high-level update:

- Longtime employee Margarita passed away from personal illness. She had worked at the Springfield MRF for 28 years and had trained just about every current employee.
- The MRF's safety record has been excellent, with a couple of near misses (no injuries) in 2022 and zero incidents in 2023. They have implemented employee warmup exercises to help with fatigue management. The MRF struggled to fill a mechanic position for the first 6 months of 2023. They now have an employee that is shared between two facilities.
- 2023 MRF tonnage was up 150 tons from 2022, largely due to return of the City of Holyoke.
- Market conditions are good.
- The MRF received very high scores for employee engagement, ability to speak up and be heard in recent formal "listening survey" conducted with all employees.

S. Waite suggested that the MAB provide some sort of memorial for Margarita (a tree or something for the Break Room). B. Fosu said that WM is willing to collaborate. J. Ameen asked the MRF to let us know what would be meaningful for employees.

J. Ameen sends a thank you to Waste Management's Brendan Farrell for creating CY 2023 tonnage report to help member communities with their MassDEP Recycling and Solid Waste reports.

5. RRR Guides. Chair Miller asked for & received agreement to pursue the production of 2024 RRR Guides. She will organize a planning meeting for those actively involved in Guide production. S. Waite explained that she will be stepping away from her writing involvement in the RRR North guide and orchestration of the RRR West (Berkshires) guide but will continue to support the projects in other ways. Waite also made a special shout out to R. Wood, for her role in securing the Berkshire Eagle's interest in the Guide and creating an excellent list of potential advertisers. Ethan agreed to assist with RRR North production. A. Donovan discussed WDIDW update effort, which needs to get started soon. M. Stucklen offered to help with WDIDW since she has recently edited it for the RRRW guide.

6. Radio spot Fabulous 413

The radio show went well and gave the MRF great exposure. We received an offer from a listener to help us translate the RRR guide into Spanish. W. Waite met with Alma Galvan, the Education and Outreach Director for the Migrant Clinician's Network. Ms. Galvan would like to volunteer her time for a project and would like an acknowledgment certificate in return. As a starter project she can help get MRF material information translated for El Pueblo Latino, the Spanish newspaper produced by the Springfield Republican. One option would be to have translated material on the website. While Ms. Galvan does translation work for pay, she is interested in volunteering on a project basis to help get the recycling message out to the region's Spanish speaking population. S. Waite asked for & received Board agreement for Ms. Galvan's participation. Chair Miller explained that RRRS is inserted into El Pueblo Latino in its English form. The Board was excited about the possibility of WDIDW being translated into Spanish. A project team will be discussed/formed at the RRR guide meeting.

5. 2024 Projects. Chair Miller revisited the topic of 2024 projects, as we had discussed taking a break after our busy year with videos, translations, and ed materials grant. No decision officially made, but no one objected.

T. DeMaio expressed concern that our website could use a visual upgrade especially given the great new material we have available. Our translated material should be highlighted and easily accessed. It was suggested that we ask Ms. Galvan about her opinion of Google Translate. Conversation will be continued at a future meeting.

6. MAC Update. S. Waite provided the following information:

- Changes to Recycling Dividends Program grant coming for the 2024 & 2025 grant cycles. The yard waste point has been eliminated. Adjustments are necessary because the funding source for the grant program is sunsetting in 2025 (income will be static in the future).
- ReTRAC is now open for prequalifying reports for SMRP grant program.
- The Boston team is in the process of hiring two Environmental Analyst (EA) 3 positions, a search for an EA4 position and a new municipal assistance coordinator for one of the NE territories will follow.

- The Municipal Waste Reduction Branch will table at this week's Massachusetts Municipal Association conference.

7. Next meeting and adjournment.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21 at 10am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Waite, a MassDEP MAC (Western Region)