Ulster County Legislature



UC RRA Reform Committee Meeting Minutes May 2, 2024 at 9:30 AM

KL Binder Library, 6th 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 ATTTENDEES: UCRRA Executive Director, Marc Rider

Call Meeting to Order: 9:36 AM

Approval of the April 4th & April 18th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion No. 1	Motion to APPROVE the Minutes of the April 4 th & April 18, 2024 Meeting
Minutes Motion By:	UCRRA Vice-Chair, Gordon
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Motion Seconded By:	Laura Petit
Voting In Favor:	Chair Baden, Vice-Chair Bartels, Legislator Greene, Deputy County Executive Lavalle, UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon, Laura Petit
Voting Against:	0
Abstention:	0
Disposition:	MINUTES APPROVED

Chair Baden updated committee members on the outreach to the haulers that are registered with the UCCRA, with no response received. He will also check with the Legislative Clerk and see if there was any response.

Vice-Chair Bartels will reach out to Oneida Herkimer to visit with committee members and asked members for input on the best day for trip and considering availability and transportation.

Chair Baden and UCRRA Vice-Chair, Gordon discussed the contract and intergovernmental relations, with a focus on the role of Comptroller Gallagher.

The group decided to postpone discussing the contract until Comptroller Gallagher is present, and instead focus on other agenda items.

Vice-Chair Bartels discussed past recommendation (2012?) by county legislature not to disband UCRRA due to outstanding debt. It was noted that UCRRA has retired all its debt, as of March 2024.

Chair Baden suggested exploring the possibility of obtaining an executive summary of a legislative committee report from 2015.

Committee members discussed materials for a special committee on the future of the era.

Legislator Greene focused on waste reduction section; Chair Baden provided a broader outline.

Chair Baden outlined reflects all topics discussed since December, including waste diversion and disposal.

UCRRA Vice-Chair, Gordon suggested using existing documents, such as the Zero Waste Management Plan, to support recommendations for the RRA Board.

Diversion, disposal, intergovernmental, and economics are the four main topics being highlighted in the report, as discussed in previous meetings, and reiterated in this meeting.

Vice-Chair Bartels suggested inviting a DEC Region 3 expert to discuss landfill siting recommendations.

Vice-Chair Bartels and other members want to prepare questions in advance for a free-flowing conversation on landfill recommendations.

Chair Baden suggested inviting David Pollock to the May 23rd or May 30th meetings to provide a programmatic perspective on solid waste management.

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 Oversite 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. Vicechair 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 th @ 9:30 AM Friday, May 17 th @ 9:00 AM
	Thursday, May 23rd @ 9:30 AM
	Thursday, May 30 th @ 9:30 AM

<u>Adjournment</u>

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