

# Washtenaw Regional Resource Management Authority

9/18/2023; 11:00 AM

Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center  
4135 Washtenaw Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

**Members Present:** Auth, Best, Wessler, Mason, Tanghe, Sirls, Colvin-Garcia

**Members Absent:** Stumbo

**Staff Present:** Eggermont, Porta

**Attorney:** Davis

**Members of the public present:** Margie Teall (Recycle Ann Arbor Board Chair), Sean Adams (Recycle Ann Arbor)

Best called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM.

## Roll Call

*Ann Arbor Township:* Present/Colvin-Garcia

*Pittsfield Township:* Present/Best

*Scio Township:* Present/Auth

*Ypsilanti Township:* Not Present/Stumbo

*City of Dexter:* Present/Tanghe

*City of Saline:* Present/Sirls

*City of Ypsilanti:* Present/Wessler

*City of Ann Arbor:* Present/Mason

## Approval of agenda for 9/18/2023 meeting

Motion to approve agenda without amendment moved by Wessler, seconded by Tanghe. All in favor. Motion carries.

## Approval of Minutes

*8/21/2023 Meeting Minutes Approval*

Motion to approve without amendment moved by Wessler, seconded by Tanghe. All in favor. Auth Abstained. Motion carries.

## Unfinished Business

### RFP

Davis pointed out components of the RFP that need further discussion including clarification on which communities have their own carts, the addition of food waste collection, and if a specific MRF should be defined to maintain consistent education around recycling.

*Sirls arrived at 11:13 a.m.*

The board discussed how to handle the City of Dexter in the RFP since they seem unlikely to participate in the contract and their inclusion in the RFP could skew the pricing. Best suggested not listing Dexter in the initial RFP because they will have the option to join later just like any other WRRMA community at the current price. Tanghe agreed that is fair. Auth suggested a change to the RFP that future communities can join at the current price or a reduction due to the economies of scale. Auth further suggested correlating that reduction to the percentage increase in units. Davis responded he will amend the language in the RFP.

The board discussed the idea and logistics of including food waste collection in the RFP. Davis noted that yard waste is typically collected for a defined period (seasonally) but there is an opportunity to look at organics more broadly by considering kitchen waste, which is a large contribution to landfills, and expanding to year-round collection. The inclusion of food waste and year-round collection would impact pricing but is consistent with WRRMA's original mission. Wessler expressed interest in food waste collection and noted that the City of Ypsilanti compost site cannot process food waste. Mason suggested crafting the definition of yard waste or organics based on the facility it goes to and shared that the Ann Arbor compost site has plenty of capacity. Sirls added there is a benefit to the wastewater treatment plants if residents collect food waste for compost collection because many people use garbage disposals for food waste.

*Colvin-Garcia arrived at 11:30 a.m.*

Davis recalled that one of WRRMA's missions is to provide a consistent message on recycling across the communities, which is dependent on what the MRFs are accepting. Davis asked if the group wants to define a MRF that WRRMA wants the contract to use or allow the contracting responder to select the MRF that best suits their contractual needs. If a MRF is designated that the contractor must use, that will likely negatively impact pricing.

Eggermont asked Sean Adams of Recycle Ann Arbor to present why having a separate processing agreement may be beneficial to WRRMA. Adams noted that separate contracts would give WRRMA more control over where materials go and would allow WRRMA to get better metrics, share in rebates, and allow communities to share education messaging and values about recycling based on the community's values.

The board discussed the options and logistics of WRRMA selecting a MRF in the RFP, allowing the hauler to decide what MRF they go to, or splitting into multiple contracts where WRRMA has a hauling contract and a separate processing contract with a MRF directly. Davis will modify the RFP so it will request bids to provide alternate pricing without the processing costs included. WRRMA will explore processing agreements simultaneously as they are relatively simple.

Eggermont noted discussions are needed about funding WRRMA staff members and corresponding funding. Best indicated that the phone calls for Pittsfield would likely not go to WRRMA.

Auth pointed out that clarification is needed on whether WRRMA is eligible for a tax-exempt certificate. Davis and Eggermont will discuss.

*DOS*

Best recalled the DOS conversation from the previous meeting and proposed postponing the conversation about the DOS to develop the idea more and think about how it might work with a processing contract that was just discussed with the RFP process.

Motion to postpone the DOS conversation moved by Colvin-Garcia, seconded by Wessler, All in favor. Motion carries.

### **New Business**

*None*

### **Reports and Updates**

Eggermont reported that the Washtenaw County Home Toxics Center is no longer open during the week because it needs additional safety equipment. The facility will maintain its Saturday collection events because the contractor brings a portable shower unit. The new Household Hazardous Waste Center at Arbor Hills will be open year-round and weekday appointments can

be booked online. Green For Life paid for the new building and will pay for the disposal and a staff member.

**Next Steps**

Davis will put together new options in the RFP based on the discussion and create alternate RFPs that include hauling of recycling and hauling of yard waste only, as well as options for processing contracts. Davis will investigate the tax question.

**Public Comment: General/Unrelated to current Agenda Items**

Margie Teall (Chair of RAA Board) noted the RFP asks for "best pricing" several times and was under the impression that WRRMA's mission to reduce waste was their priority, but her impression is the RFP is weighed towards pricing. Teall also stressed the transparency of where recyclables are going. Teall asked if haulers must disclose where they are taking their materials in their responses.

Sean Adams (RAA) noted the RFP asks haulers for their combined total monthly cost for a residential unit including collection, transportation, and disposal. Adams suggested asking the bidders to separate collection, transportation, and disposal because big companies bury landfill costs in their aggregated costs. Adams also said the landfill destination should be listed.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Auth, seconded by Wessler, All in favor. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 12:33 PM.

Minutes prepared by Angela Porta

Minutes approved by:

  
Secretary

Minutes approved by:

  
Chair