

**ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY
ZERO WASTE COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 28, 2024**

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency held a Zero Waste Committee Meeting on March 28, 2024.

The proceedings were convened at 5:03 PM. The Zero Waste Committee Meeting was held at the Agency's Main Office located 999 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY.

Committee Members present: Chair Donna Egan, Committee Members Regis Obijiski, James Gordon, Andrew Ghiorse, and David Gilmour (arrived at 5:09 PM).

Staff present: Counsel/Secretary Kenneth Gilligan (arrived at 5:42 PM); Director of Finance and Administration Tim DeGraff, Director of Sustainability Angelina Brandt and Office Manager Melinda France. Executive Director Marc Rider was excused.

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; and Peter Humphries.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regis Obijiski made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 29, 2024, Zero Waste Committee Meeting, as written, and it was seconded by James Gordon. 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent (GILMOUR).

COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next ZWCM will be held on April 25, 2024, at 5:00 PM.

OLD BUSINESS

- Discussion of the Zero Waste Implementation Plan (ZWIP)-Board, staff and Laura Petit, Manna Jo Greene and Peter Humphries discussed the ZWIP.

Donna Egan asked Laura Petit, Chair of the Recycling Oversight Committee, and member of the Ulster County Reform Committee to provide a brief summary of the ZWIP. Laura Petit's comments and points made were:

- The Plan was started after the Zero Waste Policy in the County
- She stated everyone understands there is no such thing as zero waste and maybe the plan should have been called 'Near Zero Waste'
- Should be able to get 80-90% or more solid waste pulled out of the waste stream to either
 - Compost
 - Recycle
 - Use as commodities
- Zero Waste Policy led into the plan (ZWIP)

- Reviewed components of the waste stream that covered most of their concerns
 - Mattresses
 - Composting
- The plan was worked on by a working group who have been worked on it for several years
- There is no formal or finalize ZWIP
- The Reuse Innovation Center (RIC) idea came out of the ZWIP
- Extensive study has been done on the RIC
- She feels the document regarding the RIC was written as an RFP for a business and undervalued the town transfer stations
- Not in the favor for items to be pulled out on the tipping floor of the transfer stations
- She believed the material should be source separated prior to dropping off at the Agency
- Waste diversion is a “big one”
- Tipping fees including garage in and out
- Shouldn’t have to pay for garbage going out
- She discussed the Town of New Paltz Transfer Station and Reuse Center, when she was there
 - Savings
 - Scrap Metal
 - Reuse Center items being sold
 - Labor

Andrew Ghiorse asked Laura Petit if she ever contacted the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) for assistance with the Reuse Innovation Center. Laura Petit responded that the IDA were open to include it in their application.

The Board, staff, Laura Petit and Manna Jo Greene had a discussion regarding the ZWIP and RIC. Discussion included the following:

- Cost to finish the plan
- List of remaining items left to be done to complete the plan-a copy of the list was provided to the Committee)
- Some, found ZWIP to be a useful document even though it was not finished
- Value of the reuse centers
- Hub and spoke system of the RIC
- Some board members believed hub and spoke system was a good idea
- Centralize system or a spoke and hub system
- Reform Committee should be making a recommendation
- Would need to look at the infrastructure
- Consistency with the Town Transfer Stations
- Possibly using a non-for-profit for reuse i.e. Habitat for Humanity
 - Work with the town transfer stations as the hub
 - May be possible funding
- Putting out an RFP to see what non-for-profit would be interested operating the RIC
- Peter Humphries added to the conversation on what they do at the Hurley Transfer Station, which is “Bring Something-Take Something”

- Legislator Greene stated she would be concerned. The Agency or the County should own the facility and an RFP should be done for a non-for-profit organization to operate it. She pointed out that some of the non-for-profit organizations don't take everything. They only take items that they believe someone could use, want, or could be moved. Money, they make is used to support their mission. She stated she brought items to various non-profit organizations who wouldn't accept due to not meeting their standards. The RIC would include a repair component. If going to move forward with a spoke and hub/RIC, and she hoped its goal would be maximum waste diversion which she stated should be to support it. She stated it might not be profitable or breakeven but will keep items from going to the landfill.
- Refrigerants including upcoming various events that will collect freon, who collects it (towns, scrap yards), how to handle it and publicity on refrigerants
- Angelina Brandt, Director of Sustainability added to the conversation regarding Habitat for Humanity. She stated at the MRDC's (municipal recycling drop-off centers) operators meeting last August, she invited LeeAnne Albritton from Habitat for Humanity to be a guest speaker. The Habitat for Humanity offered the towns the opportunity to work with each town. LeeAnne Albritton stated that the Habitat for Humanity would deploy a truck to the transfer station to pick-up items on an agreed timeframe (once a month, seasonal, etc.). Angelina stated that the DEC was enthusiastic about the idea. The towns that attended the meeting had mixed enthusiasm. No towns followed up with LeeAnne regarding the opportunity.
- Working with the towns and making it easy for them
- "Patchwork"- each town is different
- Cost avoidance
- An awareness at the County level that the Agency can't change their model of doing business and not have support
- Net service fee
- Using the ZWIP a reference or move forward on finishing the plan
 - Report by the Reform Committee is due in June
 - James Gordon and Regis Obijiski believed decision should wait until after the report comes out
 - Board agreed that the Committee should wait until Marc Rider, Executive Director is present

ADJOURN

James Gordon motioned to adjourn the March 28, 2024, Zero Waste Committee Meeting at 6:02 PM and it was seconded by Regis Obijiski. 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent.

April 25, 2024

Motion to approve the above transcribed Minutes of the March 28, 2024, Zero Waste Committee Meeting was made by _____ and seconded by _____. ___ in favor, ___ opposed, ___ absent.

The minutes were approved by the Board.

Transcribed by: Melinda France, Office Manager.

Signatures:

Donna Egan, Chair

Ken Gilligan, Secretary

DRAFT