

**MINUTES OF THE ULSTER COUNTY  
MEETING OF THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE  
January 14, 2008**

PRESENT: Brian Shapiro, Hector Rodriguez, Dean Fabiano, Gary Bischoff, Laura Petit

EXCUSED: Richard Parete, Kevin Roberts

Also present: Elizabeth Ascue, Jim Gordon,

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 6:33 PM by Chairman Shapiro.

Chairman Shapiro welcomed the new Committee members.

**UCRRA**

Chairman Shapiro reminded the Committee that several Board member's terms that had expired on the RRA Board of Directors. Petit questioned whether re-appointments would be made regardless of majority/minority association. Rodriguez said there needed to be a geographic balance.

Chairman Shapiro remarked that Noonan had recommended Wadnola from the Town of Ulster be appointed. He would like to be prepared next month to make a decision on appointing RRA Board members.

**Recycling Oversight Committee**

Chairman Shapiro asked the Committee for recommendations for appointments to the Recycling Oversight Committee. Petit said that Tracey Bartels was interested in remaining on the Oversight Committee as and at-large member, and that Manna Jo Greene was interested.

**MOTION** was made by Gary Bischoff to make a recommendation that Tracey Bartels be appointed as an at-large member and Laura Petit be appointed as the Legislative member from the Environmental Committee. Seconded by Dean Fabiano. All present in favor.

**MOTION** was made by Hector Rodriguez to make a recommendation from the Environmental Committee that Manna Jo Greene be appointed as an at large member. Seconded by Gary Bischoff. All present in favor.

## **Environmental Committee Reorganization**

The Committee nominated Brian Shapiro to continue as its Chairman. Chairman Shapiro recommended that Laura Petit be nominated as Deputy Chairman. The Committee agreed.

## **Water and Soil**

Rodriguez reminded the Committee that there were appointment recommendations needed for Soil and Water. Chairman Shapiro said he checked with counsel to see if it would be a conflict to serve on both Boards, and he was told no. He said he would like to be on the Water and Soil Board. He said there were two appointments necessary and recommended Petit for the other vacancy.

**MOTION** Rodriguez to recommend Shapiro and Petit for the Water and Soil Board. Seconded by Dean Fabiano. All present in favor.

Chairman Shapiro said a seventh position would be created and would like William McAfee to stay on the Water and Soil Board.

**MOTION** was made by Dean Fabiano to recommend William McAfee for the Water and Soil Board. Seconded by Brian Shapiro. All present in favor.

## **Chodikee Lake Update**

Chairman Shapiro updated the Committee on the Chodikee Lake parcel. He said that it would be worth more to the DEC if there was access. Passanti needed to grant a right of way and County counsel has gone to court to petition. Passanti has not contacted counsel to date to negotiate. Chairman Shapiro distributed info from the County attorney about progress of the case.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Shapiro opened a discussion of Enforcement of the County recycling law. Fabiano mentioned that the last time the RRA was audited was over ten years ago, and he had asked that the State review the RRAs records. Shapiro said that Lisa Cutten should be directed to review the records.

Chairman Shapiro said he was more comfortable with a County Enforcement Officer. Rodriguez commented that a County Enforcement Officer position could be paid for out of what the UCRRA had budgeted. Bischoff remarked that the RRA was a garbage czar and should be put in with the County Health Department. Petit said it would be a good idea to transfer the enforcement and education responsibilities over to the Department of the Environment so there would be more oversight. Shapiro felt it should be referred to the Oversight Committee for an opinion on whether recycling compliance should be with the Health Department. Bischoff and Rodriguez felt it should be with the Department of the Environment.

Fabiano felt that the law should be enforced. Bischoff asked if it was in the RRA's best interest to recycle since they made income from trash disposal. He thought the push should be to maximize income through a push to reduce service fees.

## **SOLAR CONSORTIUM**

Bischoff discussed net metering fees and said that the solar consortium could help local farmers. Students conducted an energy audit of several farms, and the IBEW sized two systems: one of the farms run \$12,000 a month for electric. This would be an effort to keep farms operating in Ulster County. Farms that are agricultural have provisions for net metering. Biogas alternatives could be used on cattle farms. He said Assemblyman Cahill had a bill that may not pass regarding the metering of solar power. Bonasiac was concerned that Central Hudson would lose revenue. Bischoff said locally, they may want to encourage large retailers such as Walmart to convert over to solar energy with some agreement on net metering.

## **Agriculture and Markets – Dog Licensing**

Shapiro said that dog licensing funds were supposed to be allocated for education and population control. He said Noonan was concerned about accountability of funds and would like to see participating organizations submit receipts. Shapiro said he and Petit organized a sit down discussion with the SPCA and several animal rescue groups on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **Re-Appointments**

Fred VonNostrand and William Wilklo

**MOTION** Rodriguez to appoint VonNostrand and Wilklo. Second by Fabiano. All present in favor.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Petit mentioned that she would like to see the departments begin to report at the Environmental Committees monthly meetings. Some agencies hadn't reported in several months including the Federation of Sportsmen, EMC, Water and Soil, and the RRA.

Shapiro reported that he sent a letter as part of the scoping process to DEC. He said over the next ten years \$215,000 in operating and maintenance costs for twelve miles of road would be spent. He said the County should not have anything to do with the cost of building and maintaining a road to Highmount.

Rodriguez questioned why the Environmental Committee meetings had been changed to Mondays. He asked if they could be scheduled on Wednesdays at 6:00pm like they were in the past. Shapiro said he would contact Kathy and let her know of the change.

## **ADJOURN**

**MOTION** to adjourn the January 14<sup>th</sup> Environmental Meeting was made by Hector Rodriguez and seconded by Dean Fabiano. All in favor.

ADJOURNED 7:30PM

Submitted by Laura Petit