

Ulster County Legislature



UC RRA Reform Committee Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2024 at 9:00 AM

KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building, Kingston

Committee Members:

Mike Baden, Chair

Representative, 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: Chair Baden

LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Lizvett Bost, Legislative Support Specialist

PRESENT: Chair Baden, Vice-Chair Bartels, Legislator Greene, Deputy County Executive Amanda LaValle, UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon, Laura Pettit

ABSENT: Comptroller Gallagher

QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Jeff Collins; UCRRA Executive Director Marc Rider

Call Meeting to Order: 9:10 AM

Approval of the June 21st, June 26th, Meeting Minutes postponed until next meeting - July 18th.

Chair Baden discussed the length of the contract (5 years or 10 years) and expressed a to have further conversation when Comptroller Gallagher would be present. Vice-Chair Bartels agrees that a longer conversation needs to be had and stated that she needs to understand the objections to a longer contract since the county always has an out of the contracts.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon and Chair Baden discussed the importance of highlighting certain recommendations in a narrative form, rather than a chart. The Committee agreed that a chart is not enough to convey the importance of the recommendations and that a narrative is needed to emphasize their significance.

Vice-Chair Bartels expressed interest in hearing from the Executives Office on the contract's progress and potential draft contract discussion.

Vice-Chair Bartels highlighted the importance of history in setting an example for the state legislature.

The Committee agreed to add more points to the contract, including enforcement and acknowledging the good work that Ulster County has done on waste diversion, going from 4% to 40%.

UCRRA Executive Director Marc Rider explained that the county relies on annual reports from waste management facilities for recycling data, but these reports may not be comprehensive.

Chair Baden attributed the source of the numbers to the Ulster County Solid Waste Management Plan.

Vice-Chair Bartels recommended using the county's numbers instead of the state's numbers based on UCRRA Executive Director Marc Rider's graphic.

Chair Baden suggested creating a side-by-side chart comparing New York State and Ulster County waste management numbers.

Vice-Chair Bartels and Chair Baden discussed the amount of waste generated and diverted in Ulster County, with Vice-Chair Bartels expressing confusion about the numbers.

Deputy Executive Rider provides additional context on the types of waste included in the diversion rate (28%), clarifying that it includes recyclables and other MSW. The 101,000 tons is solid waste.

Chair Baden explained Ulster County's waste management data, including 80 trips per week and 35 tons per truck.

Vice-Chair Bartels emphasized the importance of considering greenhouse gas emissions and environmental perspectives in waste management options.

Vice-Chair Bartels and committee members discussed specific recommendations for the C&D program, including requiring source separation and changing the word "consider" to "require."

Chair Baden suggested mandating compost collection in Kingston to meet waste reduction goals.

UCRRA Vice-Chair Gordon agreed, citing Asheville's (North Carolina) successful compost collection program, and Deputy County Executive LaValle noted the importance of food waste reduction for the CLCPA.

Vice-Chair Bartels discussed the rollout of a new system in Vermont, mentioning the importance of including rural areas and the potential for resistance to change.

Vice-Chair Bartels recounts the experience of implementing a plastic bag ban in Vermont, highlighting the challenges of building consensus and the unexpected reactions from the public.

Committee discussed composting program for organic waste in Kingston.

Chair Baden recognized the need to change the language in the chart to avoid singling out individuals.

Vice-Chair Bartels emphasized the importance of including historical newspaper clippings in the appendix to ground the legislature and demonstrate the urgency of the issue

Deputy County Executive LaValle explained waste management hierarchy, emphasizing recycling and composting over energy recovery.

Chair Baden and Legislator Greene agreed on the need for concrete recommendations for Zero Waste implementation plan and reuse Innovation Center.

Committee members discussed funding options for the center, including a net service fee and bonding.

Next Meetings:

Thursday, July 18, 2024 @ 2:00 PM –
County Executive’s Office

Adjournment

Motion No. 1:

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: 11:00 AM

Respectfully submitted:

Lizvett Bost, Legislative Administrative Assistant

Minutes Approved:

August 1, 2024