

Emmet County Materials Management Planning Committee (MMPC)
Meeting Minutes

05/05/2025, 10AM

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

Emmet County Staff Present: Lindsey Walker, Ashley McMurry, Jayna Steffel

Resource Recycling Staff Present: Elisa Seltzer, Katelyn Heflin

Call to order: Vice Chair D. Fuller called the meeting to order at 10:04a.m.

Introductions and Roll Call

- a. Lindsey Walker – present
- b. Marie Passino – present
- c. *Kevin Donner – absent***
- d. *Denney Keiser – absent***
- e. Doug Fuller – present
- f. Allen Elya III – present
- g. Ashley McMurry – present
- h. Caroline Moellering – present
- i. Stephanie Marchbanks – present
- j. Chris Gee – present
- k. Don Mapes – present

EGLE Contract

McMurry noted we have the EGLE contract approved and in hand.

SWOT Analysis Overview

McMurry reviewed Goals and objectives for each goal. McMurry highlighted the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for all goals from the last solid waste management plan in 2000.

Seltzer and McMurry explained that the SWOT analysis is a big picture look at where Emmet County is at as we begin planning. The staff noted Emmet is already meeting the required benchmark recycling standards and discussed going above and beyond, creating goals for materials like batteries. McMurry highlighted strengths in Emmet's program such as flow control and pay as you throw and noted opportunities through this planning

process like tip fees and pay by the ton. The staff noted the strength of Emmet County's regional hub and spoke model and opportunities to bring in more regional participation. The staff mentioned that part of the reason materials management plans are happening is to regionalize recycling infrastructure and increase participation in a more collaborative way as all counties will be planning simultaneously.

McMurry highlighted all goals and their objectives from the 2000 plan that were marked as still "in progress" in the SWOT analysis:

- Goal 1, Objective 1.3 re building materials and C&D waste.
 - Member noted there's a lot of interest in this space especially noting all the buildings demolished and hauled to landfill.
 - Reach out to Ann Arbor to learn from their C&D ordinance.
- Goal 1, Objective 1.5 re expanding composting programs.
 - Staff noted that the beneficial reuse section of Part 115 has not been developed out. We need to build out incentives in our plan to ensure healthy market development opportunities. This will require policy and engagement with EGLE.
 - McMurry noted we will have to keep in mind bond expenses for registrations, etc. as we build our goals.
- Goal 3, Objective 3.1 re-education on the costs of illegal dumping.
 - The Committee discussed the challenges of enforcing illegal dumping consequences.
- Goal 5, Objective 5.3 re exploring alternative funding mechanisms and protecting the ability to flow control.

Committee Input and MMP Key Focus Areas

Multifamily Recycling

The Committee discussed challenges and opportunities with multifamily recycling, e.g., Emmet's dual stream system. The Committee discussed opportunities to conduct a survey to assess interest. They also discussed evaluating multifamily recycling based on volume – ordinance developed – and ensuring space provided during site planning, service provision required (private or county).

Organics

Walker shared a review of composition of waste coming through Emmet's system. A significant amount, about 50%, is organic. This includes cardboard, food waste, and yard waste. Food could be going to feed people, to feed animals, and then to compost. There

are many reasons to tackle organics which make up a large percentage of waste going to landfill in Emmet County. The Committee discussed the need to balance out the ratio between carbon and nitrogen sources for compost and bring in more partners to reach that balance. The Committee discussed varied strategies to reduce organics in landfill, e.g., anaerobic digestion. There's a big education component and it will look different for more rural versus more urban areas. The Committee discussed best practices including education and pilots for food scraps and yard waste. A member asked what other counties have had experience with multifamily organics curbside programs. Seltzer noted DemCON in Minneapolis that operates their environmental campus. They have strong end markets for multiple materials.

The staff shared current gaps in food salvaging post disasters. They noted the large amount of spoiled food from grocery stores, residents, businesses, etc. after the recent ice storm in the region. Addressing this challenge should be a priority in the planning process. The staff noted the need for a de-packager to at least be able to compost the spoiled food. The Committee asked about the role of a bio digester. Emmet noted that it's really capital intensive and that the lowest hanging fruit is to feed people and animals first. The Committee discussed the work that Food Rescue Lansing does. To date they have recovered over 230,000 meals. They are very interested in getting involved in the MMP process and the Committee discussed potentially creating a chapter in Emmet County.

C&D / Disaster Debris

A member asked about the current C&D waste processing operations. Seltzer mentioned a good example facility in Minneapolis focused on scrap metal, cardboard, asphalt, etc. The Committee discussed the equipment needed to process these materials and the costs of maintaining the equipment. Seltzer noted a best practice - to source separate C&D materials. Staff noted that convenience is key for C&D waste contractors and most prefer to tip waste in a compactor and haul it to the landfill. The Committee discussed the need to build incentives to separate C&D waste and also noted the current incentive of taking wood waste to Emmet's facility. Seltzer added there is a strong case to build this into the MMP goals and the ability to incorporate *disincentives*. The Committee discussed the need for better technology to utilize C&D waste in asphalt.

Reuse

The Committee discussed the huge opportunity that reuse is with Habitat for Humanity and other potential partnerships. There's a great model for reuse on the MSU campus that Emmet would like to emulate. Seltzer shared another organization in Duluth, Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) succeeding in reuse and recovery. Seltzer noted that

most transfer stations can make money if they sell the reusables coming through their facilities – it covers operational costs. Seltzer also noted the increase in student demand for reused items. Committee agreed we will want to bring in Goodwill of Traverse City and Kris Jolly/Dave Smith from the MSU Surplus Store and potentially Duluth as guest speakers for the reuse conversations.

Other

The Committee discussed challenges with polystyrene recycling. Emmet County does not recycle polystyrene. The equipment to densify it is expensive and takes up a lot of space. The PS has to be clean, white, and does not generate much revenue. Transportation is usually Emmet's largest costs and getting the weight of densified PS on a truck (over 40K pounds) is not justified.

Other challenging materials such as carpet were discussed. Grand Rapids had a smart technology for carpet but did not get state support and had to shut down.

McMurry asked about creating a subsection of each meeting to focus on education efforts for all materials.

A member asked what Emmet's current processing capacity is and how much more material they can accept as the County looks to divert more waste from landfill. McMurry noted they have capacity to process 100,000 tons per year and they are currently processing 11 tons. Seltzer noted that part of the original design to the MRF includes the ability to expand the tip floor.

The Committee discussed plastic film and the challenges of the multiple types of materials coming in from around the globe. Seltzer noted that the tariffs could regionalize supply chains more but could also slow domestic manufacturing if a recession hits. The staff shared their experience with national sword when China stopped accepting recyclables from the U.S. and the backup that caused in the U.S.

Seltzer noted the challenges with cardboard recovery and the need for more cardboard recycling access. She noted that EGLE will grant funds towards this. This could be accompanied by an education campaign. Right now, Emmet partners with the private sector for cardboard recycling. This contract structure gives Emmet an opportunity to better this service. The Committee discussed the need to build out infrastructure to decrease the transportation costs of moving cardboard.

The Committee also discussed challenges with textiles and the very small scale of different textile end markets. The low demand required Emmet to store textiles for a long time, presenting challenges with humidity, mold, etc.

Next Steps

A google form will be sent out to all committee members for ongoing feedback.

Future Meetings Schedule

Next meeting will be at the same time and place - June 2nd, 2025

Public Comment

None

Meeting adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Fuller, seconded by McMurry. Meeting adjourned at 12 P.M

Approved by: _____ (Chair)

TO BE APPROVED AT FUTURE MEETING