

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

12/08/2025, 10:00AM

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

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

Guests: Matt Blythe (Emmet County Emergency Planning Director), Caitlyn Wouters (RRS, virtual)

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

Call to order: D. Keiser called meeting to order at 10:08 am.

Roll Call

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

Committee Updates - Input on 2026 Meeting Schedule

N. Behling opened by reviewing the meeting agenda and requesting input on the committee's 2026 meeting schedule. The committee members confirmed they expect to be available during the proposed times and will send a proxy in their place, if not. A. McMurry shared bylaws regarding proxies for reference:

“Section 5: Voting states that each member of the MMPC has one vote and there is no proxy voting; members must be present during the motion and discussion to vote. The group agreed that DPA can be contacted, and at the next meeting, proxies will be discussed and named for attendance continuity only.”

An in-person public meeting was proposed for April 2026. A Committee member suggested the first Tuesday of April to maximize attendance. An open-house format with programmed activities, such as presentations and raffles, was also recommended. The meeting would be scheduled after school hours. N. Behling said it would be ideal to have at least one representative from each village, township, and city in the County at the April meeting. To increase turnout, ideas included contacting apartment managers, recruiting neighborhood representatives, and using survey results to identify engaged community members.

Committee members also suggested hosting multiple public meetings at different locations, such as schools, throughout the year. If pursued, committee members agreed that they should announce a series of meeting dates with locations in the north and south of the County. E. Seltzer (RRS) noted that, while official public hearings are not required until the Plan is formalized, they are recommended to provide the opportunity for input and cultivate buy-in. RRS can support engagement efforts. She also recommended leveraging existing local events and getting staff and/or committee members on their agendas for short 10- to 30-minute presentations, which could encourage outreach without the need to plan stand-alone events.

Surveys and Outreach

N. Behling provided updates on surveys, highlighting ongoing business and residential surveys and 2017 parallel survey results. The deadline for the business survey was extended to December 31st, 2025, which is the same deadline for the residential survey. Currently, the residential survey has received 116 responses. There are plans to provide survey data to RRS in January for analysis and visualization.

A committee member asked about survey distribution. N. Behling said the surveys were shared through newsletters, HHW event promotions, and other means. E. Seltzer suggested adding the survey to their website; N. Behling noted that this will be explored. L. Walker proposed using QR codes in future advertisements for additional participation. C. Moellering recommended using tribal contact lists and forwarding surveys to economic development groups. S. Marchbanks offered to share surveys via Networks Northwest social media.

Organics Goals

The committee reviewed six organics goals. L. Walker discussed promoting food waste reduction and municipal strategies. She referenced an RRS webinar on municipal roles in materials management, including resolutions and ordinances to support organics

programs. The concept of “Strive for 5,” which aims for 5% organic matter in soils, was raised as a messaging tool.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

The committee discussed expanding Emmet County’s HHW drop-off days and becoming a licensed HHW hub. N. Behling shared insights from a visit to Kalamazoo, Michigan’s permanent HHW center. E. Seltzer noted that HHW events are currently best practice; a permanent HHW center is possible, but they are typically located in areas of high population density.

The committee agreed that liability and cost differences between HHW event and facility models would be necessary before moving forward. L. Walker encouraged regional partnerships with tribal communities and nearby counties for economies of scale. S. Marchbanks noted traffic flow challenges at other communities’ events and suggested offsite venues if the HHW program is expanded. She also suggested that residency checks may need to be tightened if a permanent facility is developed. At the recent County event, there were about 180-200 residential appointments. Residents can drop off material for free but are encouraged to donate; the average donation was about \$80 per car. Businesses are charged \$2/lb. to drop off material. Each event costs the County about \$30,000.

Other Special Materials

Shingles were identified as a potential material for inclusion in the County’s materials management programs. The committee reviewed the County’s previous shingle collection program that ran from 2010 through 2015. L. Walker raised concerns about limited end markets and stigma around the material in some regions of Michigan. Further discussion covered MDOT involvement, recycled asphalt shingles (RAS), and policy support. E. Seltzer noted that NextCycle Michigan’s ROADS track will return in 2027, offering potential support for managing this material.

The committee also considered including textiles in the County’s materials management programs. N. Behling highlighted the need for more end markets. L. Walker suggested engaging thrift stores through the business survey and mentioned Nick Carlson (Goodwill) as a resource. A committee member asked if other Michigan communities provide programs for textiles; anecdotally, few do, but Michigan State University diverts textiles through its Surplus Store and Recycling program.

Disaster Debris Planning

The committee discussed disaster debris management. Emmet County's emergency planning director, Matt Blythe, joined the meeting as a guest speaker. He discussed a recent ice storm that impacted the County and resulted in 3 million downed trees. L. Walker emphasized the difficulty of estimating debris volume from these events and suggested analyzing inbound/outbound material data. S. Marchbanks listed types of disasters that can impact the area and require planning: wind, hail, snow, flooding, wildfires, and rare tornados.

C. Wouters (RRS) also joined the meeting (remotely) as a guest speaker. She presented information on a Local Disaster Debris Management Plan Template provided by Michigan State Police, Emergency Management & Homeland Security Division. The debris plan template is framed as a supporting document to the Emergency Operations Plan and as a counterpart to the State's Disaster Debris Management Plan. C. Wouters emphasized that Emmet County's Materials Management Planning is an opportunity to document sites, capacity, roles/contacts, contractors, end markets, and public messaging that Emmet County's emergency management can rely on.

Following C. Wouters' presentation, M. Blythe shared that Emmet County's emergency operations plan draft is expected in January 2026. He noted that coordination with Emmet County DPW and local utility companies is needed. E. Seltzer mentioned that RRS can support modeling, where appropriate. L. Walker suggested coordinating with S. Marchbanks to proactively plan food waste management during disasters.

Construction and Demolition (C&D)

C&D discussions have been moved to the committee's January 2026 meeting. During which, Kristen Wieland (RRS) will present on the topic. This will be paired with discussions on reuse and potential speakers from MSU and Goodwill.

Expanding Materials Management

The committee discussed current and potential materials for County management. A committee member asked if Emmet County had ever conducted a waste audit; others noted that no such study had been done. It was suggested that the County complete an audit to identify material types and volumes for targeted management. In the absence of this data, members proposed expanding programs to include C&D, scrap metal, textiles, shingles, carpeting, and food waste. Developing a reuse center was also mentioned.

Committee Feedback

All 2026 committee meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month. D. Mapes may require a proxy to attend in his stead at a future meeting, which will be appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

Public Comment

None

Next Steps

The committee will meet again on January 13th, 2026, from 10am to 12pm.

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

Motion to approve by D. Fuller, seconded by D. Mapes. Approved.

Meeting adjournment

D. Keiser adjourned meeting at 12:02 p.m.

Approved by:

Douglas Fuller, Vice Chair

TO BE APPROVED AT FUTURE MEETING