




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers  
FROM: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator   
DATE: December 27, 2019  
SUBJECT: Meeting with the Washtenaw Regional Resource Management Authority

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I had the opportunity to meet with the members of the Washtenaw Regional Resource Management Authority (WRRMA) at their December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting and present the questions and concerns of Council to them. The engagement was extremely cordial, and the WRRMA members expressed their hopes that the City of Ann Arbor would join as a member.

During the meeting, I did raise the question about proportional voting. It is important to consider that WRRMA is still in its formative stage, and for at least the next year the body will focus primarily on policy and education. The members did believe that Ann Arbor should have a seat at the table during these discussions, but as an equal member. As WRRMA moves to contract for services, the body may consider a voting approach weighted on tonnage or dollars, as other authorities have done. That decision should most appropriately be made at the time contracts are considered. Regardless of the outcomes of those discussions, the City always would reserve the right to not participate in any agreement that does not support the City's labor and wage requirements or which does not provide best value to our community.

The WRRMA members were curious about the status of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). I explained where we are in the process, and that negotiations would begin after the first of January. During the discussion, the point was emphasized that the success of the MRF will depend upon the receipt of outside tonnage, and those materials cannot be the cause of contamination. Reduction in contamination will be best served by a strong education and outreach effort – facilitated by the City's membership in WRRMA.

My understanding is that Council's consideration of WRRMA membership was tabled until after completion of the Solid Waste Resource Management Plan (SWRMP) and the above discussion with WRRMA. The Environmental Commission has accepted the SWRMP and recommended it to Council. Staff will present the SWRMP at Council's January 6, 2020 meeting. With the above requirements met, staff will be seeking Council direction on how to move forward with WRRMA membership.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

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