

Springfield MRF Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2025
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

MAB Members Present: Jan Ameen, Ruby Chang, Linda Cernik, Susan Cooper, Amy Donovan, Liz Bone, Abbey Massaro, Arlene Miller (Chair), Mary Summers, Susan Waite (MAC).

Others present: Meryl Mandell (Shutesbury) Mike Moores (Waste Management), Steve Ellis (DEP)

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 am by Chair A. Miller, quorum.

Public Comment

None

MRC vacancies update:

Miller invited Meryl Mandell from Shutesbury to attend the meeting and potentially join the MAB.

M. Mandell gave a brief summary of her past work in recycling.

M. Mandell asked what the term is for representatives and how much work is involved.

Depending on what you'd like to take on including education, contracts, RRR guide.

Review and approval of draft minutes:

S. Cooper moved to accept the 12/18/2024 minutes as amended, J. Ameen seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

SMRF Operations Update:

M. Moores updated that the commodity markets stayed the same this past month, and Waste Management anticipates a bump in fiber this month. The MRF needed to do a retro-fit and had to replace equipment on the container side. The line was down for 3 days.

S. Waite asked what was replaced? *The shaker table. It took 9 months to order and to replace, costing \$200k, and they also replaced some chutes.*

A. Miller asked about the yard/ bale storage area appearing to be a mess. *There was no true opportunity to clean up, all materials were good.*

A. Miller asked about contamination audits. *M. Moores explained that the MRF does not do inbound audits. They periodically audit outbound bales by breaking them apart. The overall contamination rate at the MRF is 4-5%.*

M. Summers asked, have you noticed a change in the quality since Pittsfield had changed their system? *Only at the beginning there were some issues, but Mike communicated with the DPW and it seems to have helped.*

(Mike Moores left the meeting)

MRF contract extension:

All anticipated contracts are in except Pittsfield, Mt., Washington, and Great Barrington and a few small towns. The deadline has been communicated and will be at the end of the week. Per R. Chang (a Board of Health member), Great Barrington is considering closing their transfer station. She has been trying to get confirmation from them about signing the contract. J. Ameen commented that transfer stations hardly ever make a profit and offered to consult with them. S. Waite said she would reach out to them (as MAC) to offer information and help.

Pittsfield changed their recycling program since the contract extension was negotiated. A Miller and WM management discussed changing the contract calculation to use calendar year 2024 numbers instead of fiscal year to be able to capture Pittsfield's increased tonnage for the initial processing cost calculation

A proposal to “buy tonnage” to help get the contract starting tonnage to 14,000 tons has been made with the assumption that between Pittsfield and other potential new North Berkshire towns we would grow the tonnage over time. MassDEP is willing to put in some funding if the Springfield MAB were also willing to contribute.

Amherst is considering curbside collection, J. Ameen and A. Miller would like to talk with Amherst before they get too far ahead with the process.

S. Cooper made a motion to spend up to \$10,000 with a max limit, towards the goal of managing costs through buying tonnage. R. Chang seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. In reference to last month's meeting, A. Miller will write a letter to DEP notifying them that the MAB voted unanimously to accept the request from South Hadley to be able to deliver their Dual Stream recycling from their transfer station to the MRF. The MAB recognizes that this is not the only recyclables collected by South Hadley but it is the only Dual stream recyclables. Given the urgent need for additional tonnage to help strengthen the financial structure in the new MRF contract, the Board felt this request was both reasonable and beneficial.

Treasurer's Report:

There is \$19,000 left in our WM dual stream account and we will receive an additional \$10,000 from WM for FY 2026 on July 1st. We have \$8000 from the joint dual stream/single stream account left. J. Ameen can start paying our social media manager Jess Wozniak as education outreach from the \$8000 instead of the dual stream account.

Expense: Jess Wozniak was paid for social media posts. Jess creates posts that are vetted through the social media committee.

Proposed MAB education project 2025: A. Donovan would like to meet R. Chang, A. Massero, and M. Summers about educational outreach. They need to come up with a figure for what they would like to do for what we can offer like literature, stickers, or signage. S. Waite asked that the group consider cost and waste of specific material (e.g. magnets are expensive and become outdated)

RRR North and South Educational Outreach-RRR Guide- The guides come out in the Spring. The South version is collaborated with the Republican and is mostly written by their journalists. The North guide is entirely written by a team of MAB members. A. Donovan coordinates several aspects of the Guides, including annual updating "What Do I Do With" (the “meat: of all RRR Guides), a role that is shared by several MAB members. Checking links and phone numbers etc. Usually in January we vote on how much to spend on the RRR guides. This will be the 18th annual edition of RRR North.

S. Waite made a motion to approve up to \$4500 to spend on advertising, overruns, and productions. R. Chang seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

MAC Update-MRC meeting summary: The regional meeting was held on January 10th, with about 35 people attending. It was the first in-person meeting in 5 years.

RDP awards were recently announced

The following DEP reports are due Feb 15th- Buy Recycled policy notification, and RDP spending report and Recycling and Solid Waste surveys for calendar year 2024. Upcoming meetings, webinars, and grant due dates:

Feb 25th- Battery webinar

April 8th- SMRP webinar. After April 1st, all questions in reference to the grant application need to be written and answers will be put out to everyone via email.

June 2- SMRP and RDP grants due.

Feb 13th-Solid Waste Advisory Council meeting, John Fischer

Next week MAC's and the DEP Municipal Waste Reduction team will be at the Mass Municipal Association meeting- Jan 23-25.

Next Meeting

Our next Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 19th, at 10am.
Minutes respectfully submitted by Liz Bone.