

**Emmet County Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)  
Meeting Minutes**

**5/19/2026, 10:00AM**

**EMS Eppler Station, 1201 Eppler Road, Petoskey, MI 49770**

**Emmet County Staff Present:** Ashley McMurry, Lindsey Walker, Jayna Steffel, Noelle Behling, Natalie Gibbons (virtual)

**Guests:** None

**Resource Recycling Staff Present:** Elisa Seltzer, Stephanie Robinson (virtual)

**Call to order:** D. Fuller called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

**Roll Call**

- a. Lindsey Walker – Present
- b. Kevin Donner – Absent
- c. Denny Keiser, Chair – Absent
- d. Doug Fuller, Vice Chair – Present
- e. Allen Elya III – Present
- f. Jayna Steffel – Present
- g. Caroline Moellering – Present
- h. Stephanie Marchbanks – Present
- i. Chris Gee – Present
- j. Don Mapes – Absent
- k. Darcy Wright – Present

**March Meeting Minutes Approval**

Motion by A. Elya to approve March 2026 MMPC Meeting Minutes. L. Walker seconded.  
Meeting minutes approved.

**Committee Updates**

A. McMurry reported that D. Keiser is resigning as Bear Creek Township Supervisor, which will require his departure from the MMPC. A. McMurry stated she will obtain a formal letter of resignation and that the newly appointed township supervisor will fill the seat pending Board of Commissioners approval.

Flood Voucher Program

A. McMurry provided an update on the department's flood voucher program, which was created in response to the spring 2026 flooding. Each voucher covers two cubic yards of flood-damaged material (\$72 value) and is available to any Emmet County resident with proof of address. The program was funded by a \$26,000 contribution from the Petoskey Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation and covers 300 vouchers. Approximately 70 have been distributed as of the May MMPC meeting. The program runs through July 1, after which second vouchers will be opened to households. E. Seltzer reported that Cheboygan County is also establishing flood debris drop-off locations.

L. Walker reported that both the Cheboygan and Petoskey Habitat for Humanity ReStores will close by the end of June. She noted that Emmet County could expand programs to fill this gap, and Preservation 49740 has expressed strong interest in supporting a reuse center. E. Seltzer added that transfer stations with attached reuse centers are a recognized best practice in Minnesota.

L. Walker noted that the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians is offering tribal citizens a \$650 reimbursable stipend for storm-related expenses and asked C. Moellering about potential collaboration with the county's cleanup voucher program. C. Moellering indicated she would reach out to tribal leadership.

#### MRC Conference

A. McMurry and L. Walker shared highlights from the Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC) conference, including a tour of the Kalamazoo County HHW collection site, which handles 400,000 pounds of HHW annually and is funded through a household tax. Staff also learned that Emmet and Kalamazoo Counties are the only two in Michigan that accept hazardous waste from conditionally exempt small quantity generators. L. Walker described Kalamazoo's yard waste partnership with Morgan Composting (Dairy Doo) and food scrap collection by Organicycle as models for public-private partnerships.

#### **Data Memo Review**

A. McMurry referenced the data memo that distributed two weeks prior the May MMPC meeting and highlighted that the county's recycling rate was at 37% in 2023 and 35% in 2024. She noted that Emmet County far exceeds state averages, citing Ottawa and Washtenaw Counties at 16 to 18% and the Central Upper Peninsula at 2%. E. Seltzer shared that two conference sessions addressed MMP planning, including a guidance document expanding EGLE's plan template, which A. McMurry offered to share with interested committee members.

The committee discussed the data memo, noting that 97% of the county's waste goes to GFL's Onaway (Elk Run) landfill, which has 9 years of projected capacity. C. Gee clarified that GFL has contingency plans to divert waste to its Wexford County facility, which has approximately 60 years of capacity.

S. Marchbanks also suggested expanding plant plastics collection through partnerships with local nurseries, modeled after the existing battery collection host-site program. The committee discussed formalizing these relationships and including a host sites section in the plan.

### **MMP Siting Process**

A. McMurry recapped the March siting discussion, including Part 115 requirements, current pathways, and the handling of source-separated facilities through local zoning. S. Robinson then presented suggested changes by facility type. The committee discussed composting facility siting, including the need for a pathway should a new facility be proposed elsewhere in the county. L. Walker identified a secondary site in Brutus on tribally owned land with existing feedstock partnerships. E. Seltzer recommended identifying this site in the plan and noting its tribal land exemption from local zoning. The committee also discussed interest in a potential northern site. L. Walker raised the importance of creating end-market demand for compost, and E. Seltzer suggested the plan include a section on ordinances and model policies from ILSR, USCC, BioCycle, and ReFED.

S. Robinson explained that anaerobic digesters (AD) are classified as materials utilization facilities under Part 115. E. Seltzer recommended the committee decide whether to address anaerobic digestion through a consistency-based siting process or require a plan amendment. The committee deferred the decision for further staff consideration. S. Robinson also reviewed siting criteria updates, including replacing DEQ references with EGLE and reviewing the application fee schedule.

### **Funding Mechanisms**

A. McMurry reviewed the department's funding structure as an enterprise fund, with revenues from fees for services, recyclable sales, curbside contracts, compost sales, and transportation revenues. They do not operate on general tax dollars but received a \$600,000 general fund contribution in 2024 for a new baler. The leased drop-site program includes approximately 15–16 business sites with per-pull fees of \$100–\$150. Transfer station revenues help offset costs for programs that do not cover their own expenses.

A. McMurry reported the County regularly applies for state and local grants but is not currently pursuing federal grants due to uncertainty around EPA funding. A. McMurry presented a revenue comparison between 2021 and 2025 and highlighted diverse funding sources and a decline in recyclable sales as a revenue share. E. Seltzer encouraged naming future funding mechanisms in the plan, including general fund contributions, millage, sponsorships, and additional grant opportunities. A committee member asked about millage and bonding authority; E. Seltzer explained that under Act 185, DPWs have significant autonomy, though Emmet County's DPW operates under more constrained bylaws requiring Board of Commissioners approval.

### **Education & Outreach**

N. Behling reported that County staff completed Master Recycler training through the Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC). She also shared the 12 education hours program that was developed and hosted at North Central Michigan College. This program sold out with 25 attendees and helped build a volunteer base for Emmet County Recycling. A Master Composter program is planned for fall. L. Walker highlighted the success of a community repair café and suggested the library as a future venue. County staff also noted plans to resume direct mailers and use real-time feedback from phone calls and processor reports to address contamination.

### **MMP Goals Consensus**

E. Seltzer introduced the goals review and explained the committee would revisit previously developed goals for a consensus check. Goals with consensus at this stage will continue to be refined with specific targets and objectives in MMP drafts.

#### Commercial, Institutional, and Industrial Goal #1 – Parallel Study

A. McMurry noted the parallel study has been completed and recommended revising the goal to require it every two years. The committee reached consensus.

#### Commercial, Institutional, and Industrial Goal #2 – Cardboard Diversion

This original goal included a downtown cardboard compactor, a county-run commercial route, and a potential disposal ban. C. Gee and D. Wright opposed the commercial route and ban, citing enforcement challenges and concerns about requirements on small businesses. E. Seltzer proposed revised language focusing on increasing OCC diversion rates and considering options such as self-serve compactors at existing drop-off sites, removing the route and ban components. The committee reached consensus on the revised approach.

### Multifamily Goal – Recycling Access

This goal focuses on extending recycling services and promoting ordinances requiring recycling infrastructure in new and existing multifamily developments. L. Walker identified Bear Creek Township as the area with the greatest need. Committee members suggested strengthening language from “consider” to “promote” for ordinance development and recommended that any policy reference all materials accepted under the county’s dual-stream program. The committee expressed general agreement.

### **Public Comment**

Information was shared about three funding opportunities for local governments and tax-exempt entities: the State of Michigan’s elective pay program for clean energy tax credits, free solar project scoping through Michigan Energy Options, and the EGLE Community Energy Management Program Grant (\$5,000–\$50,000, no match). E. Seltzer added that the NextCycle Michigan Seed Grant also recently opened, offering up to \$10,000 with no match for project pilots and analysis.

### **Next Steps**

The committee will meet again on June 9th, 2026, from 10am to 12pm. The committee intends to address the remaining goals during this meeting.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by D. Fuller. Meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE APPROVED AT FUTURE MEETING