

COUNTY OF ULSTER
P.O. BOX 1800
KINGSTON, NEW YORK 12402

Environmental Committee:

Brian Shapiro, Chairman
Gary Bischoff
Dean J. Fabiano
Richard A. Parete
Laura Petit
Kevin Roberts
Hector Rodriguez



**Environmental Committee
5:00 PM, 8/12/08 - Minutes
Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency
999 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY**

Call to order:

5:05, Brian Shapiro, Chair

Present:

Brian Shapiro, Chairman; Gary Bischoff; Laura Petit; Kevin Roberts; Hector Rodriguez

Guests:

Michael Bemis, UCRRA Executive Director; Timothy DeGraff, CPA, UCRRA Controller; Michelle Leggett, UCRRA Recycling Coordinator/Educator; Kelly Utter, UCRRA Executive Secretary; Charlie Whittaker, UCRRA Material Recovery Facility & Transportation Manager; Michelle Rodden, UCRRA Board Chairman; Don DeBrosky, UCRRA Board Treasurer; Stephen J. Wing, Esq., UCRRA Counsel; Katherine Beinkafner, hydrogeologist and UCRRA Board Member at Large; Steve Noble, UCRRA Board Member at Large; Diana Bryan, Chairperson, Save Ward Stone Committee; Miriam Strouse, Ulster County Department of the Environment, recording secretary

Agenda:

UCRRA 2009 budget review
 Resolution in support of Ward Stone
 Natural Gas Drilling
 Recycling Oversight Committee membership

UCRRA 2009 budget review

Michael Bemis, UCRRA (the Agency) Executive Director, distributed the Agency's 2009 budget documents and reviewed the budget's highlights. Despite the uncertain economic outlook and the rising costs of fuel and tolls, the Agency is financially sound, and is paying down its long term debt on schedule without increasing in fees to the Towns, the City of Kingston, or to commercial/business self-haulers. The Agency anticipates that the current recession will reduce their intake of MSW ("overall budgeted tons"), reducing that income stream. However, recycling markets are predicted to remain strong throughout the year. The Agency transports municipal solid waste (MSW) to three landfills upstate; they have just negotiated a new, less costly, multi-year contract with the largest of these landfills. Direct personnel costs have been reduced by workforce planning, including overtime controls. Personnel costs have also been trimmed by switching the Union's health insurance coverage to a different provider. The Agency has also strengthened its commitment to recycling education and enforcement, and is reassessing its electronic waste (e-waste) recycler to confirm that they are using environmentally sound practices.

Resolution in support of Ward Stone

Brian Shapiro introduced Diana Bryan, Chairperson of the Save Ward Stone Committee, who presented information on the valuable services provided to the people and wildlife of Ulster County and New York State by the New York State DEC Wildlife Pathologist, Ward Stone. She reported that his work at DEC has been "repeatedly thwarted" by reductions in funding and support, including the removal of his secretary. The Committee responded by drafting a resolution request, "Requesting Adequate Funding & Staffing from the NYSDEC for Wildlife Pathologist Ward Stone". A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Gary Bischoff, seconded by Laura Petit, and adopted unanimously, 5-0. *Draft text to follow.*

Natural Gas Drilling:

Miriam Strouse shared a memo and supporting documents from Amanda LaValle about the environmental issues raised by natural gas drilling in the Marcellus shale, which underlies part of the county. After a brief discussion, the Committee took no action, but thanked the Department of the Environment for the update, and requested

that Amanda LaValle continue to inform them on the status and potential impact of gas drilling.

Recycling Oversight Committee membership:

Brian Shapiro presented a letter from Phoenix Rodden, a Kingston High School student who is requesting consideration as an appointee to the one at-large opening on the Recycling Oversight Committee (ROC). The Committee was pleased that she was interested in serving on the ROC. However, after discussion, the committee determined that they needed more information about the appointment process before proceeding with her request. The Committee would prefer a youth representative, and would like to start interviewing candidates for the seat. Brian Shapiro will research the process, and as soon as this process is clear, Ms. Rodden will be the first to be interviewed.

Adjourn:

Brian Shapiro made a motion, seconded by Laura Petit, Hector Rodriguez to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.