

**RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Friday, May 1, 2015  
Rhode Island Department of Administration  
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

**1. Members Present**

Mr. Bob Azar, Chair	City of Providence
Mr. John Chambers	Fuss & O'Neill, Incorporated
Mr. Michael DeLuca, Vice Chair	Town of Narragansett
Ms. Ashley Hahn	Exeter Town Planner
Mr. Thomas Kogut	RI Public Utilities Commission
Mr. Arnold Robinson	Community Partnerships Center - Roger Williams University
Ms. Jennifer Siciliano	City of Woonsocket
Mr. Jeff Willis	RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Mr. Ronald Wolanski	Town of Middletown

**2. Members Absent**

Mr. Steve Devine	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Nicole LaFontaine	Town of North Kingstown
Ms. Eliza Lawson	Rhode Island Initiative for a Healthy Weight - DOH
Ms. Nancy Letendre	Mason & Associates, Incorporated
Mr. Scott Millar	Department of Environmental Management
Mr. Michael Walker	Rhode Island Commerce Corporation

**3. Staff Present**

Ms. Kimberly Crabill	Statewide Planning
Mr. Kevin Flynn	Division of Planning
Ms. Nancy Hess	Statewide Planning
Ms. Karen Scott	Statewide Planning

**3. Guests Present**

Mr. Mike O'Connell	RI Resource Recovery Corporation
Mr. Mike McGonagle	RI Resource Recovery Corporation

**II. AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Azar called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and introduced the following new committee and staff members: John Chambers, Sr. Vice for President Community Development at Fuss & O'Neill Engineers in Providence; Arnold Robinson, Director Community Partnership Center at Roger Williams University in Bristol; and Kimberly Crabill, Executive Assistant, Statewide Planning.

**2. Approval of November 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes – for action**

Mr. Azar asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 13, 2014. Mr. Willis moved to approve and the motion was seconded by Mr. Wolanski. There was no further discussion. The following members voted aye Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Hahn, Kogut, Robinson, Siciliano, Willis and Wolanski. There were no nay votes, abstentions or recusals.

**3. Public Comment on Agenda Items– for discussion**

There were none.

**4. Rhode Island Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan Update – for action**

Ms. Hess, Supervising Land Use Planner gave a brief overview of the project, explained the reason for the guide plan element, provided a summary of the public hearings that were held in December, explained how the public comments were addressed, and overviewed what action was being sought from the committee as documented in the meeting materials.

Next, Mr. Mike O’Connell from the RI Resource Recover Corporation (RIRRC) delivered a powerpoint presentation (see attached) summarizing the three primary issues at hand and the associated plan recommendations. Issues where the committee engaged in discussion were as follows:

Mr. Deluca asked that RIRRC detail the pricing mechanism and how that would work and what level of oversight Resource Recovery would have. Mr. McGonagle responded that the biggest thing to understand is that if a city or town has its own pay as you throw (PAYT) program then that town will pay the \$65/ton to dispose of the waste. If a city or town participates in the state PAYT program, then residents simply pay the bag fee which covers the disposal cost. Mr. O’Connell added that Middletown is RIRRC’s number one town for recycling. The cost of their local PAYT bag is around \$2.50 for a large bag. The town collects the \$2.50 and then when they bring the trash in they pay the associated Fee.

Mr. Deluca commented that it sounded like the numbers work out best to be involved in the state program. Mr. O’Connell responded that this may be true for the small towns that don’t want to get involved in setting up the program, but for big towns, it might be the opposite.

Mr. Willis asked, if a 100 % tipping fee increase would provide sufficient incentive to municipalities?

Mr. O’Connell responded that he thought it would and gave an example.

Mr. Flynn commented that one of the important premises that everyone needs to understand is that the landfill is a municipal resource and that it is the commercial volumes that have been keeping the residential rates low. In order to extend the life of the landfill, there is a premise here that we have to set up our pricing so that the commercial waste is not attracted to the landfill any more. When we do that we then have a problem with the finances because the current municipal rate does not cover the costs. So if you have as a base notion that if you want to extend the life of the landfill you have to reduce commercial waste. Then we have to find a way of picking up the tab. This plan seeks to address the dilemma.

Mr. O’Connell further commented that the state needs some balance, some small businesses don’t want to be trucking their waste out of state, they would like to be able to use an asset that we have here. We just don’t want this valuable capacity to be squandered by bringing in everything we can in order to keep municipal rates low.

Mr. Azar asked Mr. O'Connell whether the general assembly overrides the Resource Recovery ability to set the tip fee every year? Mr. O'Connell responded that essentially they have except for the past year.

Mr. Azar next asked whether RIRRC was a public utility? Mr. O'Connell responded, that they were not and that they are simply a public corporation that is considered an entity of state government.

Mr. Chambers commented that the most important thing we are trying to do is to change the culture on reducing waste, which really is the way we are going to increase the value of the asset to the state. This is a really hard thing to do but there is an evolution where there are costs right now for creating waste that people who create it are not bearing. We have seen that change with environmental regulations over the years; it should be a cost of doing business. Aligning the behavioral change you need with the costs is the single biggest thing you can do to help the state increase the value of this asset.

Mr. DeLuca asked how RIRRC would bridge the gap from what towns currently have in place to what was being proposed and whether RIRRC would be providing assistance to the local communities? Mr. O'Connell responded that RIRRC is prepared to help municipalities that come to them and say, "we are on board where do we go from here, help us." RIRRC has resources to help.

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to recommend approval of the plan to the State Planning Council. Committee member Willis motioned to approve and committee member Wolanski seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the following members voted aye Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Hahn, Kogut, Robinson, Siciliano, Willis and Wolanski all voted to approve. There were no nay votes, abstentions or recusals.

#### **5. FY 2016 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program – for discussion**

Ms. Scott presented the draft Unified Transportation Planning Work Program as distributed with the committee materials. Instances where the committee engaged in discussion were as follows:

Mr. DeLuca asked Ms. Scott if she knew when there would be a solicitation for the FY 17 Transportation Improvement Program? Ms. Scott responded that Statewide Planning was still working with the new leadership at DOT to determine their desired timeline.

Mr. Azar asked whether the associated funding for the program was reliant on reauthorization of Map 21? Ms. Scott responded that it was.

There being no further discussion or requested action, the Chairman moved to the next agenda item.

#### **6. Associate Director's Report - for discussion**

Mr. Kevin Flynn addressed the following items under the Associate Director's report:

- Legislative updates/House Oversight Committee presentation
- Status of draft Energy Plan update
- State Property Committee Chairmanship

#### **7. Other Business – for discussion**

Mr. Azar asked how state offices were providing opportunities for recycling. Mr. Flynn responded by noting that DOA, for one, provides recycling bins for paper products at every work station and collection bins for cans and plastics are in each break room.

8. **Adjourn**

Chairman Azar called for a motion to adjourn. Committee member DeLuca motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Committee member Robinson. There was no further discussion. The following members voted aye Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Hahn, Kogut, Robinson, Siciliano, Willis and Wolanski. There were no nay votes, abstentions or recusals. The meeting adjourned at 10:17 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jared L. Rhodes, II  
Secretary