



## SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN SOLID WASTE CONSORTIUM

### Minutes of Wednesday, January 21, 2015

219 Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079

www.SWMSWC.com

Minutes prepared by: AJ Brucks, Van Buren

Business meeting called to order by Chair Max Thiele at 7:07 PM

**Roll Call of Counties:** Members & Technical Advisory Council (TAC) Present:

*Allegan* – Max Thiele and Ben Williams; *Berrien* – Andy Vavra and Jill Adams; *Branch* - Don Vrablic; *Calhoun* – Sarah Kelly; *Cass*-Clark Cobb; *Van Buren* –Richard Freestone and AJ Brucks

**Others Present:** Chris Phillips, Best Way Disposal works in Kalamazoo and Watervliet and covers Southwest Michigan and also represents the Michigan Waste Industry; Katie Venechuk, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality introduced herself to the group. Venechuk works out of the Grand Rapids office and has been hired to be our Region contact for Resource Recovery. Venechuk had worked in the Kalamazoo Office in the Solid Waste and Landfill division. Her job is to work towards the economic potential that recycling brings and be a resource to help double the percent of waste that is currently being recycling in Michigan.

**Reorganization of Officers for 2015-** Current Officers: Thiele (Chair); Ziliak (Vice Chair/Secretary); Vavra (Treasurer). Motion made by Vrablic, supported by Freestone to nominate, close nominations and with a unanimous vote to elect Thiele for the 2015 Chair. Motion carried. Motion made by Thiele, supported by Vrablic to nominate, close nominations and with a unanimous vote elect Ziliak as Vice Chair/Secretary and Vavra as Treasurer for the 2015 year. Motion carried.

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by Vavra, supported by Freestone to approve the January Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion made by Vrablic, supported by Cobb to approve the September 17, 2014 board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried. Note the November meeting was canceled due to weather.

**Public Comment:** N/A

**Financial Report:** Balance of \$6,694.25. Brucks will check with PNC bank of why there was a 6\$ service charge. Motion made by Vrablic, supported by Cobb to approve the December financial statement. Motion carried.

**Payment of Bills:** none.

FY 2015 Budget: TAC's Annual 2015 Budget Proposal. Motion made by Freestone, supported by Vrablic to accept the annual budget as presented. Motion carried.

**Presentation:** Sarah Kelly, Solid Waste and Recycling Coordinator for Calhoun County Public Health Department, highlights from the Resource Recovery Conference in New Orleans. Kelly presented with a PowerPoint and handouts. Kelly discussed the new definition of recycling the National Recycling Coalition has been amended. Kelly mentioned presenters Bill McDonough and his books he has written on waste as well as Rob Kaplan from Walmart and the goals they have with waste reduction and recycling with the Closed the Loop Fund. Other valuable information was curbside value partnership, recycling partnerships that are happening around the country and organizations that promote reuse of items and recycling like Planet Reuse.

**Old Business:**

### **New Business:**

- MRC 2015 Conference- Adams updated that the MDEQ and Governor's Office is working in conjunction with the MRC Conference and it is being planned for May 5-7, 2015 in Kalamazoo. This conference will be a great opportunity for our regional staff and Consortium members to attend and gain knowledge of recycling in Michigan and how to best develop our programs here in Southwest Michigan.
- Governors Recycling Council Meeting- Adams attended the Council meeting and give an update of the current rate of recycling is below 15% and by 2017 the Governor would like to see at least 30% of waste being recycled. There is a Recycling grant that is available and due in April. Brucks will send the information to the Consortium. It is for a 2 year program and the applicant has to have a successful audit to apply, the Consortium would apply under Van Buren County. Venechuk updated the State Recycling Summit is May 5<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the MRC Conference. There is a webinar for both the Recycling Grant and the Excellence Award that will be announced during this summit. There will be \$600,000 awarded for grants with the maximum request of \$100,000. The webinar for the grant is Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>. Adams discussed the opportunity for applying for the Excellence Award for the Education and Outreach the Consortium does as a group. Board was in full support of nominating the Consortium for this Award. Motion made by Vrablic, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Freestone to submit a nomination for the SWMSWC for the Excellence Award for Education and Outreach. Motion carried. Thiele encouraged the submission of a grant from the Consortium. Cobb discussed an idea of working with businesses to get their recycling improved and working with them to show them the bottom line of saving money and making better decisions of what they purchase. Adams mentioned the group Retap which is a group of retired engineers that work with businesses on waste audits and suggest proper changes for recycling and reducing waste in a business. Adams will send the Consortium information on Retap. Thiele asked Phillips and Venechuk what they thought was happening with prices of recycling tires, plastic and electronics and how it effects the effort in Michigan. Phillips discussed how the tire demand is down so the price to recycling is up, facilities are not meeting the standards so it is more expensive to recycle. Venechuk agreed that the tire market is down because the demand is being met and there are more tires than can be processed in a proper manner, the idea of trying tires in an asphalt mix is being worked on and improved. Brucks asked if Cass County has results from their trails. Cobb will look into this. Katie also discussed the problem behind recycling CRT's and where the State has made their mistake with weak legislation with it comes to an electronic ban and funding from manufactures. CRTs contain lead and mercury and have no recycle value for the glass so the price goes up because of the hazardous waste. Plastics seem to stay steady with good revenue from PETE.
- 2015 Annual Dues, waiver- Motion made by Vavra, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cobb to wave the \$500 membership fee for each Consortium member for the FY 2015. Motion carried.

### **Reports/Project Updates:**

- Tire Grant 2015-Williams updated he has not heard from the MDEQ about the 2015 grant submission but passed around a handout with current listed dates and locations for anticipated tire collections in case the Consortium is awarded the grant. If there are any changes Williams will need to know so he can make any amendments to the State.
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)-Valley City Tour and TAC member seats- Adams discussed the tour at Valley City and the Electronics they collect and recycle. The tour was very beneficial for the TAC to see to be able to let residents know the proper process of electronic recycling. TAC seats will remain the same for the 2015 year.

### **County Updates:**

Allegan – Partnering with the MDEQ on a phase II of a Medical Waste Pilot Program. Last year I completed 44 medical waste inspections at mostly doctor's offices. Phase II will focus on larger medical waste producers, nursing homes, dialysis centers, etc. The pilot program will generate \$2500-4000 to the Allegan County Health Dept.

SWPC: Met in October. The committee is going forward with Act 69 to allow up to \$50 per home per year. This will go to the board of commissioners in March for the twps./cities to place on a ballot by their choice hopefully all communities interested will place on the same ballot to increase awareness.

Kent County's Doug Wood retired and I met with the new Director of Public Works Dar Bass. He might be willing to speak at a future consortium meeting.

Berrien – Berrien was granted permission to work with Cass, Van Buren, and Branch counties on the 2015 Clean Sweep Program. Jill will contact coordinators in each County over the next few weeks to plan.

Michigan's Great Southwest Sustainable Business Forum is conducting a Legislative Update on February 6, 2015 at the Mendel Center in Benton Harbor. Jill encouraged the members to attend.

Branch – Vrablic was excited to announce that Branch County is now paperless and will save on many reams of paper per month. Their commission meetings are all on computers and large screens for attendees. Vrablic also commented that he will work on getting a tour set up for July at the greenhouse that has expanded to 30 acres closed in greenhouse that grows cherry tomatoes and peppers. They have a great set up for recycling water and electric generation.

Calhoun – Kelly updated on the progress of the new recycle center in Calhoun County. Kelly also hosted a Styrofoam collection in December that was successful despite the weather they collected as much if not more than last year. Styrofoam collection happened by working with Dart.

Cass – N/A

St. Joseph- N/A

Van Buren – Brucks updated that the County and District has been busy but limited things have been happening with the Recycling Program besides figuring out and reorganizing the Electronic Recycling now that there is a charge for CRTs.

**Other Comments:** N/A

**Next Meeting:** May 20<sup>th</sup>, July Tour (TBA), September 16, November 18

**Adjourn:** Motion made by Varva, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Vrablic adjourn the meeting at 9:30pm. Motion carried.