



Minutes

SW MI Materials Management Planning Committee

Monday, September 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Location: Pokagon Band Tribal Police Department Emergency Operations Center
58620 Sink Rd, Dowagiac, MI49047

Role	Member	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Solid Waste Facility Operator	Bob Kras	IP	A	IP	IP	E	IP	IP	E	IP			
Hauler	Christopher Phillips (Vice-Chair)	IP	E	IP	IP	A	IP	E	IP	IP			
Materials Recovery Facility Operator	Donovan Kelley		IP	E	IP	A	E	E	IP	E			
Composting Facility Operator	Adam Brent								IP	IP			
Waste Diversion, Reuse, Reduction Facility Operator	Sheila Bergen				IP	IP	IP	IP	A	IP			
Environmental Interest Group	Kalli Marshall (Chair)	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Elected Township Official	David Kuhn	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	E			
Elected City/Village Official	Deah Muth	IP	IP	V	IP	V	IP	E	IP	E			
Business that generates Managed Materials	Al Pscholka	IP	IP	E	E	A	E	IP	A	A			
Regional Planning Agency	John Egelhaaf	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Sovereign Nation	Jennifer Kanine	IP	IP	IP	V	A	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Berrien County													
Elected County or Municipal Official	Dave Vollrath	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Business that Generates Managed Materials	Jeff Doroh	IP	IP	IP	E	A	IP	IP	E	IP			
Cass County													
Elected County or Municipal Official	Roseann Marchetti (Secretary)	IP	IP	E	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Business that Generates Managed Materials	Amy Huser	IP	IP	IP	IP	E	IP	IP	IP	IP			
Van Buren County													
Elected County or Municipal Official	Kurt Doroh							IP	IP	A			
Business that Generates Managed Materials	Robert Baran	IP	IP	A	IP	IP	IP	IP	A	IP			
IP - Present in Person; V - Participating remotely; E - Excused absence; A - Unexcused absence; A blank spot means the position is vacant													

Public Present

Marchetti, Jerry

Adams, Jill

Plathe, Justin

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Kalli Marshall called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Role call was taken, and it was established that a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Agenda

Roseann Marchetti moved to **“ACCEPT THE AGENDA.”** Sheila Bergen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. Approval of August 18, 2025 Minutes

Roseann Marchetti moved to **“APPROVE AUGUST 18, 2025 MINUTES.”** Dave Vollrath seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Old Business

Update on Working Groups Interest Form

Bekah Schrag gave an update on the working group interest form. So far, 11 people had filled out the interest form, and only 3 of the MMPC members showed interest. She urged members to be involved since each working group needs two MMPC members. Schrag said that the meetings would most likely be virtual and be once a month or once every other month.

5. Hearings

Recycling and Best Practices

Chair Marshall presented on recycling goals and best practices, with a focus on both curbside and drop-off recycling. The discussion on curbside programs addressed budget considerations, including how to create and manage program budgets, as well as concerns about potential contamination if recycling carts are distributed to all residents. Christopher Phillips suggested that drop-off locations could be co-located with grocery stores to improve accessibility for the community, and it was further noted that partnerships with these stores could be established so that the stores themselves could also make use of the drop-off bins.

Chair Marshall then discussed various initiatives to promote sustainability in schools, including the Michigan Green School Initiative, which offers free participation and certification. She mentioned the possibility of conducting waste audits and creating educational materials for different grade levels. Marshall also explored ideas for school-based recycling programs, including using schools as drop-off sites and involving students in recycling efforts. Additionally, she suggested

implementing a business recycling certification program similar to a report card system to encourage better sustainability practices.

6. New Business

Benchmark Recycling Requirements

Schrag presented on the benchmark recycling standards required by the State for the plan. She noted that the best available data was used, though information on subscription-based curbside recycling access is not currently available. This data will be necessary to verify whether the region is meeting benchmark standards. Schrag also reviewed curbside recycling access requirements, which apply to municipalities in urban areas and those with more than 5,000 residents, with collection required at least twice per month and for materials specified in the plan. Discussion followed on the challenges of providing curbside access in rural areas, particularly in townships with large geographic areas and widely dispersed customers.

Schrag outlined the urban municipalities within the region that will need curbside recycling access by January 1, 2026, based on 2020 census data (A list can of municipalities can be found in the meeting packet). She then reviewed drop-off requirements for each county, noting that the number of sites depends on how many residents lack curbside access. Because subscription-based curbside coverage maps are not yet available, the number of required drop-off sites cannot currently be determined. Schrag explained that drop-off centers must be open at least 24 hours per month and accept the materials specified in the Materials Management Plan. She reported that Berrien County currently has four compliant drop-off sites, Cass County has none, and Van Buren County has eight.

The group discussed challenges with establishing and funding drop-off sites, particularly the difficulty of covering operational costs. Private sector partnerships were suggested as a possible solution, along with ideas such as allowing access for residents outside of a municipality for a fee or expanding options for those without curbside service.

Recycling Goal Setting

Schrag mentioned that the goals provided in the presentation were from a previous interactive activity with the MMPC. This was another opportunity to refine the goals, add additional objectives and actions, or provide feedback on what was already suggested. Interactive activities were completed for recycling goals in the following

categories: Diversion, Public Awareness and Education, Infrastructure and Access, and Policy and Funding. Schrag said that the comments will be compiled and a list of goals will be created for review at the next MMPC meeting.

8. Public Comment

John Egelhaaf commented on the hard work that Bekah Schrag and Kalli Marshall are doing to take a high level project and make it digestible for the committee, while recognizing the lack of information coming from the State.

Chair Marshall recognized the committee's progress, particularly noting that throughout the ongoing discussions, significant progress had been made on goals, objectives, actions, demographics, and many other aspects of the Plan.

9. Miscellaneous

Chair Marshall asked what topics the committee would like to be presented at future meetings, and learning more about haulers and how the plan can work with existing haulers to accomplish the plan goals was mentioned.

The group discussed challenges and opportunities in recycling and waste management, focusing on the profitability of haulers and the need for clear destinations for recycled materials. They explored innovative uses for glass, such as converting it into sand for shoreline protection, and emphasized the importance of understanding haulers' capabilities and engaging stakeholders. The possibility of incentivizing new businesses to profit from recycled materials was highlighted as a way to create jobs and boost the regional economy. The group also considered organizing facility tours to gain a better understanding of recycling processes and discussed the need for public sector involvement if private haulers do not participate in recycling initiatives.

10. Adjournment

Roseann Marchetti moved to adjourn the meeting. Adam Brent supported the motion. Chair Marshall declared the meeting adjourned at 3: 12 pm. The next meeting will be held on October 20, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Bekah Schrag

September 27, 2025