

DRAFT

AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

June 16, 2025

Board Members Present: Chairman Kenneth Long, Vice Chairman Vincent Bono, Treasurer Richard Redmond, Steven Boucher, Robert Comis, James D’Onofrio, James Franco, Barbara Freeman, Nancy Novak (via Zoom), and James Williams

Authority Staff Present: Joshua Olbrys, Jodi Tuttle, Hailey Hutchinson, Pat Lisandrelli, Emily Albright, Joseph Artessa, and Andrew Opperman

Others Present: Authority Counsel Kevin Martin

Chairman Kenneth Long called the June 16, 2025, Authority Board meeting to order at 4:30 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Freeman, and passed to approve the May 12, 2025, Authority Minutes. [10 Ayes; 0 Nays]

There were no speakers or comments received for the public comment period.

Authority Comptroller Joseph Artessa presented the Agreed-Upon Procedures Report for the City of Utica Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Agreement. This report was prepared by BST & Co. for the periods of April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025, and April 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024. Mr. Artessa explained that the purpose of this report is to ensure accurate recording/reporting of revenues and expenditures associated with City of Utica Waste Disposal, and to ensure all agreed upon procedures are being performed accurately. All procedures agreed upon were found to be completed without exception. Mr. Artessa briefly reviewed the Revenue and Expense Summary from the Agreed-Upon Procedures Report. The Authority experienced an increase in revenues related to City of Utica Waste Disposal between March 31, 2024, and March 31, 2025. This is due in part to an increase in the City of Utica Solid Waste service charge, re-levied solid waste service charge penalties and late fees, increased sales of City of Utica blue bags, and increased interest earnings. The Authority also experienced a decrease in City of Utica waste disposal expenses. Mr. Artessa said the decrease in expenses can be attributed to a decrease in waste tipping, decreased fuel costs, and decreased costs associated with the production of the City of Utica blue bags.

Resolution No. 17 was introduced by Mr. Bono, seconded by Mr. Comis, and passed to approve the Investment Policy Guidelines with no modifications. [10 Ayes; 0 Nays]

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Robert Comis
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Joshua J. Olbrys
Executive Director

Jodi M. Tuttle
Authority Board Secretary

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Resolution No. 18 was introduced by Mr. Comis, seconded by Mr. Franco, and passed to approve the City of Rome's application for Reduced Tip Fees for Disposal of Disaster Debris caused by the tornado that occurred on July 16, 2024. [10 Ayes; 0 Nays] For purposes of transparency, Mr. Comis noted that in the past he was employed by the City of Rome, including serving as Commissioner of Public Works, and, therefore, has had past relationships with the Authority. Chairman Long acknowledged that there is no conflict of interest.

Resolution No. 19 was introduced by Mr. D'Onofrio, seconded by Mr. Comis, and passed to approve the Town of Camden's application for Reduced Tip Fees for Disposal of Disaster Debris caused by the winter storms that occurred in February 2025. [10 Ayes; 0 Nays]

Resolution No. 20 was introduced by Ms. Freeman, seconded by Mr. Boucher, and passed to approve the Town of Trenton's application for Reduced Tip Fees for Disposal of Disaster Debris caused by the winter storms that occurred in February 2025. [10 Ayes; 0 Nays]

Mr. Comis suggested that the Board consider a future resolution allowing approval of applications for the Reduced Tip Fees for Disposal of Disaster Debris be to the Executive Director's discretion, up to a particular tonnage. Executive Director Joshua Olbrys said he would discuss the matter further with Authority Counsel Kevin Martin.

In the absence of Recycling Coordinator Eileen Brinck, Mr. Olbrys presented the Authority's "Binny Mini" contest results. Contestants in Kindergarten through grade 12 were invited to create a short video, no more than one minute, on the importance of caring for the Earth. Winners received an Amazon gift card, and a visit to their class from Binny. A total of 26 students submitted videos. The first-place winners were the Kindness Crew from Herkimer Elementary, Proctor Middle School (Utica), and Camden Highschool. Ms. Freeman commented on how vast the Authority's website is and noted that every video that has ever been submitted by students can be viewed. Ms. Freeman said that the videos are thoughtful, creative, and well done.

Mr. Olbrys said that the Authority is partnering with newly upgraded Donovan Stadium at Murnane Field to provide new Authority garbage and recycling bins. The cost will be split equally between the Stadium and the Authority. Mr. Olbrys stated that partnering with companies/industries to provide garbage and recycling bins with the Authority logo is excellent marketing for the Authority.

Mr. Olbrys also announced some upcoming marketing events that the Authority will be participating in this summer, including Touch-a-Truck, the Boilermaker, and Connected Community Schools.

Executive Director Joshua Olbrys gave an update on construction at the Regional Landfill. The Authority is currently in the middle of a two-year contract with Mohawk Valley Materials for the construction of the Landfill's eighth cell. This cell will span over 67.5 acres (over half of the permitted footprint) and should last approximately three to four years. 80% of the stone needed for the drainage layer of the cell has been delivered and is on site. 75% of the clay needed for the cell's clay layer has been screened. The next step will be to finish the ground water suppression, and place and compact the clay layer.

Mr. Bono asked if the Authority had ever thought of encouraging residents to utilize trash compactors to potentially save on pick-up/disposal expenses, as well as conserve landfill space. Discussion ensued.

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Mr. Olbrys said that it had been an inquiry in the past but ultimately would not save enough money or conserve enough space to be worth the associated costs.

Mr. Olbrys also stated that drilling will begin this week for the Regional Landfill gas expansion project. This project will consist of 11 new 60 to 100-foot wells, with 850 feet of vertical pipes being installed. Installation of the collection line will begin the week of June 23rd. This project will allow for improved/more efficient gas collection.

Before adjourning the meeting, Richard Bristol of Bristol's Roll-Off Services asked to address the Board. Mr. Bristol expressed his frustration with the increase in attempted disposal of waste from outside of Oneida and Herkimer Counties at Authority facilities. Mr. Olbrys stated that the Authority has hired an additional part-time employee to increase surveillance, in addition to increasing permits and tracking documents that are used as enforcement to monitor larger haulers. By making these changes, the Authority has caught and turned away at least ten people from outside of Oneida and Herkimer Counties within the past week. Mr. Bristol also wanted to voice a complaint regarding an Authority employee. Chairman Long explained that personnel matters such as this could not be discussed during an open meeting and suggested that Mr. Bristol write a letter voicing his concerns to Mr. Olbrys, who could then confidentially share with the Board.

At 5:12 PM, with no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Bono, seconded by Mr. D'Onofrio, and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi M. Tuttle
Authority Secretary