

## Springfield MRF Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

September 17th, 2025  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**MAB Members Present:** Jan Ameen, Susan Cooper, Susan Waite, Tracy DeMaio, Liz Bone, Abbey Massaro, Linda Cernik, Mary Summers, Laurie Simmons, Amy Donovan, Steve Ellis (DEP), Mike Moores, Arlene Miller (Chair)

Others present: None

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

### Public Comment

None

### Review and approval of minutes -August 20th, 2025 meeting

J.Ameen made a motion to accept minutes as amended. L.Simmons seconded. Ten in favor, one abstaining.

### MRF Update: MRF contract issues and markets, tours:

M. Moores- Operations are going well and they are preparing for the winter months at the facility. Commodities are pretty flat. We are down 330 tons from last August.

A.Miller said that we lost 3 towns since last year which influenced the tonnage. There have been drastic improvements in the quality of the recyclables (much less contamination) since a few months ago in Pittsfield. The city of Pittsfield and Casella have been working together to correct the issues.

*A.Miller asked about a new paper mill, Mansfield and its ability to take more of our paper?* M.Moores replied that it is a new MRF owned by Waste Management and it will not significantly impact the demand for our OCC.

*S.Waite asked if the MRF could recycle a certain Dunkin' Donuts package.* M.Moores replied that it is a lower grade CC, and its probably accepted in small quantities at the mills. He does not see it often at the MRF.

*A.Miller asked if we are still taking recycling from Amherst?* Yes, they are paying a different rate.

M.Moores said they had a few tours a few weeks ago but nothing is coming up. Representatives from the town of Petersham just had a recent tour and loved it even though they will probably not be joining the MRF in the near future due to the lull in commodity pricing. S.Ellis said that they will keep in communication with the MRF if anything changes.

M.Moores spoke about glass prices going down so they are directing some of it to Strategic Materials in S.Windsor CT. This has helped pricing as shipping is less.

S.Waite mentioned that Strategic was purchased by a European glass recycling organization and is not called Strategic anymore. Positive/Urban Mining received a grant from the Department of Energy and they will be using the grant money to build up their ground up glass mix for road work.

(M.Moores and S.Ellis left the meeting.)

**Treasurer's Report and FY 2026 budget discussion: (Jan)** We have spent about \$1100 and we are only two months into the new fiscal year.

**RRR West (Mary)** M.Summers reported that she might need to stop representing Pittsfield because of her personal business, Tommy's Compost, because of the interaction with the Berkshire Eagle. She is seeking advice from the ethics board. M.Summers met with the Berkshire Eagle a few times. The MAB usually pays for the printing, inserting, and the back cover ad and the newspaper receives the money from the advertising. The newspaper said they wanted \$2600 and a guaranteed advertisement from Tommy's Compost for \$1200, or \$3700 with no advertisement. M.Summers believes it's unethical for the Berkshire Eagle to ask for this. *J.Ameen asked if there is a new person at the newspaper or is there someone else to contact? It is the same contact from the last few years.*

S.Waite suggested perhaps we can run the RRR guide in another newspaper such as the Berkshire Edge, online, Shoppers World or self-publish.

As a print sponsor, we provide content and it's not our responsibility to get advertisers and it's the only green publication that the Eagle prints.

A.Miller summed up that we have a few options, the current publication asking for a specific ad is unethical and the RRR West guide should look into the options and come back to the MAB.

J.Ameen said that the newspaper insert is of great value and maybe we should negotiate or compromise. They print 13,000 copies every Saturday. J.Ameen made a motion to increase the RRR guide to \$3400. A.Donovan seconded. All in favor. It was agreed that M.Summers should work with another MAB member who is not connected to the advertisers to negotiate with the newspaper. A.Massaró and A.Miller volunteered to work with M.Summers to work out a solution.

### **Educational Materials Update:**

The committee composed of A.Massaró, T.DeMaio, R.Chang, A.Donovan met yesterday. They are continuing work on updating all of our educational material including single stream signs. All the new pizza box updates are now on the MRF website. A.Donovan shared the new graphics with the MAB. Towns can get the updated educational materials in a few months and there will be a survey sent out to see what materials the towns would like to get.

The committee created a new pizza box sign and will use the RecycleSmart battery graphic. There will be no magnets available in the new round of education material as they were too expensive.

The Recycling's Most Unwanted poster is also getting updated. The dishes graphic was removed and batteries were added instead. The committee will remove the numbers and move around some of the images for better eye appeal.

*S.Waite and L.Simmons asked that the pizza graphic could be sharper, better quality.*

A.Donovan said yes, these are just screenshots to show us the images.

*S.Waite asked if MRF branding should be included?*

J.Ameen suggested that they should create a pre-survey for towns to see how they will distribute the materials, if they have stock leftover, and that all towns should have access to the graphics so they can print them. A.Donovan said that transfer station towns definitely need and use educational signs. A.Massaró offered to help with technical support, maybe put on the form please reach out to A.Massaró.

*L.Cernik asked when the materials will be ready?* She will talk to her towns as well as Northern Berkshire Solid Waste towns to see if they would like to buy signs.

A.Donovan said America Recycles Day is the date they were planning on getting the updated menu out.

T.DeMaio had concerns about the timeline and the budget regarding the materials. She pointed out that there is a lot of administration work that needs to be done before material can be distributed. Such as how many points each town should get, will RDP funds be used by some towns, and what formula will the committee use this time for distribution.

A.Miller directed the committee to come up with a plan regarding the survey, distribution, timeline and pricing.

### **MAC Update:**

A PAYT working group has been created for curbside programs and will be meeting monthly. Meeting will be recorded. There will be a zoom regarding the newly required EPR policy on October 3rd with Becky Ferguson from the DEP. S.Waite will be unavailable from October 12th- November 30th. Missy Hollenback will fill in when she is gone.

The SMRP grant awardees will receive more than one letter and will receive a letter if they receive or did not receive the grant funds.

**Other Business:** L.Simmons had two updates. New2You is now an award winning program. They won the Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study Competition in the waste diversion category and a press release should be out soon. Also, they are going to be hosting the Mass Recycle Campus Collaborative at UMASS for a workshop on November 5th. Details about that will be coming out soon.

J.Ameen made a motion to adjourn. S.Waite seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:34am

Next meeting will be October 15th at 10 am.

Respectfully submitted, Liz Bone

Meeting Agenda (9/17/25)

- 1) Public Comment Period
- 2) Review and approval of minutes -June 2025 meeting
- 3) MRF Update: MRF contract issues and markets, tours
- 4) Treasurer's Report and FY 2026 budget discussion: (Jan)
- 5) RRR West (Mary)
- 6) Proposed MAB education project 2025 -- a few updates
- 7) MAC update: RDP—how did we do?
- 8) Other Business
- 9) Next meeting