

**ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY
ZERO WASTE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

September 10, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Meeting End Time: 7:00 PM

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency held the Zero Waste Committee (ZWC) Meeting at the Agency's Main Office, 999 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY and live streamed on Youtube.com @UCRRA5008.

ROLL CALL

Board Committee Members

Chris Hurlbert, Chair x
Donna Egan remote
Erica Brown x

Community Members

Claudia Joseph x
Manna Jo Greene x
Rebecca Martin Absent
Shabazz Jackson x

Agency Staff

Marc Rider x
Angelina Brandt Excused
Tim Weidemann x
Nancy Lam Remote
Kevin Treutler x

6 out of 9 Present

1 remote

2 absent

Ulster County Legislature:

Chris Hewitt, Chair of Energy, Environment, and Sustainability Committee arrived 5:07

Ulster County Association of Supervisors and Mayors:

Alexandria Wojcik, Mayor of the Village of New Paltz Absent

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Chair led the body to recite the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Claudia Joseph made a motion to approve the Agenda as written. It was Seconded by Erica Brown. A vote was taken to approve the Agenda, as written: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (MARTIN, WOJCIK). (1 remote: EGAN) (1 arrived late at 5:07 HEWITT). The Agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF Minutes

Claudia Joseph made a motion to approve the July 9, 2026 ZWC Meeting Minutes. It was Seconded by Manna Jo Greene. A vote was taken to approve the Minutes as written: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (MARTIN, WOJCIK). (1 remote EGAN) (1 arrived late at 5:07 HEWITT). The July ZWC Meeting Minutes were approved.

Claudia Joseph made a motion to approve the August 20, 2026 ZWC Meeting Minutes. It was Seconded by Erica Brown. A vote was taken to approve the Minutes as written: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (MARTIN, WOJCIK). (1 remote EGAN) (1 arrived late at 5:07 HEWITT). The August ZWC Meeting Minutes were approved.

COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next ZWC Meeting will be held on **October 15, 2026 at 5pm**

PRESENTATION:

Ulster County Zero Waste Guidance Document presentation by Chris Hewitt to help align /integrate initiatives with the upcoming 10-year Local Solid Waste Management Plan (LSWMP). He stated the following highlights:

- The county hired consultants to prepare and develop a zero-waste guidance document – 60 page document- hasn't been shared yet as it still needs to be reviewed for errors/ internal editing – but he will share a summary of the guidance document- essentially the document has information about everything the county has ever passed surrounding waste (including whole inventory of existing policy, but also suggesting future policy).
 - MSW Consulting is targeted to present first draft to Energy and Environment in early October, with the goal of legislature to approve in November
- A public survey was conducted amongst UC, mostly residents (136 respondents)
 - Committee discussion acknowledging that the survey provides useful data to understand the general public sentiment, but not quite sufficient to make any formal policy due to sample size and representativeness
- Top priorities identified from the survey:
 - Organics management (highest).
 - Waste reduction and reuse.
 - Public confusion around policies (e.g., straws, takeout containers).
- The policy guidance document supports advancing plastic reduction laws, including:
 - Ban on plastic straws, stirrers, and clamshells, moving beyond “straws upon request” policies.
 - Exploration of a ban on single-use produce bags, despite potential industry resistance.
 - These efforts build on work from the Beyond Plastics Working Group; Focus areas include:
 - Creating funding for educational materials that get passed along
 - Integrating Department of Health in enforcement of these policies
 - Expanding circular economy outreach and public education, seen as low-cost, high-impact initiatives.
 - Goal: Strengthen public awareness, closing the loop, and promote behavior change through financial drivers.
- The Zero Waste Policy Guidance Doc will feed into the newly developed 10-year Local Solid Waste Management Plan (LSWMP)
 - Committee Discussion on decision to embed initiatives in the LSWMP, rather than create a standalone Zero Waste Implementation Plan is beneficial due to:
 - Durability: Requires approval from the Agency Board then get approval from County Legislature and then DEC, making rescission harder after leadership changes.
 - Feasibility assessment: Consultants will review initiatives recommended by the ZWC for cost, timeline, and implementation readiness before inclusion.
 - Previous Zero Waste Plan lacked actionable details (costs, timelines, funding) or implementation language

- Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultants will include within scope their technical experience/ expertise with solid waste and zero-waste so that they could review these initiatives and make proper assessments (vs previously hired consultant)

OLD (UNFINISHED) BUSINESS

- MRDC Hub-and-Spoke Model Discussion
 - Committee has discussed this model with respect to:
 - Take It Or Leave It TIOLI Sheds;
 - Improve organics capture focusing on larger local institutions' flow of organics via audits (New Paltz as a potential pilot);
 - Expand collected materials to include C&D debris, scrap metal, and textiles.
 - Materials Recovery and Diversion Centers (MRDCs) are currently underutilized by UC residents, capturing only 7–8% of the county's waste. MRDCs are operated by individual towns/municipalities, not coordinated county-wide which is challenging. The Committee attempts to address the issue of how MRDCs could serve the county in a better more efficient and coordinated way
 - Although the Agency has at least 1 yearly meeting to try to get all of the MRDCs together to exchange information communicate with one another, there hasn't been great attendance record
- Discussion regarding: Food Waste Diversion Pilot (in NP) and Baseline Study that can act as a model for other MRDCs was led by Committee Member Shabazz Jackson
 - The study will be structured as a waste audit, not a survey, covering:
 - Total landfill tonnage (e.g., 186 tons in New Paltz).
 - Recycling and composting rates.
 - Materials collected, equipment, and labor costs.
 - Purpose: Measure current diversion levels and project increases under a formal program. Goal: Demonstrate cost-benefit and Return on Investment ROI to incentivize municipal buy-in and guide future investment.
 - The region has over 9,000 tons of underutilized composting capacity, so new infrastructure is not needed—only better utilization.
 - How: Volunteers will lead the effort, minimizing staff burden.
 - A committee member attempted to motion for support to move forward with the NP pilot, however a couple committee members reminded the rest of the ZWC that it does not have authority to make any formal decisions; that the goal of ZWC is to provide recommendations to the Regular Board; Therefore, this was an inappropriate/incorrect/mistaken action taken by some committee members
 - The Committee Chair confirmed the intent of the discussion was to get a sense of whether each committee member was in support of bringing this NP Baseline Study idea as a “**recommendation**” to the Regular UCRRA Board
 - Individual committee members may support certain ideas and advocate to bring it to the Regular UCRRA board for consideration; for example, committee members can collaborate and work on the initiative cards and advocate for certain fleshed out initiatives to be recommended to the Regular UCRRA Board for their consideration
 - A question was raised by a committee member regarding how this NP specific Baseline Study can be integrated into the Hub and Spoke Model for all of the MRDCs- to her they are different things- there was a discussion regarding hauling compost vs curbside pick up
 - a question was asked by another committee member regarding compost diversion solutions for the non 7-8% MRDCs – e.g. the large generators
 - Which leads into another committee member's point that this baseline study is just one initiative that the committee can either agree or not agree to push forward as a recommendation for the

UCRRA Board, but that there are other initiatives/ recommendations that the Committee can and should work on fleshing out as well

- Concerns were raised about having only three meetings left in the year to finalize recommendations ahead of December deadline.
- Initiative Cards Review
 - Committee did not have time to review the 15 initiative cards – didn't get a chance to discuss haulers except as it relates to compost; e.g. there's an issue with not separating recycling and municipal solid waste in the same truck during collection
 - Chair plans to distribute all initiative cards via email ahead of the October 15th meeting for prior review.
 - October meeting will focus on prioritization and drafting policy **recommendations** for the agency board to consider

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn September 10, 2026, Zero Waste Committee Meeting at 7:00 PM was made by Chris Hewitt and seconded by Claudia Joseph. 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent (MARTIN, WOJCIK). (1 remote EGAN). Meeting adjourned.

October 15, 2026

Motion to approve the above transcribed Minutes of September 10, 2026 Zero Waste Committee Meeting was made by _____, seconded by _____. in favor, opposed, absent.

The Minutes were approved by the Board.

Transcribed by: Nancy Lam, Agency Counsel

Signatures:

Chris Hurlbert, Chair