

**ULSTER COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY AGENCY
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING**

JUNE 14, 2018

The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency held a Public Hearing on June 14, 2018 at the Ulster County Legislative Chambers, 6th Floor, 244 Fair Street, Kingston, Town of Ulster, NY.

The proceedings were convened at 5:07 pm.

The following Board members were present: Chairman Fred Wadnola, Vice Chairman David Gordon, Treasurer Charles Landi; Member Jack Hayes and Member Brian Devine (arrived at 5:24 PM).

Also present were: Executive Director Timothy Rose; Counsel/Secretary Kenneth Gilligan; Controller Tim DeGraff; Operation Manager Charlie Whittaker; and Administrative Assistant Melinda France. Compliance Officer Tom Briggs and Recycling Coordinator Merlyn Akhtar were excused.

From the Public: There were approximately 21 people present which included 8 speakers. The speakers were Jim Garofalo; JoAnne Myers; Brian Woltman, UC Legislature; Andi Weiss Bartzcak; Mayor Steve Noble; Laura Petit, UC Legislature; Supervisor Jim Quigley and Manna Jo Greene, UC Legislature.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Fred Wadnola, Chairman made a motion to open the Public Hearing regarding **Resolution #2445 re: authorizing and approving the Agency to discontinue servicing single stream recyclables and Resolution #2446 re: authorizing and approving the modification of the 2018 tipping fees and other charges** which was moved by David Gordon and seconded by Jack Hayes. 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 absent (DEVINE).

FIRST SPEAKER WAS JIM GAROFALO. He is a Marlborough resident and a member of Marlborough Transfer Station Committee. He also works for Tim Miller Associates environmental planners out of Cold Spring.

He stated, "The Chinese have thrown down the gauntlet. The Board is proceeding in a fiscally responsible way. We as Americans must rise to the challenge. Rather than complain, come forth with ideas the Board and staff can help turn into reality.

Here is mine. Divide the municipality into 4 districts. Divide the hauling fleet into 4 groups. Will call these trucks the red, white, and blue for colors of our flag and brown for the pole holding it aloft.

District one's week one driver, takes the truck with the red decal and picks up empty red wine bottles and other glass. The District one's week two driver takes the white truck and pick up paper. Week three the blue truck to pick up water bottles, plastics, and cans. Week 4 the brown truck to pick up cardboard.

District two sees the white truck first and so on. Different companies maybe running different color trucks.

Haulers have to clean the single stream recycle trucks. Get new containers to the public. The Public must find a place for the containers, sort the recyclable, and put the right one out each week.

Not hard compared to being shot in the jungles of Vietnam, giving birth, being a Board member and doing the right thing; listening to all of us, getting agreement what colors to use, and dealing with quadruple amounts of each sorted recyclable material.

We must be like Vikings who have lost the wind. It's time to row together. Grow stronger together. I call for people to come up here and tell me a better direction to row if you have one. God Bless America."

SECOND SPEAKER WAS DR. JOANNE MYERS. She is a resident located at 56 Abeel Street, Kingston, NY. She is currently the Chair of Political Science at Marist.

She stated, "In my previous life, I worked both with the NYC Department of Sanitation up to Resource Recovery and Waste Disposal Planning. Garbage is in my blood. It is also in my heritage. My grandfather was a waste paper dealer.

May I propose that both resolutions, especially 2445 is really not ready for prime time. What is the position of the County's Recycling Oversight Committee? Have we heard this yet? If we are going to discontinue single stream, what are you proposing as an alternative? And, like Jim's proposal is sort separate, which is the next way to go. You also need to have the end market. Right, you need to have a way to deal with whether or not, if it glass, or paper. What are you going to do with it? You need to have that type of market. And unfortunately, about 35 years ago we stopped thinking about our need for developing those markets. My question is, what is your proposed alternative to single stream? And another one that is really near and dear to me, as citizens, we have a responsibility. We could source separate. We could also do, that first thing on those recycle triangles, is reduce. Do you have a proposal that you are putting forward to reduce our waste stream? The Bottle Bill back in 1983 actually reduced NYC's waste stream by 15%. And NYC's waste stream at that point was about 22,000 tons of municipal solid waste, that is the garbage you and I make, every single day that had to be disposed of. That is a lot of garbage. 15% is a big deal of that. Where are your proposals to reduce our waste stream? I think that is number one.

If you would like me to talk about the tipping fee. I will do so. Again, the tipping fee we don't have all the information in front of us. What is the proposal? How is it going to affect both the environment and our financial environment with the tipping fee? So I do not see any of that, in any of the documents put forward. So I would like those answers. So, thank you."

THIRD SPEAKER WAS BRIAN WOLTMAN. He is an Ulster County Legislature. He thanked the Board for scheduling this hearing.

He stated, "Good evening. Single stream, overall, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency handling of the single stream recycling has been profitable for the Agency. Only the last five months, since the advents and the impact of National Sword been in effect that has been felt; is that this material shifted. There has been a shift in the market where the RRA's handling of single stream recycling has proven to be a lost. To many people, the proposed shift in UCRRA's policy related to single stream recyclables is too sudden and to serve for the client agencies to make reasonable mid-year adjustments. So I ask, that you please consider postponing your Resolutions 2445 and 2446 until at least January 1st, 2019. And in the intermediate time period to collaborated with your client agencies in developing a long term, workable plan, which will benefit everyone. Particularly, our residents and businesses. Thank you."

FOURTH SPEAKER WAS ANDI WEISS BARTCZAK. She lives at 142 Bruynwick Road, Gardiner, NY.

She stated, “I am speaking for myself not for my town. I liked the proposal of the first speaker. I still separate my recyclables. And then I have to take them out and dump them together. Which hurts. You have the water going on the paper or the liquids going on the paper. So it ruins them; I suspect. So I would like to have to separate again; because I think that it leads to a higher return on our recyclables or at least on the paper recyclables. I think we need to let people know about the financial aspects. Will we make more money? Will we have clean paper and coated cardboard? And we need education, to let people know why they need to separate. The financial. The moral. Because we need to think about why we need to not dump everything for our children, grandchildren and environmental of course; what happens. And we need to reduce as someone has said. Let people know that the best way is to reduce the amount of recyclables as well as garbage. And I think businesses need to know this. They are. I read about a lot of businesses and residents who are doing that. And let the residents know that this is what we want to have done. And also, I don’t know if the County is also looking around for how to reduce its garbage and recyclables. But get people thinking about this, is it over packaged, the cap on the bottle, is that recyclable, those little plastic bits that you pull apart to get a part in there, can that be recycled. So, we really need to be thinking about minimizing what we have to futz around. And also looking at the markets as somebody pointed out. We should be, are you using paper made from previously used paper and so forth. So that we help make the market. And the County and businesses are the ones that can do that. So, I am in favor, as soon as possible, get those 4 trucks going. And let’s go back to separating. And if people are a little bit lazy about doing it, well let’s encourage them and help them to do their civic duty which is to separate recyclables to maximize the money that we can get back from these recyclables. Thank you.”

FIFTH SPEAKER WAS MAYOR STEVE NOBLE. He thanked the Board for scheduling the Public Hearing and Informational meeting. He thought the Informational Session was interesting to hear the Agency’s and Board’s perspectives on the SSR matter.

He stated he is representing the City of Kingston as well as being a resident of the City of Kingston.

He stated, “I could come before you this evening to talk about how the City of Kingston began its single stream operation. I could talk to you about how the Resource Recovery Agency blessed the City of Kingston’s transition to single stream recycling. I could talk to you this evening about how much money the City has spent with both local funds and state grant dollars purchasing recycling bins for the City of Kingston residents.

I could also talk to you at length about the amount of money spent on mechanizing our equipment to be able to have the single stream recycling trucks that we purchased with stat dollars. I could also speak to you this evening about how our recycling rates have almost doubled in the City of Kingston since we implemented this new recycling program. But in five minutes, I can’t do that. I also believe that I can’t do that in the month in a half that we’ve had able to do this. (The Board offered the Mayor more time but he declined he stated he was “making a point”). I think that one of the issues that we all see about this issue is that it’s complicated.

This is viewed as something that, as you all have indicated, has been happening because of China. But I would say that the issue of recycling has been happening around our country and around New York for

decades, trying to get people to recycle. And it has not been easy. And it's been something that we've all struggled with.

Whether we're single stream or dual stream, people still don't know how to recycle correctly. People still put plastic bags in dual stream recycling just like they do in single stream recycling. They still don't know where to put shredded paper. And whether it can be recycled or it can't be recycled. And I think the same issue is here. This is an important decision. What do we charge? How do we manage it? Is it dual stream? Is it single stream?

The Agency is shifting course and deciding, again, that dual stream is the only way that Ulster County should operate. Then that should be a public discussion, and it should involve the county legislature. It should involve the recycling oversight committee. It should involve a whole lot more meetings like this, and it should involve the stakeholders that will be directly implemented and impacted by these decisions. That should include the large haulers like Waste Management and County Waste. And it should involve the residents of the City of Kingston that don't speak English.

It should involve all of our residents. And the Agency needs to step-up and engage with our communities and really decide how we can build a better, more sustainable and also more resilient recycling industry here in Ulster County. And there is no way that that can happen before December 31, 2018 before the proposed switch that you're asking us to do.

I also think that we need to be able to spend that time working together to decide once and for all how we do this. As many of you know, it's taking the City of Kingston four years to completely implement single stream recycling in just the residential neighborhoods. On Tuesdays, we still have dual stream recycling, for the most part, on our business commercial runs here in the City. And so we still haven't gone fully single stream.

And so I do think that it's important that this decision not being made in haste. I think that the board, no offense, has created a crisis, and made this seem like a crisis, making it seem that our agency is stockpiling single stream recycling. Making it seem that we have no place to put it. Making it seem that there is an emergency happening here in Ulster County, and it's just not true.

And yes, we all recognize that the market is changing, and that we have a huge issue that we all have to tackle together. But again, I don't believe it needs to be done in six months. I don't believe it needs to be done like this. And I think that I encourage all of you to consider that when you're deciding on how New York is voting on these next two resolutions. And so with that said, I just want to say thank you for letting me speak this evening."

SIXTH SPEAKER WAS SUPERVISOR JIM QUIGLEY. He is the President of the Ulster County Supervisors Association and Supervisor of the Town of Ulster.

He said, "I listened to the comments here and did not intend to speak when I first came in to the room but I do want to acknowledge there is a proposal for an alternative collection system. There exists in the Towns and could exist in the City because they have a transfer station also. An alternative means of collections of recyclable materials if the consumer chooses to separate and I stress chooses because the other speakers have stressed this is a matter that starts at the source and requires a commitment of the individuals participating in the system to make it work. The Towns at the present time maintain transfer stations and effective August 1st, I believe every single town that has a transfer station will be offering

separated collections of recyclable materials. I would offer, that the citizens of Ulster County have the opportunities if they live in the towns to go to their transfer stations to deposit the materials in the proper bins, proper manner and yes, it requires a commitment on the part of the individuals. Other than that, if they want the convenience, as so many of our individuals in this world today want, they should be able to afford to pay for. With that being said, I look at the two resolutions being offered today, I listened to Mayor Noble and I also listened to the arguments that were made from last week's Environmental Commission meeting. And I make the following proposal, that the RRA suspend consideration of the suspension of accepting single-stream, recycled materials. But price it according to the market and go forward under the auspices as Mayor Noble has laid out for a full discussion of recycling. I understand that it's unfair to the RRA to ask them to accept the financial burden of a few people who choose not to recycle and those that can't recycle. And push it back on all the taxpayers and all the users in Ulster County. With that being said, a market price fee for the disposal of single stream for those municipalities or trash haulers who choose to continue to offer single stream. That is an appropriate market base decision and opportunity. And as to those citizens who wish to separate and make the commitment, I would be the first to discuss with the supervisors because I know it is true in the Town of Ulster. You do not need a permit to dispose of recyclables, you do not pay a fee for disposal of recyclables. I am pretty certain that is the standard policy amongst all the transfer stations throughout the County. There exists an alternative means of collection but it requires a commitment."

SEVENTH SPEAKER WAS LAURA PETIT. She is an Ulster County Legislative.

She said, "Like Supervisor Quigley, I wasn't going to speak. There has been some very good points brought out. First of all, we never should have gone to single stream. I think that was our first mistake. We were trying to help the haulers. We thought it would bring in more recycling. It did bring in more; however it is not recycling. My background, at least the last 30 years, has been in garbage. There has been interesting trends. And, yes, everybody wants to make it much simpler and easier. So, they thought single stream would be the way to go. So, a couple of good points that have come up; first of all our municipality in New Paltz does charge. You do need a permit to come in. I spoke to another supervisor yesterday, the trend that we are seeing, is much more recycling is trying to bring to the recycling centers. This particular township had 3 pulls a week, I believe they told me, of cardboard. We've actually put restrictions on what we are allowing people to bring in and that is up to one yard of cardboard. We are having trucks come in. We've had a box truck come in that had 12 yards. We've had people come in with mixed commingled. A two yard pickup truck with four yard trailer. We can't handle that as a township. So, I think that the potential is there to bringing clean recycling. And that is going to be marketing and other locations for residents or businesses, the smaller ones, to drop off their material. I think that will significantly help your MRF and bringing in the revenues. I also agreed with Supervisor Quigley about giving people the option. Pass along the single stream cost. It should be your market cost for disposal plus a user fee. You know, if it is \$70 and you have to charge a \$15 user fee well than that is the cost for not be willing to separate your recycling. But then the towns are open even though we do have a maximum that they can bring in at one time. They are open to take in that dual stream and bring in that nicer product. So, I do think you have some options here. However, one other concern is the significant investment that has been made by organizations and municipalities to take single stream. And that is why, I am asking that you do take a more in depth look at other possibilities before you totally cutoff the single stream in the MRF. For instance, the SUNY New Paltz campus just invested \$53,000 into new, single-stream collection equipment. In addition to the City of Kingston becoming single stream. So, you have options there. I just don't think six months is long enough. Let this new trend start to happen. I think people are becoming more involved. And let's give them other

options to bring in this nice clean material before we just start saying ok, single stream that's it. I don't know where it is going to end up. I honestly think more of it will end up in the garbage. Thank you again for letting me speak".

EIGHTH SPEAKER WAS MANNA JO GREENE. She is an Ulster County Legislative.

She stated, "My recommendation is that we reactive the Solid Waste Management Improvement Committee or the Recycling Oversight Committee or something similar that meets on a regular basis. It can't be just you have this public hearing and take an action. Although, the Agency has a lot of reasonability for this decision; it is going to effect the whole county. I don't think the circumstances that we are seeing are going to change anytime soon. I would have and I believe I probably actively did advise against single stream. There is a big difference between, to having to sort three colors of glass and several kinds of paper. And to a paper stream and a commingled stream. And I think there is a big difference in its marketability. But how to get from where we are now; to where we need to be into the future. Also, I think it is really important to take into consideration especially the large generators of food waste composting. We have some facilities and we barely scratched the surface in terms of what is the potential of food waste diversion is. So I think there is a lot of work to be done. I see the Board as being responsible for running the Agency in the most appropriate and most efficient way possible. But I think that the planning process needs to include all the stakeholders that are going to be impacted. So, I don't know whether re-activating the Recycling Oversight Committee within the past really focused on adding new materials. Now, we've done so well with recycling; we are diverting so much of the recyclable waste stream, that we've essentially exhausted the markets. We've certainly exhausted the domestic markets. I think that is another thing that I've mentioned this before but I will reiterate it until it happens; and that we give out ideas for a whole a lot reasons. I don't see us developing an idea or some real incentive for processing capability here in Ulster County or here in New York. So we are not depended on decisions from foreign markets. Those are my comments; and I would be willing to put the time in; whatever dated expertise I have, towards facilitating a process that would really work for everyone. Thank you."

Motion to close the public hearing for comment was made by Charles Landi and seconded by Jack Hayes. 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

MOTION to ADJOURN the June 14, 2018 Public Hearing at 5:40 pm was made by Jack Hayes and seconded by David Gordon.

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

AFTER THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED THE BOARD SAID ANYONE CAN SUBMIT A WRITTEN COMMENT UP TILL JUNE 24, 2018.

The above transcribed Minutes of the June 14, 2018 Public Hearing were moved by Charles Landi and seconded by Brian Devine. 5 in favor. 0 opposed. 0 absent. The Minutes were APPROVED by the Board.

Date: June 27, 2018