

MAB Meeting
December 17, 2025
ZOOM meeting
10:00-11:30

Happy Holidays

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am by Chair A. Miller. A quorum was met.

MAB Members Present: Susan Cooper, Tracy DeMaio, Liz Bone, Susan Waite, Abbey Massaro, Laurie Simmons, Amy Donovan, Arlene Miller (Chair).

Others present: Bernie Fosu (Waste Management), Mike Moores (Waste Management)

Public Comment: None

Review and approval of edited minutes: -November 19th, 2025 meeting.

S.Cooper made a motion to accept minutes as amended. A.Donovan seconded. Two abstains, the motion passes.

MRF Update: MRF contract issues and markets, tours: All material prices are flat and the operations are running well.

Bernie: The closing of Tremont St is still in progress and will close on December 31st. They will continue to clean up the site and ship the remaining bulky rigid plastics. L.Simmons asked why is it closing? The volume has decreased and there is not enough demand.

****Bulky rigid plastic processing update:** S.Waite asked about bulky rigid plastics markets in general? The process of baling and collecting bulky rigids and moving the bulky rigids takes a lot of time and the market prices have gone down so it's not profitable. If anything changes, the MRF still has the ability to take it up again. This is a region wide issue. Per Arlene, Casella and USA disagree about the markets being down; they actually want more bulky rigids.

****New cup recycling program. (Bernie):** Update to messaging from last month's meeting, they are accepting cups **with the lids, to recycle**. Even with PS #6, they will still take them with the lids. B.Fosu will share his messaging educational materials. WM has been working with MassDEP on messaging so they should be consistent now. It's a win-win because our volume will go up and they'll be recovering a bigger percentage even if some have #6 lids which are not recyclable. L.Simmons asked, does it include plates and bowls? B.Fosu said it depends on whether there is a market for them, so right now they are only accepting cups. A.Miller asked if they are baled with mixed paper or are they sorted? They are baled. A.Donovan asked are cups with lids accepted together? At the MRF, the optics will recover the PP lids into the plastic stream, and the PS lids will end up in residue. While we understand some PS lids may inadvertently end up in the material at the MRF (along with the recyclable PP cups and PP lids) - it is better to recover majority of plastic cup lids (made of PP) to reduce how much lids are landfilled (just the PS fraction) instead of disposing all lids because of the PS fraction. A.Miller thinks we can make new signage and it's a good idea because we might increase tonnage. We can ask RecycleSmart to give us what they are creating. A.Donovan asked if the

lid can be put into the plastics bin, but is it too small or made of polystyrene? Because it's not a straight yes or no, we don't want the resident to make that call so they want it all so our MRF can make the decision. A.Massaro asked what the educational committee should do with this new add on? B.Fosu will share the FAQ sheet and they can use it to tailor the educational materials. S.Cooper said she would like the new educational materials to have this new messaging, so we should include it. The educational committee said they don't mention the cups on those materials so they won't be able to change anything. T.DeMaio said she isn't planning on communicating the messaging in Agawam because of quality vs. quantity.

Treasurer's Report: None

****Update on MAB education project 2025: (Amy):** The committee is working on the menu so communities can fill it in online. They also made changes to the Recycling's Most Unwanted sign. They hope to send out the menu to towns on January 12th, and ask for it returned by January 30th. With the bulky rigid plastic issues, the committee should remove it from the educational sign menu. They will also be changing the point value on the order form. S.Waite thanked the committee for the education project efforts.

RRR North and South: Begin discussions for Spring 2026: A.Miller spoke about the idea of the 3 RRR guide creators to work together on the guides. A.Miller would like to set up a meeting in January to talk about the idea. The representatives from the 3 areas to have this discussion.

****Contract issues: tonnage:** None

****MAC update: Welcome back Susan!:** RDP was awarded in November, 283 communities applied. 279 were awarded funds. 4 new communities from Western Mass applied. The MassDEP is looking to finalize the RDP grant for 2026 but the point sheet is on the website already. The EPP policy is required by June. There are some samples on the DEP website. The MACs have established some statewide work groups. Ex. Hauling contracts, PAYT. The State is looking to lower the commercial threshold to zero for food waste soon, and also for residents in the next 5 years.

Other Business: Holiday reminders: Hope everyone got the holiday messaging to send out to your towns.

Next meeting: A.Miller hopes we can get together in person in January in one of the Western Mass towns.

S.Cooper made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by T.DeMaio at 11:17 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Liz Bone

Meeting Agenda

- 1) Public Comment Period**
 - 2) Review and approval of minutes -November 2025 meeting**
 - 3) MRF Update: MRF contract issues and markets, tours: Mike Moores**
 - 4) **New cup recycling program. Bernie**
 - 5) **Bulky rigid plastic processing update:**
 - 6) Treasurer's Report**
 - 7) **Update on MAB education project 2025: (Amy)**
 - 8) RRR North and South: Begin discussions for Spring 2026**
 - 9) **Contract issues: tonnage**
 - 10) **MAC update: Welcome back Susan!**
 - 11) Other Business: Holiday reminders**
 - 12) Next meeting**
- ** more time sensitive issues**