

# Springfield MRF Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

February 19th, 2025

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**MAB Members Present:** Jan Ameen, Ruby Chang, Susan Cooper, Amy Donovan, Tracy DeMaio, Liz Bone, Abbey Massaro, Arlene Miller (Chair).

**Others present:** Mike Moores (Waste Management).

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 am by Chair A. Miller, quorum was met.

## Public Comment

None

## Review and approval of minutes -January 15, 2025 meeting

A. Donovan had some grammar updates to the minutes. Motion to accept minutes as amended. S. Cooper made a motion to accept, R. Chang seconded. All in favor.

## MRF update, market, tours:

M. Moores says the weather has been hampering and slowing operations a little bit. OCC, PET, and natural HDPE revenue went up. Aluminum did not go up surprisingly, but is holding strong.

A. Miller asked if the bulky rigids are moving? *There are not a lot of tons coming in, but it's also seasonal.* A. Miller asked if the tariffs will affect our markets? *No, since nothing will be going out of the country.* M. Moores will check if there will be a bump for aluminum and steel.

Tour: A. Massaro let us know that MassRecycle's Springfield MRF tour went great with about 7-8 people from private residents, municipalities and businesses. They got great feedback. A. Massaro would like to discuss with S. Ellis (DEP) about the videos shown at the beginning of the tour. The information is a little outdated for where our recycling goes. All of our recycling stays within the US. M. Moores relayed where our paper and cardboard go to such as Rand Whitney and Pratt Industries.

A. Massaro asked if our plastics also stay local? *Yes, they do.* M. Moores will get a list of where our plastics go.

A. Miller asked if the tariffs will affect our markets? *M. Moores believes we shouldn't see any effects.* J. Ameen mentioned it might be affected positively with the tariffs on aluminum and steel.

## Treasurer Report:

J. Ameen pulled up the budget spreadsheet. *A. Miller expressed that we are in pretty good shape with expenses already approved for the RRR newspaper insert. A. Miller wanted to look at the budget again before we had the conversation about purchasing tonnage and needing to bank \$10,000.* J. Ameen said we are paying about \$100- \$130 for our social media coordinator per month. We've been paying everything out of the dual stream funds because we are not receiving any revenue from the single

stream towns. We are trying to hold onto the dual stream funds but the \$8000 would be spent if we paid for the RRR ads. *A. Miller asked then what our carry over was?* It is at \$26,494.44. A. Miller commented that we are in good shape if we do not need the \$10,000.

### **MRF contract extension:**

A. Miller wanted to congratulate all the work in getting the anticipated contracts to come in before February 15th. Also R. Chang, M. Summers and others who did a good job in the Berkshire towns.

We have 13,500 tons and wanted to bring in at least 14,000 tons. J. Ameen had two long meetings with B. Fosu (WM), A. Miller, and S. Ellis (DEP). B. Fosu is willing to look at what part of the year that has the most tonnage, calendar or fiscal. He is not willing to look at current increases, ex. Pittsfield new tonnage. We hope that if we can show an increase of 60 tons a month by April, it will show B. Fosu that we will have the tonnage to meet the 14,000 ton threshold. J. Ameen is talking to Athol who has about 112 tons and if we have less than 14,000, the contract says they can walk away from our commingled line. They are still discussing terms and hope to capture 500 tons in the next 3 months. S. Cooper believes Pittsfield needs to be considered a new program as their recycling program has completely changed. They will be adding an increasing amount of tonnage to our program.

To assist in increasing tonnage to 14,000, A. Miller suggested having all towns send out a notice to residents about increasing recycling, especially the drop off towns. A. Miller and J. Ameen will keep working on getting Northern Berkshires to bring their commingled to the MRF. It will be better to add communities instead of current towns adding more tonnage. A. Massaro is willing to reach out to Worcester county towns to see if they will join the MRF. Worcester county is probably closer to the MRF than the Berkshire towns. A. Miller suggested writing a letter as a board to WM that Pittsfield should be considered a new town, not the old program. S. Cooper suggested creating a graph to include with the letter.

A. Miller also spoke to S. Ellis and he told A. Miller that he had not received a letter from the MRF letting him know that the board had voted to allow South Hadley to come in with their drop off commingled and paper to the MRF, even though their curbside is going single stream in July. S. Ellis mentioned that it would be a mistake. A. Miller hoped that S. Ellis would come to talk about it at our meeting so we could hear his point of view. He believes it's a violation of the contract because not all materials are going to the MRF. T. DeMaio mentioned it is up to interpretation. Some towns have separate school contracts and their materials might be single stream. A. Miller asked the MAB: *Do we want to rescind our vote to accept South Hadley?* The MAB unambiguously supports accepting S. Hadley transfer station commingled recycling at the MRF.

R. Chang (a Board of Health member) was asked: *How did you turn Great Barrington around?* Great Barrington's budget got better, their transfer station numbers were getting better and they decided that closing their transfer station was not best for their residents. The Board of Health took over the DEP reporting to get the credits and will work to make the transfer station better.

A. Miller will reach out to the Berkshire County planning commission for a regional contract for hauling. This could help those towns get a better price for transportation of their materials. S. Cooper added that quality of service and costs should be considered. A. Miller mentioned that we can fine our haulers for issues listed in our contracts.

## **MAB vacancies: Franklin County**

Meryl Mandell (Shutesbury) declined our offer to join the MAB, leaving Greenfield and Shutesbury without representation. If anyone has suggestions or ideas, please let us know. M. Mandell will also keep us in the loop.

While discussing Greenfield, A.Miller asked if Greenfield is still potentially getting grant funding? They purchased a trailer, but not trucks. They were getting new trucks through a SWIFR grant. J.Ameen said they showed their new recycling truck on Facebook. They are one of the rare towns that use their own trucks and personnel to haul. They are always welcome to come to the MRF. Their tonnage would really be welcome.

## **Proposed MAB education project 2025**

No update

## **RRR north and south**

L.Bone and T.DeMaio have submitted their review of the RRR editing of the WDIDW sections. The deadline to submit edits to A.Donovan is Feb 21.

(RRR North) Publication date is April 17th for the Gazette, Greenfield Recorder, and Athol Daily News. Features will be an expanded "What to do with"? focus on what does not belong in the recycling.

(RRR South) A list of articles was created, but nothing decided. (Example, batteries, wish cycling, towns with new programs, contamination). A.Miller will send out a list of potential advertisers to contact. A.Miller asked A.Donovan and T.DeMaio- *Do we want to try to solicit a byline from DEP?* T.DeMaio suggested something from the MRF instead about how our materials are staying in the US.

## **MAC update: Annual reports, upcoming events and MassRecycle:**

No MAC report.

## **Other business**

None

## **Next Meeting**

Our next Board Meeting is scheduled for March 19th but is likely to be cancelled.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Liz Bone.