

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Environmental Committee

DATE: July 15, 2009

TIME: 6:00 PM

PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor
County Office Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Brian Shapiro, Deputy Chairperson Laura Petit, Legislators Gary Bischoff, Hector Rodriguez, Dean Fabiano and Kevin Roberts

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislator Richard Parete

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Bemis, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency
Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of Environment
Victor J. Melville, LWV - Observer Corp.

Chairman Brian Shapiro called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Approved minutes from May 20, 2009 and circulated notes from the informal meeting held on June 17, 2009 for which no quorum was present.

Updates:

Mike Bemis - Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency

Mr. Bemis distributed copies of the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Monthly Treasurer's Report - copy attached.

Mr. Bemis discussed the impact of the recession on the trash business. Business is down and revenues are off by \$1 million compared to 2008.

- The report indicates the comparison of receipts to last year.
- They haven't lost any contracts but there has been a change in the frequency of collections.
- They have instituted a tip for commercial haulers for recyclables which is temporary until the market rebounds.
- Tonnage and recycling are only off 7% from last year. He mentioned the impact on the towns for scrap metal charges.
- Discussion regarding aluminum being highly recyclable and its various uses in industry.
- There have been fewer trips for the haulers so fuel costs have been down.
- Effective July 1st, they have entered into a contract with Waste Management, who has mothballed their transfer station which was only a few miles away. Waste

Management felt the impact of the decline in business. This contract represents a win, win for UCRRA. There was discussion regarding the long term impact of the contract and the anticipated increase in volume. Mr. Bemis said the contract will help close the gap in their budget for the balance of the year.

- Discussion regarding the Dutchess County plant: volume and incinerator usage, their closing for scheduled maintenance and other issues affecting them.
- Hudson Valley Regional Council has been more active and there have been discussions regarding solid waste management.

Amanda LaValle - Department of Environment

Ms. LaValle discussed the Department of Energy funding and getting the application submitted in a timely manner.

The projects which are considered are as follows:

- Comprehensive Energy audits; and
- Solar Installation at Salt Shed in New Paltz; and
- Lighting retrofit at the Golden Hill Facilities; and
- Hybrid vehicles for fleet vehicles; and
- Implementing Energy Policy.

Some other considerations are renewable energy, insulation, lighting, and film on windows. This is a block grant and letters of support do not get submitted with the application. (Legislator Bischoff asked for the name of the grant: Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant).

Legislator Fabiano asked if upgrading the traffic light at Glasco Turnpike and Old Kings Highway might be considered? Ms. LaValle made a notation that this project could be looked at. The traffic light isn't old but should be LED.

There was discussion regarding other programs that will become available through NYSERDA which will be competitive and require advocacy for smaller municipalities and other non-profits. Ms. LaValle will keep the committee informed when these are available.

Ms. LaValle updated the committee on the Salt Shed project in New Paltz. The County received a \$10,000 technical assistance grant for engineering consulting services from NYSERDA. This will provide the technical information on the ways to reduce energy usage for the Salt Shed.

Ms. LaValle provided an update from Buildings and Grounds regarding the County's new recycling process in the County buildings. Tom Melville reports that there has been a two-fold increase in the amount of paper recycling. There was discussion regarding the renegotiation of the Royal Carting contract and payment for paper and recyclables.

Ms. LaValle provided the following information regarding the County's Open Space Plan:

- There is an intern working who will focus on the recreational inventory in the County.
- A second intern with GIS skills (mapping and software) will begin work soon and will focus on the priority conservation areas in the County.

The Eagle Scout has begun his project on trails improvement at Sojourner Truth Ulster Landing Park and work has also been started on the benches. The kiosk project is almost done.

The City of New York Department of Environmental Protection Regulatory Group met at 17 Pearl Street with DOE, Planning, Department of Health (Sanitation Division), etc. The County will be copied on applications for subdivisions but the main focus of the meeting pertained to watershed rules and regulations. The Department of Environmental Protection will be issuing a new "Watershed Rules and Regulations". A Planning Seminar is being considered for Towns on this subject. There was discussion regarding the Watershed areas and MS4 Stormwater areas in the County. A Memorandum of Agreement does exist regarding this matter.

Legislator Petit asked about the natural resource inventory. Ms. LaValle stated that application will be available in the near future on the website to request data.

Chairman Brian Shapiro has been asked by Legislative Chairman Donaldson for input on the County Legislature's Green Ribbon Task Force. Chairman Shapiro has contacted NYPERG and will follow up. Legislative Chairman Donaldson wishes to have representatives from various environment groups. The committee offered the following: Green Works in New Paltz and David Gross, Woodstock Environmental Commission.

- Legislator Bischoff stated that the group should be well-rounded for the most general support. Legislator Fabiano has a name he wishes to submit to the Chairman of the Committee to pass along to the Legislative Chairman.
- There was discussion about the proposed Green Ribbon Task Force members and the scope of their knowledge and perspective regarding environmental issues.
- Vic Melville, Observer Corps, League of Women Voters, expressed interest in participating on the Green Ribbon Task Force.

Dr. Susan Kross did not attend tonight's meeting and has addressed her issue regarding Soil and Water fees in another manner.

Legislator Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Legislator Fabiano to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen L. Binder, Deputy Clerk
Ulster County Legislature