



WATERTOWN

MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Date: March 18, 2026
Location: 124 Orchard Street or virtual
Subject: Solid Waste Recycling Advisory Committee (SWRAC) Meeting March 18, 2026

In Attendance:

Matt Bacon
Andrew Thompson
Russ Arico
Alana Berman-Gnivecki
Martin Solomon

Meeting commenced at 4:39 pm

- I. Minutes approved without amendment
- II. DPW updates
 - Earth Day event April 11 9am-1pm at the Jewish Community Day School
 - i. First of 3 events
 - Mostly services—styrofoam recycling, other material drop-offs
 - EcoFest May 9 11am-2pm at the Commander's Mansion
 - i. Matt Bacon will be tabling and promoting the composting program
 - 3,324 Watertown households now on compost program
 - i. Steady but slow increase
 - Hazardous waste days—in conjunction with other Middlesex towns
 - i. April 15, 3pm-7pm
 - ii. May 23, 9am-2pm
 - iii. June 20, 9am-2pm
 - Budgets are underway
 - i. Request is included for more curbside composting dollars
 - Russ asks if we could have Styrofoam collection at the recycling center
 - i. Matt explains that it's not cost effective—light material that takes up a lot of space
 - Watertown waste data submitted to MassDEP
 - i. Gaps in the data caused by the strike in 2025
 - ii. DEP is allowing data estimates based on 2024 numbers
 1. While this is not the most reliable data, it does show a decline in our solid waste disposal in relation to population growth
 - Priority is to reduce trash tonnage across town
- III. Metrics: Climate Energy Plan Metrics



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- Difficult to get accurate data when the “per household” method currently in use doesn’t distinguish large housing developments/apartment buildings from individual houses
 - i. While new large developments are on private haulers, there are around 18-25 in town that are still on town services and it would be great to have accurate data from those places
 - ii. Unfortunately, the collection process (large dumpsters) and trucking process doesn’t facilitate good data collection
 - iii. This discrepancy creates disproportionate tonnage vs household numbers
 - The goal is to propose a data metric to city council that accurately accounts for all waste hauled by city services
 - Should the metric be by household or per capita?
 - Data can still be skewed because of schools and large public buildings on town services
 - Commercial trash permits allow for 4 totes max, at least one of which must be recycling
 - All food waste generating establishments must compost if they create more than ½ ton of food waste per week
- IV. Open discussion
- No swap shop on April 4
- V. Next meeting: April 1 at 4:30pm.
- VI. Meeting adjourned at 5:35pm

Minutes submitted by Andrew Thompson
