

MAB Meeting
March 11, 2026
ZOOM meeting
10:00-11:30

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, Ruby Chang, Laurie Simmons, Amy Donovan, Jan Ameen, Arlene Miller (Chair).

Others present: Peppino Aiello (Waste Management), Jim Scheffler (DEP).

Public Comment: None

Review and approval of edited minutes: February 11, 2026. Motion; J. Ameen made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. S. Cooper seconded. All in favor.

MRF Update: MRF contract issues and markets, tours: P.Aiello said February was a bit low but it's expected for this time of year. PET is not doing well. A few plants have closed across the country since January. Pittsfield bottle and can loads have been contaminated but they are working with Ricardo in Pittsfield to continue to clean the loads up. Fiber went up; PET is just not moving. S.Waite had sent a podcast link where the President of the Association of Plastics Recyclers said that new resin plants have opened in China and so the recycled resin plants are closing in the US. S.Waite will resend the link about plastics. J.Ameen mentioned the oil prices being high because of the war might change the markets.

J.Scheffler spoke about some recent tours with Holyoke Community College students.

New cup recycling program: A.Donovan sent out a blurb with a graphic to the MAB group.

The graphic is ready. S.Waite sent out to her Western Mass towns the raw graphic in her newsletter, so towns could edit if they wanted.

Treasurer's Report: J.Ameen sent out the budget vs. actual, and we have not spent much of the budget yet except for our social media consultant this month. Our bank, M&T Bank, recently sent our statement with a \$28 fee, which was a new charge. S.Cooper suggested looking for a new bank. J.Ameen is going to check out the Greenfield Cooperative Bank which the Franklin County District uses. J.Ameen asked for a motion. S.Cooper made a motion to move our banking to Greenfield Cooperative Bank if they have reasonable rates and fee structures, if M&T does not credit the \$28 fee. L.Simmons seconded it. All in favor.

Membership adjustment review draft: A.Miller shared a document of MAB representation for 2026. S.Cooper made a motion to accept the changes to MAB representation of communities. R.Chang seconded the motion. All in favor. A.Donovan suggested looking in Franklin County

towns to find another member for MAB. L.Simmons suggested putting in a blurb in the RRR guide.

Update on MAB education project 2025: (Amy): Earlier in February A.Donovan sent around a draft of the order menu form . There is a disparity in the allocation of funds to towns in solid waste districts. A.Donovan suggested adding \$1,000 to the budget. The board discussed the benefits and issues of adding more dollars to each community. A.Miller suggested that A.Donovan discuss the order form and funding with L.Cernik. The order form is ready to move forward if no changes are made.

S.Waite suggested that the MAB board keep a formal contact list of all members and their contact information for each town.

A.Donovan will be sending out the menu letter with a link to each town and will copy the MAB members and ask for the MAB to follow up with their communities. A.Miller asked when the project will be completed. It's estimated around May and the education committee will need help from the members to distribute the materials.

RRRs—all 3: South- A.Miller met with the Republican and Lorenzo from RecycleworksMA and agreed with the North to have the theme of Reduce and Reuse. RecycleworksMA will be focusing on food waste, food rescuing. Other articles will be focusing on the Library of Things, and the 3rd idea is to be determined.

North- A.Donovan reported that this edition is focusing on Reuse, including the Library of Things, swap shops at transfer stations, free stores, and an article about paper cups.

A.Donovan mentioned that we are combining MRF/MAB ads in North and South together with the same ad. The North version is coming out on April 16th and South is on the 17th.

J.Ameen was contacted by the Eagles' Shoppers Guide about putting an ad in for \$50 for their Earth Day edition or a full page ad for \$550. Over 9,000 copies go out in the mail and also another 1,615 to stores. The board discussed what type of ad or graphic we should use. Options were the cup graphic, a MRF ad, Recycling is Real graphic. S.Waite made a motion to put an ad in the Shoppers guide and the educational committee will pick the graphic and to spend \$50. S.Cooper seconded the motion. All in favor.

Contract Issue: Tonnage Campaign- J. Ameen, A. Miller, and S.Waite met to discuss how to increase tonnage by June 30th so the tonnage adjustment fee can lower to \$12.50. They decided to send out a letter with some social media posts to all towns and especially Holyoke, Granby, Montague to recycle more. R.Chang asked about school tonnage. Most are single stream however, Longmeadow and East Longmeadow are dual and some contract independently. We need to increase our tonnage by 500 tons to meet the threshold. A.Donovan mentioned that the messaging about "recycling is real", needs to be pushed. A.Miller and J.Ameen have drafted a letter to send out to all MAB communities. A.Donovan asked who represents Holyoke and Granby. A.Miller represents them. There is a housing authority in Montague that could use some assistance, so maybe other towns can target their housing authority properties. Areas like sports fields are where a lot of recycling is getting thrown away. A.Miller suggested that S.Waite send some bullet points that we can put in a letter to our towns.

Southern Berkshire Hauling Committee- R.Chang gave an update about talking to local haulers about having a local transfer station where all the surrounding towns would be able to haul their recyclables to a trailer truck. And then the trailer truck would bring all of the recyclables to the Springfield MRF. Roger Hauling was quite interested in this idea. A call will be set up with Casella to discuss making the hauling more efficient. J.Scheffler is willing to support adding an aggregate site in Southern Berkshires, although he is not aware of any transfer stations with a scale and he suggested reaching out to Tom Speight who is the DEP representative for Pittsfield. A.Miller offered to help with this conversation going forward.

MAC update: S.Waite mentioned that the EPR meeting will be located in Holyoke on April 17th. Unfortunately there is a low sign up at this point. S.Waite asked to encourage your town's administration to attend.

April 1st- Re-Trac opens for the SMRP grants for 2026.

April 2nd- SMRP Webinar. After the 2nd, any other questions need to be in written form with the last day to submit being May 8th. Questions will be published on May 8th.

The Reduce and Reuse grant and the Market Development grant are now posted. The EPP policy is due by June 1st and needs to be submitted to be considered for the 2026 grant round. Email Becky Ferguson and Susan Waite your EPP policy and also attach it in the Re-trac certification of minimum eligibility criteria section.

Other Business: L.Simmons had an update that UMass Sustainability received a micro grant which helped with the start-up costs and retail fixtures for their New2U Thrift Store. She also encouraged everyone to sign up for the MassRecycle conference. A. Donovan said the social media committee now consists of just Amy and our consultant, Jess Wozniak, and is looking for a few more people to help.

Next Meeting: – April 15th by Zoom or at the MRF (to be determined).

J.Ameen made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by S.Cooper at 11:36AM.
Respectfully submitted, Liz Bone

- 1) Public Comment Period
- 2) Review and approval of minutes -February meeting
- 3) MRF Update: MRF issues and markets, tours: Peppino Aiello, Bernie Fusa, Jim Scheffler
- 4) New cup recycling program. Follow up

- 5) Treasurer's Report
- 6) Membership adjustment Berkshire County: Review draft
- 7) **Update on MAB education project 2025: (Amy)
- 8) **RRRs—all 3: Updates
- 9) Contract issues: tonnage campaign
- 10) MAC update:
- 11) Other Business
- 12) Next meeting