**Michigan Recycling Coalition**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, March 13, 2023**

| ***Mission***  *The Michigan Recycling Coalition fosters sustainability by leading, educating, and mobilizing business, government, nonprofit, and individuals to advance their own and collective resource use and recovery initiatives in Michigan.*  |
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Attendance: Nick Carlson, Dave Smith, Jeff Krcmarik, Brad Austin, Justin Jungman, Libby Rice, Tim Botzau, Steve Kent, Rick Lombardo, Kath Melby, Kerrin O’Brien, Kelly Schalter

**10:30 am**

1. Call Board Meeting to Order – N Carlson
	1. 10:33 am
2. Public Comment - no public present
3. Consent Agenda
	1. Additions to Agenda, Approval
		1. 2 proposed additions - highlighted in red.
			1. Motion to add to agenda - T Botzau
				1. Seconded by J Krcmarik

No opposition, motion passes

* 1. Acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meeting
		1. Motion to accept minutes - R Andrews
			1. Seconded by T Botzau
				1. Discussion - Bill made a comment with instability of west coast banks, look into ensuring that where funds are are insured.

No opposition, motion passes

* 1. Monthly Financial Report for February
	2. Committee Reports
	3. Membership Update
1. Staff Updates
	1. 2024 Conference Site
		1. K O’Brien - Blue Water Convention Center in Port Huron. Opposite end of the state from Kzoo. Did hear from Kzoo that they have space available in 24 & 25. May end up seeing how things go as far as the amount of people who show up in 2023 to go right back there in 2025. As we get larger, we’re going to have fewer facilities that can meet our needs.
		2. J Krcmarik - Inn at St. Johns in Plymouth has expanded
		3. K O’Brien - in the future, look for dedicated exhibit hall, not just a hallway. Having enough room in session rooms and banquet space. Being in a city nd being able to walk to venues, because networking and after hours fun is important. Those are the kinds of things at the top of our mind. May identify 3 or 4 places and circulate within those places based on the numbers we attract this year.
		Growing interest in our members wanting us to have conversations around chemical recycling.
	2. Chemical Recycling position
		1. K O’Brien - don’t feel it’s necessary that we take full responsibility for the amendments about chemical recycling in Part 115, but we are being seen as the org that led the charge, and now some of our members and environmental groups are asking us to step in. Convo with exec. Comm. - going to have a conversation on Friday. Going to work over the week to develop a position that will be the foundation of discussion going forward. Conference program completed on Friday will show that we’re planning for a chemical recycling panel at the end of the conference. Actively seeking speakers, not having a lot of luck with proponents. Not interested in roasting anyone, but interested in building understand about what we’re talking about and where boundaries and borders should be as we think about the role of chemical recycling. Not necessarily interested in particular processes, maybe highlighting but more policies around chemical recycling in general. Where it starts, where plastics-to-fuels, thermal processing, etc - what the lines are and what policies might be helpful.
		2. N Carlson - what’s key is understanding the difference between waste-to-energy and novel or innovative technologies that are coming onboard that can create new products and actually recycle them. Vast majority of chemical recycling is waste-to-energy, but there are innovative things happening. We don’t want to eliminate the prospect of the good future, but we can’t endorse waste-to-energy as recycling. Very important topic.
		3. K O’Brien - important to build understanding about what is in Part 115 and what those definitions really mean.
	3. NextCycle Award contribution
		1. K O’Brien - NextCycle is going to have a showcase very similar to what we did for FIR for FLOWS and RIT tracks. April 20, we have a notice in our newsletter about it. We’ve been approached to contribute to an award pool and maybe make one of these awards an MRC award for whatever we want to do. Looking for a conversation and motion about doing this. $7500 is the sweet spot, but anything from $5-10,000 is good. We’ve done some contributing to other orgs before like UPRC, but we haven’t done it for NextCycle. But NextCycle is a significant part of our bread & butter right now. What does everyone think of that opportunity?
			1. N Carlson - Completely agree that NextCycle is a big piece of the puzzle right now for moving things forward. $7,500 is a lot of money, but it’s worth us being at that table and spreading that message. Lines up with our mission and would have 0 problem as long as it fits in existing budget.
			2. R Andrews - can you clarify what the money is for?
				1. K O’Brien - the showcase is where each of the teams makes a presentation about their idea, and that the time they used in NextCycle turned that idea into an idea ready to be funded. Each team is then judged for their presentation, their project, the work they’ve done to move things forward. It’s one of the things that makes NextCycle exciting. And it provides money incentive to carry people through and give them the boost they need. Nobody automatically gets funded when they’re done with NextCycle. Award pool is something to work toward.
				2. B Austin - Is there criteria that would be spelled out in MRC mission to make clear the awarding of that, and would there be any restrictions based on our org status?
				3. K O’Brien - can look into that. A board member can present the award, too.
				4. R Andrews - where does funding usually come from?

K O’Brien - fundraising usually. RRS contributed, Centrepolis contributes. MRC has managed and received money and held it in NCMI account. Dow and Carton Council have contributed to awards. New year/session means new fundraising for the awards.

* + - * 1. R Andrews - how many per year?

K O’Brien - one per cohort. Depends on what level they’re at. We could fund people’s choice award or have our own award, or something else. Maybe work with MOC. A variety of ways to make this work.

* + - * 1. J Jungman - are there other levels or is the amount negotiable?

K O’Brien - it’s negotiable, but this seemed like a good amount. May be worth another conversation. They’re willing to work with us.

* + - * 1. N Carlson - MOC and FLOWS, RIT & MRC - what if we did $5,000 for each from MOC and MRC?

K O’Brien - we could get creative.

* + - * 1. J Jungman - $7,500 is too much. What’s our ROI on it. Maye offer MRC membership or something else.
			1. R Andrews - which budget line?
				1. K O’Brien - haven’t given it too much thought yet. May have to pull from different places.
			2. N Carlson - everyone seems in favor but the pricing seems high. Can you put together a proposal for board to vote on?
			3. S Kent - important to bridge up - $7500 or $10,000 is a lot. Next year’ they’re going to want you to match or beat it. It’s hard to go down.
			4. K O’Brien - will get back to you and vote on it over email.
	1. USCC MOC Agreement
		1. MOC agreed to sign MOC/USCC agreement. Finalizing documents and shortly will establish a membership meeting with members. Haven’t had a member meeting in quite a while. Will talk about agreement, compost regulations, and ways that we can continue to support the organics industry in Michigan. Everything moving forward as we talked about.
	2. Bottle Bill Discussion
		1. K O’Brien - MEC has restarted bottle bill discussions. Much larger contingent at recent meeting, and feeling a lot better about how these conversations are going now. Lots of conversation around what could work and what the problems are. Water system problems in MI and whole cities having to use bottled water for water supply is concerning for advocates and putting a $.10 deposit on water bottles is a significant increase. Talked about not including water bottles, maybe adding glass, like pickle jars, spaghetti sauce, etc. and what that could mean. Conversation about money flow, there would be money available for materials management on the other side if it was expanded. Talked about the fact that EPR discussion about packaging and paper products in general may be a better way to go. There’s a lot broader discussion about managing these materials in this group, and pleased to be involved in a way that for the past several years it hasn’t been. Will keep you up to date - they’ve been sharing details, so now will pull together info about what’s being discussed and proposed. Going to be a long discussion, but it may position us in good ways.
	3. Membership Highlights & Prospects
		1. Conference promotion! Bring people in. Kalamazoo is the right place to have a big conference. Lots of expansion capabilities. It’s the time to bring leaders to the table to begin to prepare them for what’s to come. Any help you can provide is great.
		2. Any of those types of organizations that you think we need to reach out to about membership or sharing information, just let us know. We have emails ready to go and will follow up. We can help!
1. Strategic Priorities
	1. Advocacy update
		1. K O’Brien - trying to get meetings with the new EGLE interim and with Kara Cook, the environmental liaison with Whitmer admin. Meetings with key legislators, but no one is yet available because of how much is currently going on. Too many committee assignments. They overextended themselves, and it’s a common frustration that everyone is hearing. Feeling like leadership at EGLE is a bit of a moving target. Rober Jackson not in the mix and Liz Browne not focused, no long term leadership - having a hard time getting anyone’s attention, and that’s problematic because of concern that there’s not capacity to deliver on requirements and grant funding. They’re going to have to narrow their focus significantly, and concerned that they won’t end up funding to the extent that we’ve expected grant opportunities. There are only 2 of 4 recycling specialist positions. Really wondering where money is going, where it’s spent, etc. Asked for information from the accountant at EGLE about how Renew funding is being allocated and used, and still haven’t gotten those reports. Significant funding questions for EGLE. And an interested constituency at the capital, but because of their challenges, our priorities (products stewardship in all of its forms, e-waste, mattresses, paint, packaging and paper products) haven’t been able to be discussed with legislators. Also have a strive for 5 policy to move forward which would mean that topsoil would have to have 5% organic matter in it to be considered legit, which would drive the market for compost. Want to line up these meetings, but haven’t gotten a lot of traction.
		2. J Krcmarik - had a retreat last week, lots of concerns about where money should be spent, rolling out policy was discussed, working on implementation meetings all week. Will develop a better position to communicate.
		3. K O’Brien - can you confirm capacity issues there?
			1. J Krcmarik - yes, that was one of the biggest discussions.
		4. K O’Brien - there should be plenty of money to support needed staff, but we’re not seeing that. Fear is that we’ve got $15 million that’s supposed to go to communities in the form of grants for planning & infrastructure and market development, then $9 million for oversight. Concerned that that $9 million has never gotten to the department, and never have been able to get a straight answer about it. It may be that that money felt like a random win for EGLE and is being used for different purposes. Someone needs to advocate for that. Working strategic priorities, but trying to get them through a system that isn’t quite connecting yet.
	2. Executive Committee – N Carlson
		1. Awards
			1. List of nominees, haven’t gone through them yet but will go through and make recommendations. Kerrin put together a matrix that will help narrow in on which groups/companies will win. 3 awards - individual, organization, and unsung hero. Started process, and more to come.
				1. K O’Brien - if you’ve seen anyone or any org that we should look into. If we collectively see someone doing really tremendous work, we should award them for that. If you have anyone to look into, share that, and board will look into it.
		2. Board donation to Fund Affair
			1. N Carlson - typically everybody can contribute a dollar amount, and also a package for the raffle as well. Be thinking of both.
				1. MRC staff will put together an email with link to donate.
		3. Nominating Committee - Need to fill 3 open seats G-25, B-26, A-26
			1. 1 open seat – G-25
			2. 2 open seats (B,A) for elections – 2B, 2G, 1A
			3. Bill Whitley running B, Tracy Purrenhage running G, Tim Botzau running G
	3. Policy Committee – N Jakub
		1. K O’Brien - meeting quarterly now to have in-depth discussion and bring big topics to the table and do some work in between. Committee identified a new set of members, and those members have voting capacity. If we get into a place where it’s contentious, we have a committee that can vote and move things up to the board when it’s time. Now that Part 115 has passed, we need to sink our teeth into the next big things - EPR, bottle bill, landfill tip fee surcharge, need to get really specific about these things. Working to align committee in making big things happen and sending to the board to be voted on. Work with chemical recycling, bottle bill, epr - reconvene e-waste work group.
	4. Conference Committee – K O’Brien
		1. Conference webpage - button at the top
	5. Committee Forum
2. Board of Directors Updates
	1. B Austin - QC process for all products - when recycled material is brought into that forum, it changes things & costs. Designing for recycling an interesting topic for future. A lot of brands have no idea what happens on the other end. QC component. What added costs come in when recycled material is added?
		1. K O’Brien - for Plastics Circular Economy grant, brought someone in to speak with MSU packaging students about that disconnect and how to bridge that gap. That needs to be a regular feature of education. Will be speaking at a packaging class coming up and may be able to talk with a professor about that. Also, the MRC was written into a very significant department grant (MSU) - working with OSU on great lakes circular economy development. It may be a component of that, and it’s on people’s mind.
3. Wrap-up and Call to Action – conference hotel space, USCC agreement, reach out to Libby with nomination considerations620
	1. N Carlson - if you have additional awards nominations, please send them to Kerrin or Kelly or Nick and they’ll get in. Continue to think about contributions to Fund Affair. MRC will send email about that. KO will put together NCMI award proposal.
	2. K O’Brien - note that the June meeting will be in-person.
4. Close Meeting
	1. Motion to adjourn - K Melby
		1. Seconded - T Botzau seconded
			1. Adjourned at 11:40 am