ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY
PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE DRAFT BUDGET OF 2024
SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency held a Public Hearing on September 21, 2023.

The proceedings were convened at 5:30 PM. The Public Hearing was held at the Agency’s Main Office located 999 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY.

Board members present: Chair Andrew Giorno, Vice Chair James Gordon, Treasurer Regis Obijiski, Member Donna Egan and Member David Gilmour (arrived at 5:33 PM).

Staff present: Counsel/Secretary Kenneth Gilligan, Acting Executive Director/Director of Finance and Administration Timothy DeGraff and Office Manager Melinda France.

From the public: Reporter Bill Kemble from the Daily Freeman; Manna Jo Greene, Ulster County Legislator; March Gallagher, Ulster County Comptroller; Peg Nau, Councilperson from Town of Saugerties; Supervisor Rich Parete of the Town of Marbletown and Katherine Beinkafner.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT (Recording 0:45:18:46)

Comments were made by County Legislator Manna Jo Greene, Supervisor Rich Parete and former UCRRRA Board Member Katherine Beinkafner.

Ulster County Legislator Manna Jo Greene discussion points, comments, and updates made (Recording 1:00:11:30):

- The legislature made a lot happen in the past year which will affect the budget
  - Contracted Sustainable Hudson Valley to prepare a feasibility study for a Reuse Innovation Center (RIC)
  - RIC would essentially manage the waste the Agency does not handle
  - RIC would be for items that can be repaired, reused and sold for a cost
  - The study was intended to be written with recommendations this year and implemented in 2024
  - Asked the Agency to consider, in its capital budget and operations, the RIC
  - Doesn’t know who will run RIC or where it will be housed
  - Has asked for cost estimates on various options
  - Wants Ulster County to succeed and believes RIC is a critical component to that success
  - Diversion rate is at 40% and believes there could be 80-85% diversion
- Motion to request that the Agency not move forward with the Feasibility Landfill Study was defeated
- NY Times article regarding Seneca Meadows
- Time to take local responsibility of the waste generated and not to think of it as waste but as materials
- Legislature and the Energy, Environmental and Sustainability Committee (EESC) meetings have been more about the future of UCRRRA
- Need to bring stakeholders together and sort it out in a way that would be best for Ulster County
- Zero Waste Implementation Plan
  - Three-quarters of the way done—ran out of energy and funds
  - Purpose was how to implement waste diversion
  - Have all stakeholders review the ZWIP and collect input
  - The ZWIP creates an opportunity for everyone to work together
- Hold focus meetings to discuss:
  - Expanding the Agency’s Board
  - Possible dissolving the Agency
  - Agency becoming a County Department

**Supervisor Parete of the Town of Marbletown comments and discussion points made (Recording 11:49-15:51):**

- Thanked the Agency for their hard work and service
- Agency has been responsive to the Town’s needs. Marbletown and the Agency have a great working relationship
- Has been great working with Manna Jo Greene for the last few years, with the legislature.
- Give the Agency credit for trying to site a landfill but don’t see it happening in Ulster County
- Noticed some of the towns and supervisors have been “beaten up the staff at the Agency”
  - All towns have contracts
  - All contracts state the Towns have 90 days written notice to get out of the contract by the end of the year
  - No Town has gotten out of their contracts
  - Speaks volumes of the service the Agency supplies to the Towns
- Noticed costs on the budget are fixed
- Try and reduce the net service fee
- Opposed of three towns receiving compactors, while the other towns pay for it
- Suggested:
  - More education to the towns on how to fill the boxes
  - 2-tier system
  - Provide more education to the public, legislatures, supervisors and the towns with a slideshow or presentation

**Katherine Beinkafner comments and discussion points made (Recording 16:05-18:46):**

- In her opinion, a landfill is not the solution to Ulster County’s solid waste
- In her opinion, the Agency and NYSERA should team up to build a modern waste-to-energy plant
- Waste-to-energy plant is not an incinerator
- Westinghouse has technology that can turn the waste into gaseous materials
- The material can be used as a commodity
- Believed NYSERDA and NYSDEC has failed by not planning for the future or how to handle the solid waste
- If more waste was needed, could reach out to other counties, to run the waste-to-energy plant
- Willing to help gather information
- Thinks it is important to consider the waste-to-energy option
ADJOURN

James Gordon motioned to adjourn the September 21, 2023, Public Hearing at 5:49 PM and it was seconded by Regis Obijiski. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

September 28, 2023

Motion to approve the above transcribed Minutes of the September 21, 2023, Public Hearing was made by David Gilmour and seconded by James Gordon. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

The minutes were approved by the Board.

Transcribed by: Melinda France, Office Manager.

Signatures:

[Signature]

Andrew Ghiorse, Chair

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Ken Gilligan, Secretary