

# Ulster County Legislature



## UC RRA Reform Committee

### Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2024 at 9:30 AM

KL Binder Library, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, County Office Building, Kingston

#### Committee Members:

Mike Baden, Chair

*President, Ulster County Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors*

Tracey Bartels, Vice-Chair

*Legislative Chair Designee*

Legislator Manna Jo Greene

*Energy, Environment & Sustainability Representative*

Laura Petit

*Minority Designee*

Comptroller March Gallagher

*Ulster County Comptroller*

Deputy County Executive Amanda LaValle

*Ulster County Executive Designee*

Jim Gordon, Vice-Chair

*UCRRA Board of Directors*

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** UCRRA, Chair Baden

**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Michael Tierney, Legislative Support Specialist

**PRESENT:** Chair Baden, Vice-Chair Bartels, Legislator Greene, Deputy County Executive Amanda LaValle, Laura Pettit, Jim Gordon, Vice-Chair UCRRA Board of Directors

**ABSENT:** Comptroller Gallagher

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** UCRRA Executive Director, Marc Rider

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**Call Meeting to Order:** 9:36 AM

**Approval of the April 4<sup>th</sup> & April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting Minutes**



Deputy County Executive LaValle recommended inviting someone with experience in permitting and technical staff from the region to the meeting. RRA Executive Director says Pollack as such experience.

Chair Baden discussed the need for specific recommendations for the Legislature.

The group debated the role of RRA in making recommendations and the impact of legislative actions on UCCRA implementation.

Legislator Greene recommended completing the ZWIP (zero-waste implementation plan) and utilizing Ulster County's unique waste diversion system, with many drop off sites already in place, and creating a centralized Recycling Oversight Center (RIC).

Legislator Greene emphasized waste diversion, rejecting materials that won't resell.

Deputy County Executive LaValle suggested organizing recommendations into a table for easy implementation. Chair Baden agreed, citing the importance of simplicity and clarity in the report.

Committee members discussed the possibility of extending the resolution's deadline and move on to discuss disposal.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon discovered outdated recommendations in solid waste management plan, in that current SWMP calls for priority exploration of a company BioHiTech, which went out of business in 2023.

Waste management options in Delaware include landfill, recycling, composting, and energy production.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon highlighted the cost of various waste management options, including pyrolysis (\$226-\$239 per ton) and biomass (\$203 per ton). He used the list from the current SWMP.

UCRRA Executive Director Marc Rider provided cost estimates for these technologies, including a \$211 million starting point for sending waste to Seneca Meadows, based on figures updated in SWMP.

Concerns were raised about private company benefiting from long-term solid waste management contract. Vice-chair Bartels expressed concern about contracting with a private company for a long-term deal being improper under UC Flow Control law, since it would in effect, create a government monopoly for a single private company.

Legislator Greene requested a chart of waste disposal options for the solid waste management plan.

Legislator Greene suggested including recommendations for a strong environmental ethic to motivate protests.

UCRRA Executive Director Marc Rider and Chair Baden discussed procurement laws and RFP process for county contracts.

Discussion on simplifying waste management by eliminating certain types of materials from the waste stream for reuse or recycling or use as organic feeder for composting. Such diversion of waste reduces environmental impact and odors, making landfill siting easier.

Legislator Greene reiterated the idea that plastics which didn't qualify as regulated recyclables could be placed in a "monfill" designed to hold only plastics.

Deputy County Executive LaValle discussed using microbes to convert waste into energy, highlighting their efficiency and effectiveness compared to technological interventions.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon mentioned mushrooms breaking down plastics, suggesting a potential future solution for waste diversion and recycling.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon and Chair Baden discussed the possibility of contracting with a private company for waste management, Chair Baden also mentioned that a for-profit company can do the job well and be environmentally conscious.

Deputy County Executive LaValle highlighted the importance of considering different funding opportunities for waste-to-energy projects, and the potential for government changes to impact waste management decisions.

Chair Baden and Legislator Greene discussed the RFP process for waste management companies.

**Next Meetings:**  
Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 AM  
Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 AM  
Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 9:30 AM  
Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 AM

**Adjournment**

**Motion No. 2:** MOTION TO ADJOURN

**Motion Made By:** UCRRA Vice-Chair, Gordon  
**Motion Seconded By:** Laura Petit  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 6  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

TIME: 11:01 AM

**Respectfully submitted:** Lizvett Bost, Legislative Administrative Assistant  
**Minutes Approved:** May 17, 2024