The Municipal Review Committee is a regional collaborative made up of 115 municipalities including Brewer. The MRC and the Maine DEP worked until the 11th hour to try to find a solution that would have allowed waste to be sent to PERC during this interim period before the Fiberight plant is operational.  MRC was disappointed those efforts were not successful.

As part of the Fiberight project, the MRC had arranged in 2015 for trash to be directed to a landfill if needed due to delays in construction. Unfortunately, the MRC has had to use those arrangements. The MRC regrets the use of landfill disposal for this purpose; however, it is an interim measure that is an integral part of a long-term sustainable effort to put an advanced recycling and waste processing facility in place.

It is worth noting that the reason for the delay in opening was not winter weather, but rather PERC’s Hail Mary appeal of the Hampden facility permits, which cost the schedule a critical 237 days. Had there been no appeal by PERC, the Hampden facility would be complete today and interim landfilling would not be needed.

As a reminder, the MRC’s need to find an alternative to PERC was prompted by the 2018 end of PERC’s $20 million per year federal subsidy and PERC’s unwillingness to consider changes to address this revenue loss. PERC’s doors may still be open at this moment, but without that subsidy PERC is not economically viable in the long run.

MRC’s sole purpose is to look out for the long term interests of its member municipalities.  Adherence to contractual agreements is of utmost importance to successful completion of the Hampden facility.  Communities that have chosen to set aside their contractual commitments are jeopardizing not only themselves, but exposing the entire MRC membership to significant financial risks.

The Fiberight facility is on target to begin accepting waste in September, if not before.  This interim period is exactly that—temporary and short term.  It is important to focus on the future. Soon, the Hampden facility will be a key part of our region’s systems for maximum recycling of trash on a long-term sustainable basis.

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