

**AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 20, 2023**

**APPROVED**

**Board Members Present:** Chairman Ken Long, Neil Angell, Steven Boucher, James Franco, Barbara Freeman, Nancy Novak (Zoom), Richard Redmond and Jim Williams

**Board Members Absent:** Vice Chairman Vincent Bono and James D'Onofrio

**Authority Staff Present:** William Rabbia, Jodi Tuttle, Joshua Olbrys, Emily Albright, Joseph Artessa, Eileen Brinck, Justin Fitch, Pat Lisandrelli and Andrew Opperman

**Others Present:** Kevin Martin, Authority Counsel

Chairman Long called the November 20, 2023, Authority Board meeting to order at 4:31 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Ms. Freeman, seconded by Mr. Franco and passed to approve the September 18, 2023, Authority Minutes

At 4:31 PM Chairman Long called the public hearing on the proposed 2024 Authority budget to order.

Executive Director Bill Rabbia, Deputy Executive Director Joshua Olbrys, and Comptroller Joe Artessa presented an overview of the proposed 2024 budget through a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Rabbia reported that Authority staff began working on the proposed budget in early August and a draft budget was provided to the Finance Committee for review. Following input from the Finance Committee, the 2024 draft budget was released to the public prior to the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Mr. Rabbia said that the Authority will maintain tipping fees for municipal solid waste (MSW) and sludge at \$60 per ton, construction and demolition debris (C&D) at \$58 per ton, local solid waste at \$50 per ton and source separated organics (SSO) [food waste] at \$40 per ton. All other rates will also remain the same. In 2024, the Authority will continue to offer two reduced tip fee programs to assist Oneida-Herkimer Counties and its municipalities. The first program provides reduced tip fees for disposal of debris following a disaster, such as a flood (\$42.00 per ton). The second program provides for reduced tipping fees to assist Industrial Development Agencies and Developers related to Brownfield clean-up and Industrial Development Projects (\$42.00 per ton). Mr. Rabbia noted that the largest portion of the Authority's revenue comes from solid waste tipping fees. Total projected tonnage for all waste classes in 2024 is projected to be 299,600, compared to 293,600 budgeted for 2023. Graphs illustrating historical MSW tipping fees for the period 1990 - 2024 (proposed) and historical MSW tipping fees versus the rate of inflation for the period 1990 - 2024 were reviewed. A chart outlining neighboring County tip fees was also reviewed. Mr. Rabbia commented that many of the neighboring planning units do not have the same services and/or facilities supported through the Authority's integrated system, and some charge a fee for recyclables. For the 33<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, recyclables will continue to be accepted at no charge. Total projected system revenues for 2024 total \$22,700,000, compared to the 2023 budgeted amount of \$22,360,000. Mr. Rabbia stated that 2024 tip fees remain stable, noting that the Authority has reduced tipping fees 6 times since 2012.

**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

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*Chairman*

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*Vice Chairman*

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Steven R. Boucher  
James M. D'Onofrio  
James A. Franco

Barbara Freeman  
Nancy A. Novak  
James M. Williams

William A. Rabbia  
*Executive Director*  
Jodi M. Tuttle  
*Authority Board Secretary*

**GET SOCIAL WITH  
THE AUTHORITY:**



## **AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES**

**November 20, 2023**

Page 2

Deputy Executive Director Joshua Olbrys reported that the 2024 proposed landfill reserves total \$2,400,000 [\$800,000 landfill equipment replacement and \$1,600,000 landfill liner extension]. The 2024 proposed capital plan totals \$7,041,000 with projections through 2028 and includes system-wide heavy equipment and vehicles, and landfill cell closures and expenditures for landfill gas system expansion that will be funded through an established reserve.

Comptroller Joseph Artessa reviewed 2024 proposed revenues by category, 2024 expenses by departments, and 2024 expenses minus capital by category. Mr. Artessa reported that the Authority is reaching the end of its debt service on the 2006 bonds and that the Authority will have no debt after 2026.

Mr. Rabbia said that the 2024 proposed budget totals \$22,700,00 in system revenues/expenses and \$6,600,000 in municipal revenues/expenses. He then reviewed the proposed 2024 budget for the six municipalities in which the Authority administers the respective municipal programs. The proposed 2024 Authority Budget totals \$29,300,000. Mr. Rabbia will have a resolution for the Board to approve the 2024 proposed budget at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Authority.

Chairman Long stated that Authority Secretary Jodi Tuttle confirmed that there were no public comments received on the proposed 2024 budget.

At 5:07 PM Chairman Long closed the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting of the Authority.

There were no comments submitted for the regular public comment period.

Mr. Rabbia reported that the Authority and the United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) have negotiated a new five-year (2024-2028) collective bargaining agreement. The new agreement includes a 3.5% wage increase for 2024; 3.4% increase for 2025, 2026 and 2027; and a 3.5% increase for 2028. New items in the agreement include reimbursement of CDL fees for applicable employees; an annual stipend for vehicle mechanics who have additional certifications; and a one-time COVID pandemic duty payment (under a side agreement).

Resolution No. 20 was introduced by Mr. Angell, seconded by Mr. Redmond, and passed [8 Ayes; 0 Nays; Absent: Messrs. Bono and D'Onofrio] approving a new five-year collective bargaining agreement between the Authority and UPSEU.

Chairman Long announced that Executive Director William Rabbia will be retiring at the end of the year and through transition planning and preparation for this promotion, Deputy Executive Joshua Olbrys is well qualified to take over the responsibilities of the Executive Director position.

Resolution No. 21 was introduced by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Redmond, and unanimously passed [8 Ayes; 0 Nays; Absent: Messrs. Bono and D'Onofrio], appointing Joshua Olbrys to the position of Executive Director, effective January 1, 2024; and further authorizes the Chairman to sign an employment agreement with Mr. Olbrys. Board members congratulated Mr. Rabbia and Mr. Olbrys.

Mr. Olbrys said that Resolution No. 22 would award a contract for Cell 8 liner system construction at the Regional Landfill. Mr. Olbrys said that this cell is approximately 9.4 acres. New York State regulations and the permit require that the landfill have at least one additional landfill cell available for use at all times. Mr. Olbrys said that sealed bids for Cell 8 were solicited, a pre-bid meeting was held with prospective bidders and on November 10<sup>th</sup> bids due and received by 7 companies. The bids were canvassed and evaluated for compliance with specifications, contractors' qualifications confirmed, and referenced projects checked. Barton & Loguidice and Authority staff recommend that the bid be awarded to the qualified low bidder, Mohawk Valley Materials (Rome, NY) in the amount of \$7,075,171.91. Discussion ensued.

## AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

November 20, 2023

Page 3

Resolution No. 22 was introduced by Ms. Freeman, seconded by Mr. Franco, and passed [8 Ayes; 0 Nays; Absent: Messrs. Bono and D'Onofrio], awarding a contract in the amount of \$7,075,171.91 to Mohawk Valley Materials for Cell 8 liner construction.

Recycling Coordinator Eileen Brinck provided a recycling education update on the Authority's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Green Halloween Costume Contest and the Trash Can Film Festival. There were 17 entries for the costume contest. Participants were required to come up with creative ways to recycle/reuse items in creating their costumes. First and second place winners received Amazon gift cards and the third-place winner received a swag bag. Ms. Brinck said that the Trash Can Film Festival was created to give students in Oneida and Herkimer Counties a creative way to explain how important recycling is. The winners were announced on the Authority's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages and their videos are available for viewing at [www.trashcanfilmfestival.com](http://www.trashcanfilmfestival.com). The winners have been given the choice of having a red-carpet event either at their school, or at the Authority's Recycling Center, where they would walk the red carpet and play their video. In addition, winners will be awarded an Amazon gift card. Ms. Brinck reported that she has been contacted by 16 school districts, including the NYS School for the Deaf, BOCES and Hamilton College, for recycling assistance/programs. She made 13 deliveries of recycling boxes and posters, 10 visits for presentations, assemblies, and Green Team meetings; gave 10 Recycling Center tours; and received 5 requests for information in helping set up Green Teams. In addition, she presented at 4H Conservation Days and Project Fibonacci Career Fair.

Mr. Olbrys updated the Board on the Regional Landfill Phase 2 Closure project. Mr. Olbrys said that Powis Excavating & Contracting was awarded the project. Due to equipment, manpower and weather issues, the project has moved slower than anticipated. Delays aside, Mr. Olbrys said that he is pleased with Powis' quality of work. The overall project is approximately 8 acres. An area of about 3.5 acres is completed, covered, sealed and fully operational. The spring schedule will be re-evaluated over the winter. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Olbrys reported that on June 7<sup>th</sup> NYSDEC had a stakeholder meeting after finalizing some of the solid waste regulations and they are now focusing on landfill leachate emergent contaminants. Mr. Olbrys said that DEC is looking for landfills to try to contain some of the chemicals in the waste. He said that their original proposal was for all landfills to take the leachate, solidify it and put it back in the landfill. There was vigorous public comment from the Authority, NYSASWM, NYSAC, and other landfills. Some of the biggest obstacles included volume issues, odor issues, and the fact that the removal of leachate wouldn't solve the problem as sewage treatment plants also receive chemicals in their waste. Mr. Olbrys attended another stakeholder meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>, with 25 other attendees (5 from DEC; Steve Acquario from NYSAC, 4 from municipal landfills; and the remaining from large private landfills). DEC has now revised some of its comments that would give more leeway with onsite treatment of leachate, removing contaminants, solidifying the leachate, and putting it back in the landfill. Mr. Olbrys said that this would be a huge financial burden on landfills and communities. He said that landfills would still have to partner with sewage treatment plants. Mr. Olbrys noted that DEC could not provide acceptable levels of contaminants or what constituents would be required to be treated. DEC could not provide guidance on the design or running of facilities. DEC would like draft legislation by the end of this year. Discussion ensued. Mr. Olbrys will continue to keep the Board informed as new developments unfold.

At 5:38 with no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Williams seconded by Mr. Franco and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Jodi M. Tuttle  
Authority Secretary