

**Monroe County Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Monroe County Fleet Center, Building 11 Conference Room 115**  
**January 9, 2025 (3:00 – 4:30 p.m.)**  
**Drafted: January 10, 2025**  
**Approved:**

**Members:** Ram Shrivastava, Dan David, Theo Maxey, Jeff Meyers, Haines Lockhart, Ciaran Hanna, Enid Cardinal, Paola Viera (for Duane Beckett), Eric Longnecker

**Staff:** Yasmin Guevara, Tina Stevens, Brianna Lees, Meagan Saurini, Madison Quinn

**Guests:** Luann Meyer, Members of the Environmental Management Council: Steve Olufsen, Mark Gaul, Beth Hoak, Tom Dooley, Meg Zimmer, Virginia McIntyre, Bill Parkhurst, Star O'Neill, Liz Kaptein, Mark McDermott, Aimee Owens, Hunter Reece, Charles Johnson, Sally Howard, Andy Less, Charles Zlotkus

**Introduction & Business (Jeff Meyers):**

1. Meeting called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Chairman Jeff Meyers.
2. Minutes from the December, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved. Motion by Theo Maxey; second by Ram Shrivastava.
3. Jeff welcomed the members of the Environmental Management Council to the annual joint meeting. Jeff and Tom Dooley from the EMC provided a year in review for their respective organizations, stating what each had accomplished in 2024.

**Monroe County (Yasmin Guevara):**

1. 2025 is a new budget year for the County. Lots of activity around renewing purchase orders, contracts, etc.
2. Environmental Services welcomed a new Deputy Director, Richard Perrin. Rich was formerly with the City of Rochester.

**Education and Outreach (Tina Stevens):** No report.

**City of Rochester (Theo Maxey):**

1. City continues to develop their Organics Management Plan with Barton and Logudice. Surveys will be released shortly.
2. City is also working with County Solid Waste and the Monroe Community Hospital to collect Food Waste – presently working out logistics.
3. Currently operating at a 46% participation rate for recycling; biggest issues are combating contamination and sharps.
4. At Your Service calendars have been added to the City website.
5. City operates an Instagram account where they are sharing sharps messaging.
6. Holidays falling in the middle of the week present collection challenges, but nothing unique.

**Haulers / Markets (Jeff Meyers):**

1. Christmas and New Years holidays falling mid-week present collection issues for haulers, but not out of the ordinary.
2. No particular challenges noted; weather is typical for this time of the year.
3. Sharps continue to be a big quality issue; between residents with veterinary needs and the availability of more self-injectable drugs, this will continue to be a problem.

**Materials Recycling Facility (Hae Hku):**

**Fiber**

- Fiber markets remain flat as of now.
- Mixed Paper pricing is at \$40/ST.
- OCC selling at \$80/ST.
- Inventory is on the high side for the week with weather and trucking issue but will be back to normal by the end of next week.

**Containers**

- PET is moving smoothly with no issue. Pricing is at \$380/ST.
- HDPE natural remains strong, current pricing is at \$1360/ST with \$260/ST pick up.
- HDPE color remains at \$180/ST.
- No change to Aluminum. Currently \$1340/ST.
- Tub and Lids (3-7) went up to \$280/ST with \$40/ST increase.

## MRF

- Overall, inbound decreased by 181 ST compared to prior year and 373 ST compared to previous month.
- OCC volumes was down by 3.9%, Commercial up by 3.8%, and Residential up by 16.4% compared to previous month.
- Plant had a great run throughout the year, running at the average of 91% uptime, with the rate of 19.7 tons/hour.
- Plant is running well so far with normal winter obstacles, i.e., snow and ice causing more stop and pause.
- We were not able to audit sharps in our glass stream due to the cold weather but will resume it in March. So far, we have not had any complaint from our customer relating sharps.
- Our maintenance team is short staffed again. We are looking to refill maintenance supervisor role.
- Safety, production staffing, and production remain strong at the MRF. Overall, the Plant is in great shape.

## New Business:

Yasmin Guevara, Solid Waste Administrator, presented on the Monroe County Organics Management Plan:

- Monroe County is preparing an Organics Management Plan (OMP) as a supplement to their existing Local Solid Waste Management Plan
- The overarching objective of the OMP is to prevent and divert organic waste from disposal
- This OMP will characterize the County's waste generation, existing programs, policies, and resources, and relevant laws and regulations to identify feasible strategies for the prevention or diversion of organic waste on a County-wide basis
- A draft scoping document has been released with the intent to provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the OMP
- Draft scoping document can be accessed at <https://www.monroecounty.gov/des-environmentalrecycling>

## Relevant Laws, Regulations, and Policies:

- New York State Food Donation and Food Scraps Recycling Law and 6 NYCRR Part 350:  
*Requires designated food scrap generators (DFSG) (2 tons/week or more):*
  - Donate excess edible food
  - Recycle all remaining food scraps if they are within 25 miles of an organics recycler (composting facility, anaerobic digester, etc.)
  - There are 61 DFSGs in Monroe County (24 DFSGs required to recycle any food scraps not donated)
  - Beginning January 1, 2026 – food scrap generators producing one ton or more per week must donate any excess edible food and recycle all remaining food scraps, provided that a facility is located within 50 miles
- NYS Solid Waste Management Plan (finalized 12-23-23)
  - Several of the goals included in the NYS SWMP impact the County's approach to organic waste management
- Monroe County LSWMP
  - As a supplement to the County's LSWMP, the OMP will address the relevant Program Strategies
- Monroe County Climate Action Plan
  - Phase I identifies recommended actions by sector to reduce GHG emissions specific to County facilities, some of which are relevant to organics management
  - Phase 2 – develops waste reduction and minimization programs that incorporate techniques of reduction, reuse, recycling, composting and organics recycling

## Existing Program Inventory:

Existing County Composting Facilities:

- Avion Drive Compost Facility - (yard waste)
- Van Lare Compost Facility - (yard waste, manure)

Existing Private Facilities:

- High Acres Landfill & Recycling Center - (yard waste and food waste composting)
- Impact Earth - (organics hauling & recycling)
- Loric Development Corp of NY - (SSO composting)
- Natural Upcycling/Noblehurst Farms - (organics hauling and anaerobic digester)
- Re-Nuble, Inc. - (SSO - source separated organics - processing for use as growth media in hydroponic farming)
  - Existing Town and Village Programs:
- Collection programs - Various yard waste collection programs
- Several food waste collection programs, including:
  - City of Rochester residential pilot
  - Village of Fairport
  - Town of Pittsford residential pilot (ended December, 2024)
- Yard Waste Composting Facilities
- Food Donation Resources: Foodlink, local food bank, NYSP2I

### Preliminary OMP Outline:

- Introduction
- Relevant Laws, Regulations, and Policies
- Team and Supporting Partners
- Community Engagement and Expected Participants
- Research and Data Collection
- Proposed Organics Management Strategies and Evaluation of Strategies
- Resource needs and budget
- Implementation Steps and Timeline
- Program Goals

### Timeline and Phases:

- OMP Draft Scoping Document – Completed September, 2024
- Current Phase: Stakeholder and Community Engagement – October 2024 - September, 2025
- Draft OMP – Anticipated release July, 2025
- Public Comment on Draft OMP – July – September, 2025
- Final OMP – Anticipated release November, 2025

### Public Participation:

#### Project Liaison

Yasmin Guevara, Solid Waste Administrator Monroe County  
Department of Environmental Services  
50 W. Main Street - 7100  
Rochester, New York 14614  
[OMPComments@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:OMPComments@MonroeCounty.gov)

#### Document Repository

All documents relevant to the OMP will be maintained electronically for public viewing under resources (including Draft Scoping Document)  
[www.monroecounty.gov/organics-management-plan](http://www.monroecounty.gov/organics-management-plan)

#### Stakeholder Identification

Initial Stakeholders include: Residents on Solid Waste & Recycling Email Lists, Foodlink, Color Your Community Green Groups, Business Lists

#### Public Outreach Activities

- Solid Waste and Recycling Email Lists
- Social Media posts
- Website Updates
- Surveys

#### Comment on Draft Scoping Plan - Available until May 31, 2025

Complete the OMP Draft Scoping Plan Feedback Form  
or email [OMPComments@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:OMPComments@MonroeCounty.gov)

Complete and share survey form with relevant stakeholders: residential, agricultural, business and organizational

### Questions/Comments:

- Was suggested to include Town Conservation Boards in outreach efforts
- Enid Cardinal asked about requiring residential recycling to students in multi-family residential housing: Y Yasmin stated the County is working on revisions to the Solid Waste Recycling Law, which would require owners of high-density housing (multi-unit residential) to provide recycling services to tenants.
- Question about donations of useable food: NYS sees this as the priority, and donations should be centered through organizations such as Foodlink; they have many networks and organizations to properly disseminate donations
- Luann stated that prevention and education are key, then feeding people and animals, followed by other diversion methods (compost, anerobic digestion, etc.) City of Rochester plan is looking at similar goals; additionally, NYS is providing a great deal of financial support for storage such as refrigeration and freezing to help keep foods viable. They also provide many guidance documents on proper and safe food storage.
- One concern is always liability; Luann state that liability insurance and Good Samaritan Laws will protect a business from legal action.

- Ram asked about the CBD industry and composting – what can be done with plants once harvested? Yasmin stated there needed to be regulatory guidance on the subject, and Luann said this is another issue that needs consideration when developing plans such as the OMP. Eric Longnecker suggested benchmarking with other municipalities that have similar programs in place to investigate. Luann said an OMP cannot solve every problem, but can be a starting point.
- Pittsford Food Scraps Residential Collection Pilot outcomes: Yasmin stated report is still being finalized; however, overwhelming amount of residents wanted residential curbside collection – a different program than what was offered.
- What about schools and organic waste? Yasmin stated that under the NYS regulations schools, hospitals, and nursing homes are exempt. However, the County will be announcing details shortly of a county-based grant initiative to promote composting in Monroe County schools and BOCES.
- Is MCC listed as a DFSG? Monroe Community College has their own food waste diversion program where useable food is given to students and scraps are shared with a local pig farm. Luann stated that this is another purpose of formulating a plan – to find out what organizations and businesses are doing and what they may be interested in.
- Luann also stated that there are many methods – not just composting – this is not a “one solution fits all” answer. Included in the study will be evaluations of GHG emissions.
- Why is Monroe County so far behind in this process? Luann stated that because tipping fees are relatively cheap and Monroe is a land-rich county, there hasn’t been the desire to investigate options. There are many reasons for trash collection – one of the largest is the decomposition of organics that creates odors and attracts vermin. When organics are pulled from the waste stream, there is not the need for as frequent trash collection. At present, there is not the infrastructure for organics and that is another mission of the OMP.
- Jeff Meyers asked “What does success look like?” Yasmin stated that the County needs diverse opinions and observations to insure the correct plan for the community is drafted – including data collection. Implementation will be applying for grants and working with public/private partnerships.
- Outreach strategies: could waste haulers send survey links? Also, health department food service permit registrants (average 2,500-3,000 / year).
- Agricultural: have already reached out to Farm Service Agency, Monroe County Soil and Water, Cooperative Extension and asked each of them to promote to Agricultural Groups. County will reach out to residents in several ways, using solid waste email addresses and Facebook/Instagram.
- Luann stated that “recycling tends to be confusing – food waste isn’t” – it’s the separation, infrastructure, drop off and collections that can be problematic.
- Pittsford pilot – participation was higher in the beginning then tapered off, why? People didn’t like the odors, having to transport a smelly bucket in a personal vehicle, location not that convenient. Yasmin stated that early feedback was that residents thought the program was great but did not want to transport waste. Curbside collection programs are not widely available.
- Dan David asked about Impact Earth collecting paper goods as part of their composting program. Ram said one opinion said that paper makes better compost.
- Questions were asked about incentives for filling out the surveys: there will be a drawing for a Wegmans gift card.

**Public forum:**

No correspondence or requests to speak were received.

Jeff thanked Haines Lockhart for coordinating the meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Enid Cardinal; seconded by Ram Shiravastava. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 P.M.