

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE- GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2026

The Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District Committee held a publicly posted meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. at the Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 309, 400 Slocum Road, Dartmouth, MA.

District Committee Members in attendance: Chairperson, John Beauregard; Caroline Conzatti, Michael Gagne, Ed Iacaponi, Daniel Patten.

Kelley Cabral-Mosher, not in attendance

Also in attendance: Anthony Novelli, Executive Director; Leonor Ferreira, Executive Assistant; Raphael Weschler, Project Manager; Matthew J. Thomas, District Counsel.

1. Call to order / Salute the flag

Chairperson Beauregard called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and led a salute to the flag.

2. Legal Notices

Mr. Beauregard noted that legal notices of the meeting were posted in Dartmouth and New Bedford more than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Chairperson Beauregard read the following statement:

“Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, any person may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting or may transmit the meeting through any medium. Attendees are therefore advised that such recordings and transmissions are being made, whether perceived or unperceived, by those present, and are deemed acknowledged and permissible.”

3. Roll call of members

Chairperson John Beauregard, yes
Caroline Conzatti, yes
Michael Gagne, yes
Ed Iacaponi, yes
Kelley Cabral-Mosher, absent
Daniel Patten, yes

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Draft Minutes of December 17, 2025, Meeting, Regular Session

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of the December 17, 2025, meeting, regular session. MOTION made by Mr. Patten seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 - 0

- b. Draft Minutes of December 17, 2025, Executive Session

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of the December 17, 2025, meeting, executive session. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 - 0

5. Warrant Report and Ratification

- a. Warrant 12-26, and 13-26 ratification

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to ratify warrant 12-26 dated December 18, 2025, and warrant 13-26 dated January 7, 2026. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

6. New Business

- a. Vote to Adopt Draft FY2027 Budget

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to consider the draft fiscal year 2027 budget. MOTION made by Ms. Conzatti, seconded by Mr. Patten.

Mr. Novelli prefaced the discussion by stating that Chairperson Beauregard, Mr. Patten, Ms. Conzatti (the Budget Subcommittee), Mr. Wechsler, and himself met to review this proposed budget in mid-December. Mr. Novelli began by reviewing revenue projections and highlighted a 9% increase in the assessment to members, totaling \$1,081,871 of the ~\$4.6 million total budget. The assessment is divided based on the total tonnage delivered by each member in FY 2025, where New Bedford delivered 83.81% and Dartmouth delivered 16.19%. A credit/debit is also applied based on the annual reconciliation, bringing the total assessment for New Bedford to just under \$900,000 and for Dartmouth's to approximately \$182,000. He added that this still provides the members with an extremely favorable disposal rate. Chairperson Beauregard explained that the rationale for this increase will be explained in the assessment letters sent out by February 1, and that the letter would welcome the members to contact the Committee with any questions.

Next, Mr. Novelli stated that the expected minimum put-or pay tonnage of approximately 22,000 tons was used to develop the budgeted amount for tipping fees. He and Mr. Wechsler had begun outreach to local haulers, sharing the feedback from a few haulers that \$113/ton was too high. The Committee asked about other nearby disposal options and pricing. Mr. Thomas stated that larger companies have the ability to send waste by rail or truck to other states such as Alabama. This dynamic factors into the planning for a future rail transfer station to serve New Bedford and Dartmouth. Mr. Patten noted that one facility shows a \$200/ton tipping fee online. Mr. Novelli believes that contracted haulers get a lower rate than residents, and that Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials are usually more expensive. The team is gathering data on local market conditions and disposal facilities.

Mr. Novelli opened up for discussion the tipping fee to be charged to the Town of Freetown, who receives a discounted rate as a neighboring municipality. The current tip fee

is \$86/ton. Given the increases being charged to the members and other haulers, it was agreed to offer \$90/ton. The Committee highlighted that this is still a significant discount compared to other non-member customers. Next there was a discussion on cover materials- the team primarily uses alternative materials that the District receives revenue for, but there is a need to apply a conservative budget line item. The projection for landfill gas revenue is similar to the previous year. The District recently hired a gas technician, and Mr. Novelli believes there will be an upward trend in production. He added that some of the revenue received is due to the District's share of the sale of Carbon Credits by the power plant operators (CNBE), which is hard to predict. Mr. Novelli also briefly discussed ongoing efforts to draft a new license deal with S.K. Wainio to operate the District-owned cranberry bogs.

Mr. Novelli also highlighted that up to \$400,000 from reserves is budgeted as part of operating expenses for FY2027. The Committee agreed to do this instead of increasing the assessments to the members further, as the District continues to decrease reliance on non-member waste acceptance and tip fee revenue to preserve airspace for the members in the long term. He does not expect that this full amount will need to be transferred.

For expenses, Mr. Novelli mentioned that the budget includes a 3% COLA and 2.5% step increase for all staff, as previously discussed. The Personnel Subcommittee expects to continue to meet and discuss revisions to the compensation system for staff and contracts for senior leadership in the coming months, which could affect this figure. He noted succession planning for Ms. Ferreira who plans to retire in FY2027, and that there is intention to hire a part time employee to work specifically with local schools on waste reduction and recycling education and outreach.

The discussion moved to health insurance. Preliminary estimates from Mayflower Municipal Health Group are that health insurance premiums are expected to increase in the 12-15% range for the next year, which has a significant impact on the District and very importantly its employees. He appreciates the District's participation in the MMHG, who usually works to not pass this full increase onto the District or its employees, but rates have not been determined yet. He reiterated previous comments by the Committee that these increases should be factored into salary increases. Mr. Gagne commented that health insurance rates are already expensive, even before this expected increase, with Blue Cross HMO plans currently costing around \$33,000 per year. In municipalities that cover 50%, someone making \$60,000 per year pays \$16,000 off the top to insurance. With the dramatic rise in healthcare costs, even with a 3% cost-of-living increase (tied to CPI), the employee's take home pay ends up being less than the previous year.

Regarding the proposed part-time employee, Mr. Patten asked if trash from the New Bedford schools comes to Crapo Hill. Mr. Novelli confirmed and mentioned that the intent is for this person to focus on food waste diversion and proper recycling in the schools. The waste reduction team does make occasional presentations in the schools, but a more consistent presence is needed for increased diversion results and education. MassDEP is expected to increase the food waste ban in the coming years, and the schools are subject to this. Mr. Beauregard complimented the great work and the local expertise that Ms. Perez-Dormitzer and Ms. Hebert continue to provide to this area. Mr. Thomas asked if DEP grant funds could pay for this position. Mr. Novelli replied that those funds were awarded to the City and Town, not to the District. New Bedford uses its funds to cover the cost of running the Recycling Center, and currently the RDP funds awarded do not cover the full cost. Mr. Thomas mentioned that the company AMP robotics uses AI technology to sort waste and that the District should explore further. They mention a 60% diversion rate. Mr. Novelli is

confident that technology like this will play a large role in the future of solid waste management and agreed that the District should explore this.

Mr. Novelli resumed discussion about budgeted expenses and increases. Environmental monitoring costs have continued to increase, and the leachate and landfill gas line represents a significant portion of expenses. This is expected to include the drilling and installation of vertical gas collection wells, a significant expense. This could end up happening in the following fiscal year, depending on landfill elevations.

Mr. Novelli reviewed the projected landfill equipment expense projections, another significant expense category, which are expected to decrease from the previous year. Mr. Thomas inquired about the next anticipated piece of equipment which is expected to be replaced. Mr. Novelli stated that no total replacements were expected in the near future, and that the team is working on a long-term forecast of equipment needs and expenses to better understand this. He acknowledged that these can be major expenses.

There were no further questions from the Committee.

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to accept the FY 2027 budget as presented by the Executive Director. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

Mr. Gagne highlighted and commended the budget presentation and organization. He appreciated that there is sufficient information and is easy to read.

b. Discuss District Committee Officers

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to discuss the District Committee Officers. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti.

Mr. Thomas noted that the District Committee does not currently have a Vice Chair, who would run a meeting in the event that the Chairperson is unable to attend, and suggested that this position be filled. Mr. Novelli added that the Committee should have a motion to appoint the Chairperson.

Motion to nominate John Beauregard as Chairperson, Caroline Conzatti as the Vice Chair, and Daniel Patten as the Treasurer of the District Committee. MOTION made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Iacaponi. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

c. **Staff Report**

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to receive the staff report. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti.

Mr. Novelli has been evaluating the landfill operations on Saturdays, driven by the fact that the District often does not receive much traffic. He said that, on average, between 1-2 trucks deliver on Saturdays and sometimes there are none. However, the 1-2 trucks cover the operating costs and despite being slow, the District is essentially breaking even on Saturdays, not losing money. It was stated that this excluded weeks where there was a holiday, creating a need to remain open on Saturdays. He does not believe the District is required to remain open on Saturdays of non-holiday weeks, and the members usually do not deliver when there isn't a holiday. Key considerations cited were the response from the

staff over the possibility of closing on Saturdays, and the current contract negotiations for the next fiscal year. Mr. Novelli stated that the District will try staffing 2 people instead of 3 to cut costs, and that he will continue to evaluate this in the coming months. He mentioned that some of the staff appreciate the extra hours. Chairperson agreed with the approach.

Mr. Novelli reviewed landfill gas production, which has seen a generally positive trend in recent months, with a slight decline since the last meeting. He was of the view that the uptrend would continue.

Mr. Novelli then mentioned progress on Cell 7 permitting- he currently expects to receive a draft permit decision by the end of January 2026 which would be followed by a 45-day public commenting period, with a final draft permit decision expected around April. Chairperson Beauregard mentioned how Mr. Marc Garrett of the Dartmouth Conservation Commission had recently retired and will be missed. The Committee expressed their best wishes for Mr. Garrett.

Mr. Thomas discussed a recent merger between Capitol Waste Services (who services New Bedford) and E-Z Disposal (who services Fall River) and how going forward all trucks would be marked and painted as Capitol Waste Services. Thus, there will be Capitol Waste trucks coming from Fall River and there will need to be heightened attention to each truck to avoid accounting and tonnage discrepancies and members paying for Fall River trucks. Mr. Novelli described the current process- Capitol is supposed to dedicate separate trucks for each municipal route, and each community has a list of approved truck numbers that are authorized to deliver under their account. Capitol needs to communicate any changes with the municipalities and with the District, as some are rental trucks, and the District does not allow any trucks that it does not recognize to deliver on either account. Mr. Novelli will ensure there is increased attention on this situation to prevent any potential conflicts.

Mr. Novelli mentioned that SRPEDD is planning to attend the February meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the Land Use Study. He will provide more information ahead of the meeting. Mr. Novelli also mentioned that Bartholemew & Co. typically provides an update on the District's investments in February. The Committee agreed to postpone the Bartholomew presentation.

Mr. Novelli then discussed the District's audit services, as the current 3-year agreement with Hague & Sahady had expired after the FY2025 audit. The Committee discussed whether to continue the relationship or explore possible new auditors. Mr. Beauregard mentioned displeasure with how some issues in previous years were handled but noted that the most recent audit went well and acknowledged the level of effort required to solicit and potentially switch firms. He recommended the District leave the issues in the past and continue with Hague & Sahady. Mr. Gagne mentioned the value of their institutional knowledge and familiarity with municipal issues, noting that he has worked with them in both Dartmouth and New Bedford and that they provided sound guidance beyond the normal scope of the audit. There were no objections.

Mr. Novelli then discussed recycling and waste reduction efforts, and that he was invited to speak on the MassRecycle podcast. He clarified that Pyrex glass containers (especially broken ones) should not be placed in recycling bins, and that clear plastic lids on items like plastic coffee cups are able to be recycled with the cup. The team is planning an educational video in cooperation with the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) that processes local recyclables to better educate and to highlight what should and shouldn't be in the recycling

stream. There was conversation that “contamination” at a MRF includes materials that shouldn’t be there (such as plastic bags), as well as material that is not clean enough. He highlighted the importance of maintaining communications with MRFs.

He then highlighted the Recycling Dividend Program (RDP) grants that each community receives from MassDEP. The award amount is related to the number of programs in place in each community, and New Bedford’s award (\$78,000) is among the highest in the state. This is an indication that there are a lot of waste reduction and recycling efforts and programs in place locally. New Bedford’s grant award is being used to staff and manage the recycling center and has led to a lot of improvements there. Chairperson Beauregard suggested that this award be publicized, as it is not an insignificant amount of money, and it is therefore not coming out of the City’s budget.

The City of New Bedford is working on a solicitation for solid waste collection services, beginning in July. An option to operate the recycling center may be included, he believes the City may look to secure a 5-7 year deal after the current 3-year deal ends, hoping for better pricing.

Ms. Conzatti highlighted the New Bedford Creative grant that the District received, noting that it was a very competitive process and that only a small fraction of the applications were awarded. Mr. Novelli credited Ms. Perez-Dormitzer, the District’s Waste Reduction Manager, for the idea and application, noting that it will fund a series of reuse and repair workshops.

There was a brief discussion of hazardous waste collection and the possibility of opening up the District’s events to more municipalities. This would make New Bedford and Dartmouth eligible for additional RDP grant funding and will continue to be explored.

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to receive and place on file the staff report and place it on file. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

7. Items That Could Not Be Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

None

8. Set Meeting Schedule

The next meeting is set for **February 18, 2026**. The subsequent meeting is scheduled for **March 26, 2026**.

9. Adjourn

Chairperson Beauregard requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 09:00

MEMOS

6A. Vote to adopt Draft FY 2027 Budget dated 01/15/2026
Attachment – Draft Fiscal Year 2027 Budget
Attachment – Income Statement as of January 9, 2026

6D. Staff Report dated 01/15/2026

Approved by vote of the District Committee on February 18, 2026.



Anthony Novelli, Executive Director