

**ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 29, 2024**

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency held a Regular Board Meeting on February 29, 2024.

The proceedings were convened at 6:06 PM. This meeting was held at the Agency's Main Office, 999 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY.

**Board members present:** Chair/Treasurer Regis Obijiski, Vice Chair James Gordon, Member Andrew Ghiorse, Member Donna Egan and Member David Gilmour.

**Staff present:** Counsel/Secretary Kenneth Gilligan, Director of Finance and Administration Tim DeGraff, Director of Sustainability Angelina Brandt and Office Manager Melinda France.

**From the public:** Manna Jo Greene, Ulster County Legislator; Laura Petit, Chair of the Recycling Oversight Committee and member of the Ulster County Reform Committee; Rokosz Most, reporter from Hudson Valley One; William Kemble, reporter from the Daily Freeman; Marc Rider and Peter Humphries.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Regis welcomed Marc Rider, the Agency's new Executive Director, to the meeting, as a guest. Marc's position will begin March 4, 2024.

Marc thanked the Board for the opportunity. He stated he is looking forward to his first day on March 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT** (Recording 2:38-4:32)

Regis went over a few guidelines prior to asking the public for comments. The guidelines included the following:

- Raise your hand to be acknowledged
- State your name
- State the municipality you live in
- If you are an elected official or have an official appointment indicate the affiliation
- Comments should be no more than three minutes
- Anyone who wishes a topic to be addressed at a board meeting should send request to Regis Obijiski at [robi@ucrra.org](mailto:robi@ucrra.org). The request should be sent 10 days prior to scheduled board meeting.

Regis opened the floor for public comments. No public comments were made.

### **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Regis asked if the Board had any changes to the Agenda.

David Gilmour asked that *Finance Committee Meeting* be added under “**Communications & Announcements**”; under “**Old Business**” add the *ad hoc committee discussion* and under “**New Business**” *disclosure of a meeting that he had and meeting reporting procedures*.

Andrew Ghiorse asked to add *discussion of reimbursement expenses to attend meetings on behalf of the Agency* under “**New Business**”.

Donna Egan asked that *landfill study update* be added under “**Old Business**”.

Donna Egan made a motion to accept the amendments to the Agenda and it was seconded by David Gilmour. 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Regis stated Anna Roppolo indicated that the NYS retirement system will not allow a consultancy role to replace her “interim executive director” assignment. Anna’s role will cease when Marc’s role states on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Regis thanked Anna for the work she did on behalf of UCRRA, especially the recruitment of Marc Rider.

Regis also thanked James Gordon, Board Member who recommended Anna as a respected leader in the field and who successfully recruited Anna.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

David Gilmour made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2024, Annual Organizational Meeting with the amendment that Laura Petit’s title should not be Ulster County Legislator but should be Chair of the Recycling Oversight Committee and member of the Reform Committee, seconded by James Gordon. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

James Gordon made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2024, Regular Board Meeting with the amendment that Laura Petit’s title should not be Ulster County Legislator but should be Chair of the Recycling Oversight Committee and member of the Reform Committee, seconded by Andrew Ghiorse. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

James Gordon made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 29, 2024, Special Meeting and it was seconded by Andrew Ghiorse. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

### **COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Governance Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2024, at 6:00 PM
- Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2024, at 6:00 PM
- Audit Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2024, at 5:00 PM
- Zero Waste Committee Meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2024, at 5:00 PM

- Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2024, at 6:00 PM

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE (Recording 24:28-28:17)**

Anna Roppolo's was unable to attend the meeting. Regis read her update which read as follows:

"The Ulster transfer station tip floor repair is completed, and the DEC has been notified of the completion as required. The entire tip floor will be opened as of Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. As we have previously discussed, the work was done by in-house staff and overseen by outside engineers, providing significant cost savings to the residents of Ulster County. The Agency's estimated savings are approximately \$400,000, which is a very conservative estimate based on the previous year's vendor costs.

In order to keep MRDCs informed of their efforts regarding recycling and transportation, each town supervisor received two letters. I previously informed the board about a letter sent regarding recycling contamination. The second letter recently sent to each MRDC explained how to reduce pull requests for cardboard and paper. Excessive pull requests are environmentally and fiscally burdensome to MRDCs and do not align with the goals of the Agency. The letter outlined best practices for each MRDC to reduce both financial impact to the towns and GHG emissions. Angelina Brandt has a copy of the letter sent and can answer any further questions.

Tim has completed fieldwork for the new auditors for the 2023 audit. He is finalizing the report and ACFR for their review. I believe there should be an audit committee meeting with the auditors before they present the final report. Tim will keep you posted as to when that will take place.

Also, as required by the ABO under Public Authorities Law sections 2800(1)(a)(15), 2900(2)(a)(15) and Section 2824(7), each board member is to complete a Board Evaluation questionnaire annually. This is a requirement so please make sure you have completed the form and returned it to Tim. In addition, as a reminder Ulster County Local Law 2 of 2008 requires all board members to complete the ethics form which should be returned to the Ulster County Ethics Board. Please do not return it to the Agency. This is a county requirement.

My apologies for not being there this evening. Since the board meeting date was changed, I was unable to make it due to other personal responsibilities.

I'd like to thank the staff at UCRRA for making me feel welcomed, being so kind and helpful and being so passionate about their work. It was a pleasure to work with everyone. I thank the board for the opportunity, and I wish Marc great success moving forward!"

**Discussion:** (Recording 28:18-34:24)

The board and staff had a brief discussion regarding the ABO Board Evaluation form and the Financial Disclosure form which is sent from the County.

David Gilmour stated in his opinion the letter to the Town Supervisors (mentioned in Anna's update) was well written and thanked Angelina.

Regis stated he spoke to the auditor who had asked him several questions. Regis stated the auditor stated that the Agency's books are the "cleanest books that they have seen in a long time" and Tim provided them with anything they asked for.

Donna Egan asked for an update regarding the landfill study. There was no update to provide.

### **RECYCLING PROGRAM UPDATE (Recording 34:25-44:41)**

Angelina Brandt, Director of Sustainability update included the following points:

- **Tiffin Project**
  - The Agency recently won a grant through the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute-called the "Ulster County Tiffin Project"
  - Awarded \$20,000 to purchase and distribute 1,000 tiffins
  - Tiffins are reusable metal food take out containers
  - There will be an advertising campaign and a series of events to educate the public
  - This will take place in July to celebrate Plastic Free July and will be free
  - Will take place in communities where the Agency has established project partners. Project partners are organizations who wrote a letter of support for the project.
  - Recycling Outreach Team are in the initial contracting phase of this grant
  - There will be press release and blog in March with more information
- **Compost Bin Sale**
  - Opened and will run until May 17<sup>th</sup>
  - Residents can visit the online store and browse various backyard composting bins and must pre-order
  - This program is in partnership with Brand Builders LLC
  - Brand Builders, LLC provide this service as a truckload sale and provide turn-key logistics
  - Residents pre-order and pick-up their supplies at the bin distribution event which is scheduled for Saturday May 19<sup>th</sup> at the Main Office
  - Last year the Agency helped over 120 families to start composting
- **Master Composter-Recycler Program**
  - Launched recruitment for the 2024 Master Composter Recycler Program, which is a volunteer training and certification course
  - Enrolled participants will receive 20 hours of professional development training in the form of ten 2-hour classes throughout the month of June
  - After completing the program, they're asked to give back in the form of 20 hours of volunteering with the Recycling Outreach Team.
  - The deadline to apply is Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup>
  - More details can be viewed online at [ucrra.org/volunteer](https://ucrra.org/volunteer)

**Board asked how many volunteers were there. Angelina stated that there were 8 volunteers last year.**

- **Advertising**
  - Participating in Radio Kingston’s Underwriting program which benefits the Radio Kingston Community Fund
  - Four distinct messages will be read live on the air 100 times, scheduled April – November. The ads will be read in both English and Spanish.
  - The reach of this radio station is essentially the geographic area that is the Kingston City School District
  - Youtube pre-roll campaign ended this month. 15 second video runs 30 days on YouTube as an unskippable ad, targeting Ulster County residents age 20-65 with environmental interests. This campaign will reach over 16,000 impressions on Youtube.
- **Welcomed the newest Partner in Composting: Rondout Valley High School (RVHS)**
  - Recycling Outreach Team worked with RVHS Environmental Club for several months to launch their cafeteria composting initiative
  - Angelina congratulated RVHS
  - Club members have taken extraordinary steps to plan for this program. The Club met with the Recycling Outreach Team several times to learn about composting, conducted waste audits in the cafeteria, trained other students to source separate all their materials, and developed posters.
  - RVHS will bring in their first load of food scraps in the next couple of weeks
  - Working on getting an interview completed for the Community Spotlight Blog
  - Shared a picture with the Board of RVHS’s Environmental Club
- **Misc.**
  - Five educational classes scheduled for next month with various partners in Highland, New Paltz, Olive, Marlborough

There was a discussion regarding how the Recycling Outreach Team reaches schools and on how to view the annual reports Angelina has prepared.

**GENERAL REPORTS (Recording 44:46-1:07:45)**

**Tim noted the following:**

**MSW Tonnage Report**

**MSW/C&D:**

Target Tons	Actual Tonnage in	Difference
11,323	10,288	Actual Tonnage was 1,035 tons short from the targeted tons

Tim explained that there was variance in the first month. He stated that he calculates the target tons from the prior year actuals.

### **SLUDGE:**

Tim noted that sludge was “right on”.

### **Recycling Tonnage Report**

Tim stated recycling is consistent to the prior year (January).

### **MRF Cost Center Analysis (December)**

- The total sale of recyclables was \$58,729; higher than prior 3 years (December)
- Positive for December \$6,243
- Total net loss for the year of \$289,108
- Markets are down

**Discussion:** The Board and staff had a discussion regarding scrap metal, glass, other recyclables like OCC and returnable deposits.

### **Treasurer’s Report (Recording 55:10-1:07:45)**

Tim attached a narrative report to the Treasurer’s Report.

Regis directed the Board to label and review 3 columns on the Treasurer's Report. Regis discussed various line items and columns on the Treasurer's Report. He explained and pointed out various line-item numbers. The Board and Tim discussed capital reserve. The Board asked Tim what a disaster for the Agency would be. Tim responded that a hauler deciding Flow Control doesn’t matter to them and fight it in Court.

The Board and Tim continued to have a discussion regarding the expiring contract with the County, net service fee, debt service payment, and reserve.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (Recording 1:07:48-1:09:00)**

#### **Resolution # 2612 Re: Authorizing the Appointment of the Executive Director and Approving the Executive Director’s Employment Agreement**

David Gilmour made a motion to approve **Resolution #2612 Re: Authorizing the Appointment of the Executive Director and Approving the Executive Director’s Employment Agreement** and it was seconded by James Gordon. 5 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 absent.

### **OLD BUSINESS (Recording 1:09:05-1:20:38)**

- **Discussion regarding an ad hoc committee**

- Regis withdrew his request to have an ad hoc committee.
- **Discussion regarding a general ledger report that Tim provided to the Board**
  - Members from the past Board requested this report
  - Who would want this report
  - Former treasurer requested this report
  - Takes Tim about hour; hour and half to prepare
  - Regis asked Board to think about the report and decide if they would like to continue receiving this report.
  - This matter will be discussed at next meeting
- **Landfill Study Update**
  - No update
- **Mileage Reimbursement**

**Discussion:**

Due to it not being an authorized Agency purchase Tim DeGraff requested authorization to reimburse board members to travel to meetings other than Agency Board meetings. Marc Rider added that the Legislature appointed the representative that they should provide for those expenses. The Board decided that due to the cost being minimal that the Agency should just pay it.

Donna made a motion that reimbursement be allowed for any authorized meeting for Agency appointees, and it was seconded by James Gordon. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

**NEW BUSINESS** (Recording 1:20:39-1:43:43)

Regis thanked Donna for stepping up to reintroduce Zero Waste Committee. He added she ran a good meeting. Donna wanted to note that there was no Zero Waste Committee last year and that is why there were no meetings.

Jim Gordon was appointed to represent the UCRRA on the County Legislature's Reform Committee. Jim provided an update which included:

- He's encouraged that the County understands the dilemma with stop sending solid waste to the landfill and that's how the Agency gets its revenue to make "ends meet"
- A lot of discussion on rethinking solid waste management
- Will cost money to redo the system
- The report will be out in June
- County will have to be involved

Regis added:

- The Reform Committee asked for the haulers' rate of recycling contamination. Charlie advised Regis it was about 25%. David asked for a summary of the haulers' rate of recycling to be provided to the Board.

- Committee wanted to know what happens to glass
- There were questions regarding pharmaceuticals
  - Andrew believes all medical waste is burned
  - Marc Rider added that Dutchess County burns the pharmaceuticals

Donna provided the Board with copies of the minutes from the Reform Committee meeting.

Manna Jo Greene, Ulster County Legislator added to the conversation regarding the Reform Committee. The following points or comments were made:

- Committee organized its work into waste diversion, disposal than intergovernmental affairs
- The Committee is looking at the future of the Agency
  - Expand the Board to include other stakeholders
  - Consideration of the Agency's future
    - What would the contract look like
    - Disbanding the Agency and possibly making it a County Department
- Finishing up the waste diversion discussion and used the Zero Waste Implementation Plan as the table of contents
- Report is due in June and will look back and see if there are consensus
- She stressed her concerns about enforcement
- She believed if there is specific project, like the RIC, which is not in the budget, that the Agency should ask for a net service fee and would be provided it by the County.

Board and staff had a discussion regarding the following:

- **Disclosure of Meetings:**
  - Regis Obijiski updated the Board regarding his attendance as an invited guest to the January 30, 2024 Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee. The following points were made in his update from that meeting:
    - Two memorializing resolutions-one to reappoint Regis to the UCRRA Board and one urging the expeditious establishment of a NYS Stewardship program that includes both packaging and printed material.
    - The committee will continue the conversation regarding reuse
  - David Gilmour stated he had a meeting with Mayor Steve Noble, City of Kingston
- The Board and staff had a discussion regarding disclosure of meetings. Currently, there is no meeting disclosure policy on record. The Board decided to do some research and bring the matter to the Governance Committee at a later date for discussion.

## ADJOURN

James Gordon made a motion to adjourn the February 29, 2024, Regular Board Meeting at 7:51 PM and it was seconded by Andrew Ghiorse. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.



March 28, 2024

Motion to approve the above transcribed Minutes of the February 29, 2024, Regular Board Meeting was made by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_. in favor, 0 opposed, \_\_\_\_\_ absent.

The Minutes were approved by the Board.

Transcribed by: Melinda France, Office Manager.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regis Objiski, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ken Gilligan, Secretary

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