



## **SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA RECYCLERS' EXCHANGE**

Cooperative marketing \* market development \* materials exchange

507-328-7022

### **SEMREX Technical Committee Meeting**

**Friday, August 19, 2016**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Ponderosa Landfill**

**20028 Gooseberry Lane – Mankato, MN**

See link for directions: <http://www.blueearthcountymn.gov/index.aspx?NID=626>

### **AGENDA**

-  10:00 Call Meeting to Order & Approve Minutes
-  10:05 Director's Update – Sharon Schriever
-  10:15 SEMREX Future Sub-Committee Report & Discussion
-  10:30 MPCA Update – Ben Crowell
-  10:45 County Updates – All
-  11:30 **Tour New Ponderosa Landfill Facility**
-  12:15 Adjourn

If you cannot attend, please contact Sharon

**If you have a safety vest – please bring it along.**

Meeting  
Mower County (Austin Public Library)  
May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Members present; Mark Goskeson, Freeborn/Steele Counties, Scott Martin, Olmsted County, Jean Lundquist, Blue Earth County, Georgette Hanson, Waseca County, Paul Pieper, Rice County, Rita Cole, Dodge County and Jeff Weaver, Mower County.

Also present Sharon Schriever, SEMREX Director and Ben Crowell, MPCA

Scott M. called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM. Georgette made the motion to approve the minutes of the last SEMREX meeting, seconded by Jean, motion passed.

Scott then deferred to Sharon, for the marketing update. Sharon passed out the update. Paper markets (especially OCC) have been increasing lately. There was a \$10.00 per ton increase in the last month. Other paper grades have made more modest increases. There was also an increase in the price of plastics. HDPE is up five cents per pound and has a strong price; PET was down 3/4 cents per pound. The group then discussed the market trends over the last couple months. One major problem has been markets for textiles, Sharon told us that it is nearly impossible to move them, and there was discussion about this issue. Jeff told us that he has not been able to market his sorted white ledger and he may have to sell it at a lower grade in order to move it at this time. The amount of material moved through SEMREX is down slightly from this time last year. Sharon also discussed the budget and told us that we are ready for the SEMREX JPB meeting next month.

Sharon discussed the agenda for the JPB meeting. One item on the agenda will be to discuss the future of SEMREX with the JPB or at least let the Commissioners know that we may have to make some changes and at the worst dissolve SEMREX if some of the current changes in recycling continue. One of the major changes is the switching over to single sort recycling. There ensued a long discussion regarding this issue. The main thing that we decided to bring to the JPB was the fact that we are seeing changes and depending on what the future holds at least let the Board know that we may have to make some major changes.

Scott then deferred to Jean who led the discussion regarding RAM. When both of the main RAM staff left at the same time a while ago it made quite a few headaches for the organization. It so happened that they left right at a busy time as RAM was distributing the rain barrels and compost bins. RAM decided to hire a full time temporary employee. This person lasted about 10 days since she found a full time permanent position. RAM then hired the second choice from the original hiring process. She is now on board and is full time and permanent. Now the problem seems to be that RAM is wondering how to continue to pay for the two full time positions. The two main sources of income are the annual conference and the program "Message in a bottle". The MIB program is not making money any longer as the price of PET is down considerably from when the program started. The cost of collection is a big hurdle. They have started charging the convenience stores for the service, which is not going very well. Hopefully this can turn around for RAM.

**MPCA UPDATE;** Ben gave a short MPCA update. The electronics bill is still moving through the legislature and looks like it may pass. The major changes for the law will have to do with the

accumulation of credits by the manufacturers and the change in how payment is made so that it covers shipping. Scott noted that it may not make a lot of difference to out-state MN and will mainly help the metro. Ben also told us that in the next few weeks they will be awarding the grants from the last grant round. They have more money than what they are awarding, so more than likely they will have another grant round to give this money out. Jean suggested that SEMREX apply for a grant if this goes through, the group discussed this topic with no real suggestion as to what the grant would pay for at this time.

### **Member updates-**

Rice County: Paul told us that they had a few tours from a business looking at possibly getting some ideas to start a similar facility. He told us that one of their problem companies (a wood processing facility) had a major fire recently. They are more than likely going to leave the county and may move to a facility in Steele County.

Dodge County: Rita said that they are starting to get busy with the warmer weather. Their building number 2 is finally up and running after replacing the floor, during the remodel they had to move the drop-off to another area and it was kind of a pain. They are currently working on updating the Counties Solid Waste Ordinance which should go on public hearing June 28<sup>th</sup>. The main changes will make the document more user friendly. They are planning on discontinuing the contract with Full Circle Organics due to lack of material being processed/shipped.

Waseca County: Georgette reported that she is also getting busy especially in the HHW facility. She will be in the process of hiring again as one of her employees took the sign-man job with the Highway Dept. The County Board finally approved the price increases (on tires, appliances, garbage, etc.) at the facility. The prices overall increased approximately 10% and this is the first increase in the last 21 years and she still has had complaints! She is working on some fix up at her facility, mainly repairing and replacing the parking area and driveway.

Freeborn County: Mark told the group that the HHW program is open for the year and so far have had good participation. They will be having the first collection for E-Waste next Friday; their contractor for this collection is Retro-Fit. Mark gave a presentation mostly to City employees in regards to SW issues. They are planning some recycling drop-off areas in Albert Lea, the material will be picked up by Thompson Sanitation. Mark also works with the septic systems and while checking out every residential system he hands out a pamphlet explaining the problems associated with burn barrels and one explaining this HHW program. Mark will be emailing a copy of these to our members in case we would like to use this information.

Blue Earth County: Jean told the group that their building at the landfill is finally finished and they will be having an open house on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mower County: Jeff told the group that his new garbage compactor is up and running, the total cost was approximately \$42,000, it is working great. The County will be opening bids on the possible addition to his facility on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The Board will then decide if they want to spend that amount of money on the addition, meaning this is not a for sure thing. Starting September 1<sup>st</sup> they will be changing from twice per month collection to weekly collection and will start collecting all plastic containers 1-7. These will not be sorted at his facility; they will be baled together and sold to Republic Services. His HHW facility is getting busy as summer approaches. He told the group that Mower

County is in the process of updating the Solid Waste Ordinance, but it is being done by his supervisor who has hired a consultant to write the document.

Olmsted County Scott told the group that they have budgeted \$1 million for the self-haul garbage and recycling facility. He is a bit short on his budget and may have to make sure that all garbage is charged correctly. They have recently raised their fees at their facility, including fees on garbage, tires, small and large bulky items. He was told that they were going to have an OSHA inspector/consultant come through the facility and had one month to get everything in order. It was a challenge, but they had a great report from OSHA, but not all of the county departments (park and rec) had good results. He is doing some fix up at the facility including new lighting and has plans for a new forklift.

The next meeting was set for July 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be held in Blue Earth County.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Jeffrey Weaver

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