Minutes approved May 18, 2026

DISTRICT COMMITTEE- GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

The Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District Committee held a publicly posted meeting on Wednesday, February 18, 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, Kelley Cabral-Mosher, and Daniel Patten.

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

Other Attendees: Lizeth Gonzalez, Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) for presentation.

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, yes
Daniel Patten, yes

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Draft Minutes of January 15, 2026, Meeting, Regular Session

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of the January 15, 2026, meeting, regular session. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 6 - 0

5. Warrant Report and Ratification

a. Warrant 14-26 dated January 21, 2026, and Warrant 15-26 dated February 4, 2026, ratification

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to ratify warrant 14-26 dated January 21, 2026, and warrant 15-26 dated February 4, 2026. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 6 – 0.

6. New Business

a. Update on Land Use Analysis- SRPEDD

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to receive an update on SRPEDD's Land Use Analysis. MOTION made by Ms. Conzatti, seconded by Mr. Patten.

Chairperson Beauregard welcomed Lizeth Gonzalez, who is presenting an update on SRPEDD's analysis on the highest and best uses of District land.

Ms. Gonzalez stated that SRPEDD's methodology is to align with the District's priorities for managing these properties. Maintaining natural areas is a priority for some properties, while potential improvements that could produce net positive outcomes will be evaluated for others. One consideration is that the District's inventory of land is in Freetown and Dartmouth, not New Bedford. Development of certain parcels could impact their tax liability. There are parcels in close proximity to the New Bedford Business Park, and there was attention given to local industry trends to identify what would be most successful near the business park. Currently, the top industries growing include healthcare, transportation, educational services, and to a lesser degree manufacturing. While healthcare is the top industry in New Bedford in the last 5 years, it has contracted. Another factor is Location Quotient which measures concentration of an industry compared to a larger geographic area (such as the county). Dartmouth, for example, saw a 24% increase in the 2015-2024 concentration of healthcare industry compared to the county as a whole. New Bedford saw a 6% decrease in this area, and is now on par with Dartmouth regarding concentration of employees in the healthcare industry.

Ms. Gonzalez then reviewed general categories being considered for the District's properties. Many of the parcels are currently vacant, some are currently under protection of Chapter 61 and 61A, some may be considered for protection due to development limitations, and some might be best considered as development candidates. Mr. Thomas highlighted how there are existing easements that could facilitate access to some properties that currently have limited road access. Ms. Gonzalez responded that this would be factored into the analysis.

In addition to studying existing easements, Mr. Thomas mentioned the need to assess the status of Eversource substations. Mr. Novelli believes that the Industrial Park substation is currently at full capacity, but another substation may have available capacity for a solar project.

The discussion moved to the High Hill Road Bogs in Dartmouth, currently under a license agreement for harvesting the cranberries. The District is exploring dual-use applications and the potential to put solar over the bogs, which is challenging but possible. Next Ms. Gonzalez reviewed existing residential properties. She acknowledged that the District's primary goal is not to be a landlord, but that these properties need to be maintained. She indicated that SRPEDD would look into partnership leasing possibilities such as housing authority or non-profit use. The potential for affordable housing was mentioned, as well as for outdoor recreational areas. Mr. Beauregard stated the need to decide what the best use of these properties is- some are currently vacant, which is not the solution. Ms. Gonzalez reviewed uses that would require special permits in Dartmouth and Freetown and the existing zoning of these parcels. She then reviewed properties with more varied use potential such as solar development or areas for development adjacent to the New Bedford Business Park. There is a lot of development potential for the property located in the Business Park, and she plans to engage with the New Bedford Economic Development Council to discuss potential uses. There is a primary water line that serves the City of New Bedford located in this area, which would require extreme caution if any potential development proceeds. She will have a conversation with DPI about this.

Mr. Gagne suggested that SRPEDD include MA Heritage's endangered species maps in the analysis for all of these parcels. There is a 2:1 replication requirement for areas that have rare and endangered species, and the presence of these species would have serious implications on potential projects. He also suggested that SRPEDD review nearby parcels that are owned by the Industrial Foundation (specifically containing wetlands) that abut District properties- perhaps they would do an exchange of properties where the Industrial foundation acquires wetland areas that are more advantageous to them and the District acquires land with higher development potential.

The discussion shifted to the possibility of development of PV solar arrays on the capped landfill areas. Mr. Thomas indicated that potential areas should include the rooftops near the maintenance area, scale house, administrative offices, and nearby fields. Mr. Thomas indicated that Mr. Novelli and Mr. Wechsler were in the process of drafting an RFP for PV solar arrays for the aforementioned areas including dual use of cranberry bogs – in 3 different parts with solar and 1 or 2 battery energy storage systems (BESS). It was indicated that the RFP would be ready in a couple of weeks.

Ms. Gonzalez indicated that her presentation and this conversation was intended to determine what the next steps and tasks should be. She would email Mr. Novelli with what the tasks should be and to estimate out what remedies would be for a numerical basis for estimating. Ms. Gonzales mentioned that she would communicate with the City of New Bedford DPI with a few other questions. Attorney Thomas suggested that she contact Mr. Dominic Galotti.

This presentation was intended to review the first phase of the project, identify key parcels, and get input from the Committee before proceeding. Chairperson Beauregard asked about timing on the next phase of the next presentation. Ms. Gonzalez indicated it might be in 'mid spring' and asked whether it would be beneficial to wait until the solar RFP is issued. Mr. Thomas asked about the task list and how the next task would center around fiscal projections and if the timeline for delivery of the full report was still on track to which Ms. Gonzalez indicated that she believed it was.

Committee members thanked Ms. Gonzalez for her presentation.

Lizeth Gonzalez left the meeting at 8:43 a.m.

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to receive the SRPEDD report and place it on file as presented by Ms. Gonzales. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Cabral-Mosher. MOTION passed 6 – 0.

b. Staff Report

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to receive the staff report. MOTION made by Ms. Conzatti, seconded by Ms. Cabral-Mosher.

Mr. Novelli started by stating that there had not been any odor complaints since the last meeting and complimented the operations team. The main pump station rebuild is underway. Next, Mr. Novelli shared how gas production had declined as the winter temperatures dropped significantly below freezing, causing persistent mechanical issues. He believes the staff are doing the best they can to troubleshoot and maintain the system, and they continue to discuss ideas for improvement with the owners of the power plant. Mr. Novelli also indicated that the power plant owners were contractually obliged to produce a minimum of 1,500 kWh during a scarcity event or face fines from Eversource, and how of late this is around where production levels have been.

Next Mr. Novelli highlighted progress with securing contracts for additional disposal tonnage in fiscal 2027. He expects a few new customers, as well as additional tonnage from some existing customers who continue to expand their business in this area. Through this effort, there was evidence from the marketplace of price inelasticity resulting in some price pressure and some other haulers not to be interested. Additionally, as large operators acquire local haulers and are increasingly vertically integrated there was some price resistance. The larger companies own their own disposal capacity in other areas and are less likely to pay a higher tip fee.

Chairperson Beauregard indicated that given price sensitivity it would be recommended to give a modest price break to a customer who was significantly increasing tonnage. He highlighted concern about smaller private haulers based on past experiences, and the importance of timely accounts receivable collection. Haulers under contracts to the District went bankrupt in the past, costing the District in revenue. Mr. Novelli shared the increasing sensitivity of price and the need to align with the market. Some feedback he had gathered is that the District's tip fees were higher than some haulers were currently paying at other local waste transfer facilities. He did highlight the short turnaround time at Crapo Hill compared to Covanta/SEMASS facility, especially in the summer where wait times can be in excess of 5 hours, sometimes up to 8 hours. Mr. Novelli highlighted the pricing of existing customers with their projected tonnage.

The Committee agreed to offer additional tonnage at a slightly discounted rate to an existing hauler in FY2027 to meet revenue projections.

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to authorize the Executive Director to offer disposal contracts for the FY 2027 at proposed tonnage amounts and tip fees as amended. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 6 – 0.

Mr. Novelli shared how MassDEP had some technical comments regarding Cell 7 which the District will need to respond to. He indicated that these were nothing major, but rather

requests for clarification in the technical details of the project. This will push the permitting process out at least a month, but there is confidence in current direction.

Mr. Novelli indicated that the District's interest waiver reserve is not really needed any more, and suggested that this account be eliminated and the funds be transferred into other accounts. It was agreed that the majority of the funds would go into the Equipment Reserve account, and a portion would go to the Recycling Reimbursement reserve, which provides funding to the member communities for waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Chairperson Beauregard asked for a motion to close the Interest Waiver reserve account and transfer 75% of the funds to Equipment Reserve and 25% to Recycling Reimbursement. MOTION made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Conzatti. MOTION passed 6– 0.

Mr. Iacaponi asked about the 'future solid waste management' account and its purpose. Mr. Thomas discussed how the account is designed to provide funding to explore other solid waste management technologies and/or offset increases in future solid waste disposal costs to District members once Crapo Hill closes. The District provides extremely favorable disposal prices at the landfill, and eventually the members will need to pay significantly more- this is intended to help with the transition.

Mr. Novelli then reviewed a 3-year proposal from the auditing firm Hague, Sahady & Co, who currently performs these services. There were comments on some prior interactions which could have been handled differently, but overall this is a reputable firm that has served the District for a while, and the price is reasonable. There would be a significant level of effort to go out to bid and potentially transition these services.

Mr. Gagne asked for a motion to accept the 3-year proposal for auditing services from Hague, Sahady & Co. MOTION made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Mr. Iacaponi. MOTION passed 6 – 0.

Mr. Patten left the meeting at 9:01 a.m.

Mr. Novelli provided an update on the solar project- the RFP was moving forward with a lot of effort by Mr. Wechsler and Attorney Thomas and they expect it will be advertised in the near future. Additionally, Mr. Wechsler is progressing through the MA OIG Procurement Officer certification process having now completed 2 of the 3 training sessions and subsequent exams. Mr. Gagne commented on how certified procurement officers in the state of MA were increasingly rare and in demand, with some municipalities no longer having internal MCPPOs. Mr. Gagne praised the process and the education and experience being gained through these classes and the current applications.

Mr. Novelli then shared an update on a proposed reciprocal arrangement between certain municipalities offering household hazardous waste (HHW) collection events. Essentially, the District would allow residents of other communities to attend its events (which occur twice per year) and in turn, the other participating municipalities would allow Dartmouth and New Bedford residents to attend their events. Each municipality would cover the cost for its residents to attend the other events. This would give increased access to HHW disposal events, since the options are limited. By the District joining this consortium, New Bedford and Dartmouth would both receive additional MassDEP grant funds. Currently, there are no municipalities in close proximity participating, but the hope and expectation is that this will expand in the coming years to include more nearby communities. There is support from MassDEP on this. Mr. Novelli added that, given the proximity of the

communities currently participating, it is unlikely that this would add any significant amount of traffic to the District's events, and little additional effort is expected from District staff, especially considering the financial incentive for New Bedford and Dartmouth by the District participating. The program is only open to residents and not to commercial entities. Mr. Iacaponi asked why local municipalities such as Fairhaven and Westport have not joined. Mr. Novelli was not sure, noting that a DEP regional coordinator is taking the lead on this, but they have not engaged yet. The group agreed that keeping hazardous materials out of the waste stream coming to Crapo Hill is critical, and adding additional options for local residents to dispose of these materials properly is worthwhile.

Mr. Gagne asked about a status update on meeting with New Bedford and Dartmouth regarding the feasibility study a potential waste transfer station. He has noticed that the railroad company has been doing a lot of improvements near the airport recently, and suggested that the District engage in conversations with them. Mr. Novelli is working on scheduling a meeting in early March, and the team is preparing an outline for the project. After an initial meeting, the technical staff can work on the project more, but it is important to involve all parties upfront.

Chairperson Beauregard requested a motion to accept the staff report and place it on file. MOTION made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Mr. Iacaponi. MOTION passed 5 – 0.

7. Executive Session

Motion that the District Committee go into Executive Session pursuant to General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7) and General Law chapter 4, Section 7, Clause Twenty-Sixth(d) to discuss inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters relating to policy positions being developed by the District and then reconvene in Open Session. The minutes of this Executive Session will become public once the policy positions being developed by the District have been fully developed. MOTION made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Mr. Iacaponi. All voted in favor.

Committee entered Executive Session at 9:11 a.m.

Committee returned to Open Session at 9:26 a.m.

8. <u>Items That Could Not Be Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance</u>

There were none

9. <u>Set Meeting Schedule</u>

The next meeting is set for **March 26, 2026**. The subsequent meeting is scheduled for **April 30, 2026.**

10. <u>Adjourn</u>

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

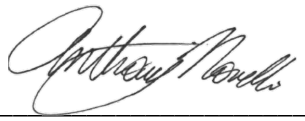
The meeting was adjourned at 09:28 a.m.

MEMOS

6A. Update on Land Use Analysis – SRPEDD dated 02/18/2026

6B. Staff Report dated 02/18/2026
Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C. Proposal FY26 – FY28
Income Statement as of 2/11/2026

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



Anthony Novelli, Executive Director