



City of Watertown

Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee

Date: April 2, 2026

Location: 124 Orchard Street or virtual

Subject: Solid Waste Recycling Advisory Committee (SWRAC) Meeting April 1, 2026

In Attendance:

Matt Bacon
Andrew Thompson
Russ Arico
Lise Paul
Eileen Ryan
Nancy Hammond and David Atchison (guests)

Meeting commenced at 4:34 pm

1. March 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes approved without amendment

2. DPW updates
 - New format for agenda and switch from Teams to Zoom for remote participation
 - i. Open Discussion will no longer be on the meeting agenda. It is not compliant with open meeting law
 - Swap Shop first Saturday each month 10am – 2pm beginning May
 - i. dates:
 - May 2
 - June 6
 - July 11
 - August 1
 - Sept 5
 - Oct 3
 - Nov 7
 - ii. Lise will create a flier to solicit volunteers and write to Watertown Faces Climate Change group to ask for volunteers. Matt Bacon's email is the contact for volunteers.
 - iii. Matt will schedule a meeting with all volunteers prior to May 2 to emphasize what to accept/reject and emphasize parking must be outside of the Recycling Center

- April 11 Earth Day Event 9-11 at Jewish Day School.
 - i. Compost give away - 5 gallon container per person
 - ii. Sapling give-away (50 flowering trees available)
 - iii. Secure Shredding
 - iv. Textile and Styrofoam recycling
- May 9 Econ Fest 11 – 2 DPW tabling will include Matt to represent solid waste

3. Metrics: Climate and Energy Plan Metrics

- Metric 1 Tons of trash sent to incineration – no recommended change
- Metric 2 Waste Generation Rate – committee recommended a change to divide incinerated pounds by Watertown population (pounds per capita). For reasons discussed at the March 18 meeting, per capita is considered a more accurate measure than households. Baseline and all targets would be likewise changed.
- Metric 3 Diversion rate – no change. For reporting, add clarifying footnote that all waste not incinerated is included.
- Metric 4 Number of households signed up for food waste pick-up. City is already well above the 2030 Climate and Energy Plan target. Discussion around the difficulty of achieving the metric, given the slow down in sign-ups. Possible alternatives were discussed, including setting a target for new resident signups.
- The committee recommends changing the composting metric to 5,000.
- Discussion of establishing annual mileposts to track progress will be on the May 6 SWARC agenda

4. Open Discussion

- The committee discussed ways to increase awareness of the free composting program:
 - Billboard on Mt Auburn Street near Coolidge hardware
 - Mailing specifically to those not signed up
 - Targeting of new residents
- Bottle Bill is pending with the legislature. The proposed law would increase effective recycling and reduce littering. Committee members will write postcards in support.
- Republic's Peabody recycling facility will open this summer. All municipalities have been invited to tour. Matt will view the recycling on mixed paper and plastic to assess effectiveness of recycling of these items.

5. Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm

Minutes submitted by Andrew Thompson
