

# STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

## TASK FORCE ON RECYCLING SEPTEMBER 25, 2006 MEETING MINUTES

### Attending Members

Phil Morris	Butch Meredith	Richard Harrell
Renee Howell	Joel Yelverton	Jerry Wilkerson
Kathy Avis	Sara Kountouris	Richard Brown
Ron Aldridge	Stuart Dean	Vernon Hartley
Nick Wilson	Russell Bennet	

### Guests

Bob Neal-State Economist	Lori Langford—MS Assoc. of Supervisors
Walter Ward-Community Recycling	Allison Satterfield-Hinds CC
Kristi Sather-Smith-Hinds CC	

### MDA Staff

Kenneth Calvin

### MDEQ Staff

Mark Williams  
John David Burns

Call to order and welcome to guests. Attendees expressed their gratitude to Chairman Phil Morris for providing lunch to those in attendance. The minutes from the previous meeting held 9/6/06, were reviewed and adopted with no changes proposed. Task Force members again introduced themselves since there were several invited guests and new members in attendance. Mark Williams conducted a brief review of the report required by the Legislature for the 2006 Recycling Task Force to bring everyone up to date. The focus of this report will be on the status of the recycling industry in the state. Other aspects of the process will also be included, but the focus will be the industrial/commercial sector. Mark also advised the group that MDEQ is tasked with developing a broader report on the overall status of recycling in the state. The reports will be related but focus on different aspects of recycling. There was no old business to discuss, so the meeting moved on to the new business and the current discussion of the on-going project.

The Governor's office had been contacted and advised that some of the Governor's previous appointees on the 2004 Task Force were unable to continue serving on the 2006 Task Force, but no word had been received on replacements. In addition, it was also discussed that all Task Force proceedings, minutes, schedule of meetings, findings, and the final report will all be on the web site so that the general public, as well as any other interested parties, can remain conveniently informed of the activities.

Mark requested that the members forward any pertinent newspaper articles or other media articles to him or to bring them to the meetings to help in the process so that all members can have a copy as necessary. In addition, a copy of the mailing list of those to be contacted to complete the recycling survey was discussed. All attendees received a copy for review and were requested to

provide any inclusions or changes necessary as soon as possible so that all necessary recyclers will receive a survey.

In addition, it was discussed that recycling industry speakers could be invited to some of the upcoming meetings to present information on the survey responses. This will help the Task Force get a better understanding of the various barriers and problems that the recycling industry faces in their operations. These guest speakers can also make suggestions for other aspects of the report that should be addressed.

In addition, the cover letter for the survey was discussed with revisions proposed. The cover letter/instructions and survey questions were word-smithed extensively. There was also discussion on the wording and arrangement of questions included in the survey. Revisions were proposed and recommendations were made so as to maximize the amount of information, but to retain it in a convenient format to encourage responses from the recyclers that receive it. The Task Force members indicated that they wanted the survey to encourage or allow for additional comments that might not be specifically requested on the survey or for which the survey form did not provide sufficient space for written response. Revisions will better collect information that will further help the State Economist in his assistance to the Task Force. Mark Williams indicated that he would take the comments provided by the Task Force and make revisions and mail out the survey by the end of the week. It was requested that any changes, revisions, or suggestions be sent to Mark by Wednesday, 9/27/06, so that they could be included in the mail out. The target for the survey to be mailed out would try to be in the next few days but no later than October 1.

There was extensive and wide-ranging discussion about the content of the survey and the spreadsheet. A great many suggestions were made to improve the survey and encourage a greater response. It was suggested that the spreadsheet be simplified to encourage more recyclers to respond. A shorter version of the spreadsheet developed by Renee Howell was discussed with suggestions to include more information to better capture broader material volumes rather than the more specific volume information. After further discussion of the varying versions of the survey, it was agreed that the survey spreadsheet would be simplified with the broader breakout of commodities. Hopefully, the agreed-upon version would be extensive enough to provide helpful information, but would not appear intimidating and discourage responses. The Task Force agreed that the deadline for the survey would be 10/16/06.

After finalizing discussion on the survey, the mailing list was discussed. Some entries were consolidated, while others were deleted for lack of recycling activities for those recyclers that are located out of state. It was agreed that the cover letter would be slightly modified for those recyclers located out of state that will be receiving the survey.

After discussion of the mailing list, the outline of the final report was discussed. The Task Force will likely need to divide into sub-groups to better address different aspects of the final report to better utilize the short amount time available to compile and present the data for the report. As previously discussed, the Task Force agreed that the focus of this report would be on residential waste. In addition, the final report would address the economic impact of recycling, taking into consideration new construction, labor and work force, retail sales, sales tax, where applicable, as well as other tax issues, barriers, including issues dealing with landfills, and convenience of disposal, among other things.

Another barrier expressed was that much of the general public does not know about the recycling opportunities that are available to them. It was suggested that the survey list barriers and ask

respondents to rank the top 3 of those barriers, as well as list their own as necessary. As stated earlier, much of the final report and its structure will be dictated by the responses to the survey. As the Task force compiles the final report for specific sectors of the recycling industry, it was suggested that specific companies or case studies be profiled in each section. This will help illustrate what has already been accomplished with little “formal” economic stimulation by the state of the recycling industry. It is hoped that profiles and success stories could help the Task Force give an accurate picture of what could be done if there was even more effort by the state towards recruiting and growing the recycling industry.

There was also some limited discussion on how to handle the final data received. The Task Force discussed whether the data collected would be to be heavily extrapolated to give a better estimate of the status or if it would be better to utilize the actual data gathered and qualify that data within the final report. It was agreed that this decision would depend upon how many surveys are returned, how extensively the surveys are answered, the size of the recyclers that respond and the quality of data gathered.

The Task Force then scheduled its next meeting for Tuesday, 10/17/06, at 10:00 AM, but the location was not finalized. The Task Force was asked to give thought to how the group wanted to organize into smaller, more manageable work groups to handle certain areas of the report. It was suggested that these smaller work groups could invite others that were not formal members of the Task force to attend these meetings to assist each group as needed. Various members offered their offices as locations for these smaller meetings.

After agreeing to the meeting date and time, the meeting was then adjourned.