

Monroe County Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 17, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Monroe County Health Department (MCHD)

Monroe, MI 48161

Attendees: Anthony Abela, Josh Dunphy, Bailee Pasienza, Shane Anders, Bill Anders, Al Prieur, Krysten Booker, Jamie Dean, Jennifer Shankie, Chris Schaffer, Bobby Reese, Chris Westover, Penny Barron, Dan Rock

Virtually: Paula Williamson, Tenecia Wilson

Absent: Kevin Shipman, Jay Heinzerling

1. Welcome

- Chris Westover welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Jamie Dean, the Health Officer and Department Head of MCHD.
- Roundtable introductions were conducted by MMPC members.
- **Approval of December 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes (Motion: Reese/Pasienza)**
 - Motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024 meeting made by Bobby Reese and seconded by Bailee Pasienza.
 - Motion carried unanimously.

2. Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair

- Dan Rock shared the roles and responsibilities of the chair and vice-chair with the committee, as outlined in the bylaws.
- Dan Rock requested volunteers for both positions.
 - Jennifer Shankie (IHM) volunteered for Chair.
 - Josh Dunphy (GFL) volunteered for Vice-Chair.
- A voice vote was held to elect Jennifer Shankie as Chair and Josh Dunphy as Vice-Chair.
- The motion carried unanimously.
 - **Decision:** Jennifer Shankie was elected as Chair, and Josh Dunphy was elected as Vice-Chair.

3. Discussion of Future Meeting Schedule

- The committee discussed the optimal time and day for future meetings to accommodate member availability.
- **Decision:** Following a brief discussion, the committee agreed to hold future meetings on the second Thursday of each month from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM.
- A calendar invite for these meetings will be distributed to all committee members.

4. Bylaws - Review and Approval

- **Bylaws Key Points Reviewed:**
 - Chair and vice-chair positions will be elected annually.
 - Individuals can be re-elected for a maximum of three consecutive years.
 - Voting must be conducted in person; virtual voting is not permitted.
- **Motion to Approve Bylaws (Motion: Prieur/Abela)**
 - Motion to approve the bylaws made by Al Prieur and seconded by Anthony Abela.
 - Motion carried unanimously.
 - **Decision:** The committee approved the bylaws as reviewed.

5. Materials Management Planning Grant

- The committee discussed the details of the available Materials Management Planning Grant.
- **Grant Details:**
 - One \$60,000 grant is available, in addition to \$0.50 per capita.
 - Counties can apply for grant reimbursement once the work plan is approved by the state.
- **Funding Clarity Discussion:**
 - Uncertainty exists regarding the exact funding structure.
 - The grant operates on a reimbursement basis, differing from initial understandings of potentially separate funding pools.
 - Clarity is needed on whether unspent funds from the first year can be carried over to subsequent years. The current grant cycle concludes on September 30th, coinciding with the state's fiscal year, and the fate of unspent funds by this date is unclear.
 - A public comment highlighted potential communication silos within state agencies, including EGLE. The committee should prepare to engage with multiple EGLE departments for information.
 - **Action Item:** Dan Rock will seek clarification from EGLE on funding questions before the next meeting.
- **Action Item: Workplan Development**
 - **Action:** Dan Rock will develop a draft workplan before the next meeting.
 - **Workplan Considerations Discussed:**
 - The workplan is adaptable and can be modified later.
 - It will outline steps to achieve the end goal, focusing on a one-year timeframe initially.
 - State approval of the workplan is required before fund disbursement.
 - Only expenses incurred after workplan approval are eligible for reimbursement.
 - The workplan will establish the foundation for the overall Materials Management Plan (MMP).
 - The MMP will need to address food waste and composting.
 - Benchmark Recycling Standards must be incorporated.
 - Oakland County's budget proposal included approximately \$340,000 for consulting services, suggesting a potential need for consultant support in MMP development, which other counties may also consider.
- **RecycleNow Program:**
 - The RecycleNow Program is anticipated to address many Benchmark Recycling Standards.
- **Resident Education:**
 - Resident education is critical for enhancing recycling rates and minimizing contamination.

- Potential educational strategies include social media campaigns, direct mailers, and workshops, emphasizing proper sorting and preparation of recyclables (e.g., rinsing containers, flattening boxes).
- The committee acknowledged the challenge of educating residents on acceptable recycling materials and the significant issue of contamination, such as plastic bags, which disrupts recycling processes.
- Seasonal variations in recycling volumes were noted, potentially requiring flexible adjustments to collection capacity.
- **Capacity Issues:**
 - Current collection bin capacity is insufficient to meet the existing demand.
 - The committee discussed the limitations of the current drop-off recycling program and the possibility of expanding to curbside recycling to increase capacity and participation. Challenges associated with curbside recycling include high costs for residents and low hauler interest due to perceived low participation rates.

6. State Guidance and Communication Challenges

- The committee discussed the lack of clear guidance from EGLE regarding the Materials Management Planning process and the associated grant. State responses to county inquiries have been delayed.
- Plan submission deadlines were enforced before adequate guidance was provided by the state.
- Many DPAs (Designated Planning Agencies) have formed a collaborative group to exchange information and best practices due to the state's lack of coordination.
- SEMCOG is organizing meetings for DPAs in Southeast Michigan to discuss concerns and share resources.
- Potential staff reorganization within EGLE may be contributing to the communication challenges.
- **Committee Desires:** The committee emphasized the need for improved communication and clearer directives from EGLE, particularly concerning grant funding rules and plan submission expectations, to ensure efficient utilization of time and resources.
- A public comment reiterated concerns about potential communication silos within state agencies, including within EGLE, and advised the committee to be prepared to engage with multiple departments for necessary information.

7. Public Comment

- A member of the public commented on the option of multi-county plans, noting potential difficulties due to differences in funding, program offerings, demographics, and geography across counties. The committee briefly discussed the decision of Southeast Michigan counties to pursue individual county plans.

8. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn made by Al Prieur and seconded by Anthony Abela.
- Motion carried unanimously.
- Meeting adjourned at 2:52 PM.