Environmental Health Task Force
Monday, April 6, 2026 - 11:00 am

Joe Pete Wilson - Chairman

Chairman Wilson called this task force to order at 11:23 am with the following in attendance: Matt Brassard, Ken Hughes, Mary Lamphear, Stephen McNally (11:50), Clayton Menser, Richard Preston, Davina Thurston, Joe Pete Wilson, Mike Mascarenas, Anna Reynolds, Linda Wolf and Jim Dougan. Meg Wood was absent

Deputy present: Dina Garvey

WILSON: Alright, thank you for sticking around after a long morning. This is the first Environmental Health meeting in a long time, we're trying to, I want to inject some new energy into this group and we've got some big issues that are in front of us. Typically, the Environmental Health Committee has addressed environmental related projects, topics, operations that the County is involved in. So, like the Fish Hatchery was a big one. Solid Waste is always an ongoing one. Those have been the main things the past few years, but one of the main things on my agenda here is going through those issues a little bit, but are there some priorities that we want to identify and focus on, because I don't think we should try and tackle everything with this committee. We should try and focus on a couple of priorities that we can actually do something with and make some progress. I am also on the Legislative Committee for what that's worth. So, I think out of this group we might have some lobbying priorities for Albany. Certainly, Matt, was in Albany a few weeks ago lobbying for funding for solid waste. So, I think out of the committee can come some focused, well-supported efforts that we take up in Albany to help us with funding, legislative changes, whatever they might be. So, maybe we'll start with a few quick updates, because the Fish Hatchery is an evolving issue and maybe Jim can give us an update on that and Clayton's here, thank you for coming in to get up to speed on that.

DOUGAN: Yeah, so quickly, we're in stocking season, right now. Our spring stocking will out by June, we've already worked with DEC on any of the fish that we have remaining after this year stocking list, where we can put those, areas where they won't impact other native populations. So, we have a pretty good plan there. We've gone out to bid once, we didn't receive any bids. Twice, was it twice?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, we extended it, because we didn't get any bids. So, I stand corrected.

DOUGAN: For a private hatchery to provide fish for the fishing derbies. We have met with DEC on that. DEC is willing, they say legally they can stock fish in a few of the fishing derby ponds. Roe Pond is a public access pond, so we working with them to bring down the total quantity that we would still need to find, a private hatchery to fund. We will need to make sure that we keep that $60,000.00 that comes from Occupancy Tax available to continue stocking those fishing derbies in the future.

WILSON: Yeah, so a portion, since the origin of the Occupancy Tax, a portion of it has been dedicated to supporting the Fish Hatchery and this is a way to continue funding the fishing derbies that take place in so many of our communities and are an important part of activities there and so I think that's really important for Supervisors to understand here, as we're discussing Occupancy Tax, that a chunk of it is really critical to keeping these fishing derbies stocked with fish since we can no longer do it ourselves.

HUGHES: What that amount, Joe Pete?

DOUGAN: $60,000.00.

HUGHES: And so we're just shifting $60,000.00 from Fish Hatchery to the tournaments?

MASCARENAS: Correct, the other option that we have that we could do, if we're going to do that, the recommendation should come out of this Committee I would think, is we could push the money to the towns that are having those fish derbies and let them take care of their own fish. It is becoming difficult to get bidders and those types of things. You know, people that have fish and game clubs in their communities and those types of things, may have better opportunity or know how or even what to volunteer to make sure that those types of tournaments continue in their communities. So, it's an option, it's an option, if we can't buy those fish directly, maybe the money goes to those communities, somehow we distribute it based upon who's having those derbies and making sure they're in public water, etc., and we can push the money, part of that $60,000.00 to the communities directly.

WILSON: Yeah, so we've been having a lot of discussions about ROOST, but this an important piece.

THURSTON: I don't mind leaving the $60,000 at the County level and here's why. Even though I had moved to Bloomingdale when the kids were little, even before one of them was even born, we still attended the fishing derby in Keene. So, I think even though we were in one town at a fishing derby in another town, it is still the same County.

MASCARENAS: You're not wrong, we see a lot of that participation across the County. Kids are jumping neighborhoods and going to those different fishing derbies, you're absolutely right.

THURSTON: So, I think, I am totally fine at leaving it at the County level, but then again if they need the money, you know, just funding those fishing derbies, if we can't find a good seller for the fish.

MASCARENAS: Local fish hatchery aren't used to dealing with our procurement.

BRASSARD: Yeah

DOUGAN: Exactly

MASCARENAS: Is really what makes it difficult. They're people that look at that package and it seems very overwhelming.

THURSTON: Right

MASCARENAS: And I think that's probably the issue. We've had a couple of people call, but I think when they got their homework and realized that, they're normally a one-man show or very few people.

BRASSARD: They want someone to call and say, I need 2,000 trout and I need them delivered this day and here is the check. They don't want to do paperwork.

THURSTON: And I don't blame them for that and like you said, usually they're smaller. So, in the procurement policy, I believe it's $20,000 per individual, right?

DOUGAN: We still have certain paperwork we have to put out, $20,000 is what requires a bid.

THURSTON: A bid, right.

DOUGAN: We're developing some other options. So, we went out to bid for the total quantity, similar to what we've stocked in all of the fishing derbies for the last 10 years and then we talked with DEC and DEC said, okay, we believe that we can stock some of these. DEC is more than likely going to stock 1-year old fish instead of 2-year old or 3-year old fish, but, we'll still take it if they can't, so we're going to figure out what that number is. You know, we still have a stocking truck. We may try, maybe we go pick some of these up. Maybe some of it's a travel distance, too. So, we're figuring some of this out. We started looking at it, you know, a full 16-months before the stocking needs to take place. So, we still need to, within the next few months, hopefully, get a private hatchery that we know that they're interested, because especially if we're looking for 2-year old fish. But, we think we have a few different options.

WILSON: And so I think from this committee's level, knowing that the $60,000 is in Occupancy Tax Funds, knowing that we need to keep that there and letting Jim work through the growing pains a little bit of changing a system that's been in place for, since the 80s. So, maybe we will step in to support Jim, but he's working through these growing pains.

MENSER: I'm not on the Committee, but I think I'm the only town that has a fish hatchery in the County and my understanding is we're in the process of shutting it down.

HUGHES: Shifting responsibility.

MENSER: Well, I am hearing shutting it down completely. They want…

DOUGAN: A resolution has already been passed.

MENSER: Right, so the biggest thing that I am concerned is what is the timeline on that and who's going to cover the cost of the complete closure of it?

DOUGAN: So, we're stopping rearing fish as of June. We may have a few leftover and Newcomb, your fishing derby isn't until the fall. So those fish will still be here, but we stopped egg production, and most everything other than a little bit that may be put out in the fall of our surplus or Newcomb, will all be gone by the time June gets here. So, at that point, I am going to start the process of maintaining the buildings of any of the stuff that Essex County owns. The Fish Hatchery was originally constructed by the State. The deed says the property returns to them. Now they have some interest in turning it over to you, because your well and your wellhead protection is all there.

MENSER: Right

DOUGAN: That property has buildings on it already. So, they don't really want another Camp Gaberial's, where all these buildings sit here and nobody does anything with it. So, they seem to have some interest in that and if the Town of Crown Point has interest in it then why not? But, you're still determining, we're going to take down the netting that is on the top.

MASCARENAS: I can tell you that we have been negotiating with the attorneys at DEC, there is nothing solid yet in terms of a decommission plan. That will be something that they will have to provide us, almost like an order of consent that you would typically find if you were operating a water/sewer plant, those types of things. So, there's no specifics on that. I can tell you that anything we're required to do, we'll do, it might not be without a fight. We might have disagrees on what we think we should do and should do, but from that final document, that Board will absolutely have a say in terms of what happens.

WILSON: And Clayton, it might be helpful for you to meet with Mike and Jim to really go into the details, but I think a lot of it is between the, you know the outcome of this really going to in Crown Point.

DOUGAN: There's a lot of things that have been done, like you know where the tank, the wastewater tank for the chlorine residualizer for your water building is actually located on what would have been the County's property and not yours for distance from the wells, all those kinds of things. So, it makes some sense, but you need to be part of it as well.
From a closure standpoint with DEC, really the only legal standing that they have is on our SPEDS permit. We actually do have to close that in a certain way, but the rest of the building they don't really have a lot to say. So, we're waiting to see, we'll have they put their cards on the table first before we show them ours.

MENSER: I just don't want all of a sudden, okay, Crown Point it's yours and by the way, there's all these hazardous materials that have to be cleaned up and that's all on you.

DOUGAN: Did it, asbestos did it, PCBs that they left, did it, okay? Formaldehyde that they used to treat the fish, did it. So, a lot of that is good. I'm not telling you the buildings are in great shape, definitely not. But we should work together on that. Our focus is trying to know where the next group of fish for fishing derbies is coming from has been a little bit more of a focus than the rest of it.

HUGHES: I don't want to prolong and shut you down so we can move on, but I want to offer a counterpoint to your statement. I think that this should eventually be a town, the fishing derbies should be a town responsibility and not County responsibility. Especially just getting $60,000.00, now I don't have a fish tournament, or derby in my Town so I am not sensitive to that, but if it's no longer a County responsibility to rear fish and do what we do with fish and now it's back on the Towns, from the procurement standpoint it might easy for Towns to individually procure their own company to do that fish, to do the company. Every time that I hold an event in my Town that is paid for with bed tax money, I am pulling people from Willsboro, Essex, Westport, Lewis. So, usually the events that I do have do draw people from other parts of the County. So, I don't necessarily buy that entire argument. I do see your points, but I think that the money, we shouldn't just give the $60,000.00 because that's what we've encumbered for the bed tax, in the future I think that should be a Town responsibility and the County should get out of it. That's just a budding conversation that I have in my brain.

THURSTON: I just want to counterpoint.

HUGHES: Please

THURSTON: I'm not against the Towns taking it over, if we just move the occupancy tax that's set aside for the fish derbies to the Towns and earmark it specifically for the fish derbies. I am okay with that in the sense of the procurement that might be a better way to go. I just think it is important to keep kids fishing and so anything that we can do to get outside and fishing I am willing to do that.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, at some point in time the Board decided, and I think continues to support it, just there's a lot of reasons not to make this conversation awkward. That fishing is valuable, which is why that $60,000.00 was set aside for operations. Now, no prior Board can hold a current or future Board to something that they did. With that being said, the Board that is here now is the one that kind of makes the rules around that. So, I think the logic and the shift in though was really around living in the Adirondacks, fishing is vital to our area, it's a life-long sport, all those types of things. So, I think that's where the County kind of comes into play, if at all. But, I think those are points…

HUGHES: The devil is in the details.

THURSTON: And I don't have a fishing tournament either.

WILSON: So, probably what we're ultimately going to need though is accountability around the expenditure of that money. Just like we do with occupancy tax that comes to us and that would come out of this group, what kind of accountability do we want so we know that when we're justifying keeping that $60,000 and redistributing it, we're getting, it's going where it's intended. As Jim goes through the growing pains of this coming year, this coming season, we might really think about what are the Towns that have fishing derbies and how we're going to do this and put it back in this direction.

HUGHES: That data is important.

THURSTON: Yup

WILSON: Where we still have documentation of where's that money's going.

THURSTON: Do we have list somewhere?

DOUGAN: We do, I didn't bring it with me, but yes, I can get you a list.

THURSTON: I think that would be good.

MASCARENAS: Jimmy, can get you the whole stocking plan that we have done in the past and just highlight the ones that are…

DOUGAN: I can share with you that bid that we just did, because it has to listed and has the GPS location of where those fishing derbies are.

LAMPHEAR: I just have one thing, we do have the TR Weekend, but there's talk that it may not continue, the fishing derby in the future. So, I think there's those how do we do it each year with monies to the fishing derbies.

DOUGAN: I've looked at this as if we're trying to, for those towns that have had fishing derbies, we're trying to find a method to continue it. I think it would be great to turn it over to those towns in the future. I felt that it was my responsibility to lead that process right now from a County standpoint. Here's an option for you, I absolutely think that for some of the towns it's only 300-400 fish, absolutely, it doesn't fall anywhere near the threshold to bid. Where others it's 2,000 fish and it absolutely might.

WILSON: So, what I am taking from this discussion though is that there is some work that this committee should focus on for the short-term wrap up for the closure of the fish hatchery, but for the sustainability of fishing derbies that are taking place and the County for appropriating the $60,000.00 in occupancy tax revenue. So, I am making a note of that, this will be a definitely a follow up issue for this, because otherwise I think it could just fall entirely on Jim and be a huge distraction and come into the difficulties of bidding. So, yeah, let's work on how we transition this and administer that. That's definitely a topic for us to continue with.

DOUGAN: And I will get out the list of derbies and fish.

WILSON: And other hatchery? Any other things that you need to update on? And you're, and Clayton, you're going to follow-up with these guys to get the real inside?

MENSER: Yes

WILSON: Okay, great.
In the past I have worked with Anna and a previous version of this Committee to talk about shared services. Davina was in on some of that and what I found a few years ago was it was so difficult to get people to talk about, use the word sharing that I gave up on it, but in the future I am open to this, because I think shared services is a critical, you know I worked, around water and wastewater and Anna and her team was really helpful and we talked some and Jim talked some, but towns were in a different place then and the idea of sharing was well, I want this and I don't want to pay for and I want this and I don't want to pay for it. So, I dropped that and having come back to it, but I am open to it if we feel a need, if we identify a need where we could do some effective shared services, I am open to that and as you come up with ideas…

THURSTON: Yeah, so I just want to point out that in St. Armand, we have you know a full time wastewater superintendent and a full time, he splits between general and water, water superintendent, but we have weekend testers and one of them works for DOCCS and one of them, she is a full time wastewater treatment operator at North Country School. So, that has actually worked really well sharing those part time positions and those of us that share a code enforcement officer and things like that, I think that's a really good way to focus, because those are just the hourly, part time when somebody goes on vacation they do coverage and that kind of thing, so maybe we could, you know, talk to our people and say do you want a few more hours somewhere? Can we put you on a list of who to call?

WILSON: So, we almost are like a clearinghouse?

THURSTON: Yes

WILSON: That's a great place to start, I will follow up with you about that.

HUGHES: Joe Pete, I know that during COVID, there was a request or a responsibility or a mandate for, at least, I thought it was all municipalities, but at least we enacted an agreement with Willsboro that if for some reason my operator went down, because of COVID, couldn't handle the responsibility that Willsboro would step in and we would do it for Willsboro. I thought you guys had that with Westport? But anyway, I thought that kind of relationship already existed by fiat of the Governor, during the time of COVID or something like that.

WILSON: It tends to be very informal.

HUGHES: Yeah

WILSON: Very informal.

HUGHES: And only geographically, because Willsboro and Essex are right next to each other. It could be Moriah, Westport, you know Ti, Crown Point, things like that.

WILSON: And I think highway departments have a good informal network of supporting each other.

THURSTON: Yes

HUGHES: Yes

THURSTON: We have shared service agreements with all kinds of people.

WILSON: Started thinking of that. So, this is more of a slow burn thing between Solid Waste and Fish Hatchery, I think we've got some big items right now, but I don't want to just narrow our focus and again, I think that some of the things that we're talking about, we might come up some legislative priorities that we could take to Albany in an organized way to advocate for Essex County, but a good transaction to that is Solid Waste, where I think Matt, I think you are the only one in here that was there in Albany, right?

BRASSARD: Yup

WILSON: So, you got a little news, you want to update the committee on? So, I am going to switch over to Solid Waste, because that is a big impressing topic.

BRASSARD: Yeah, so Steve, myself, Meg Wood, Clay from Hamilton County.

WILSON: Clay Arsenault.

BRASSARD: And his Jimmy Dougan, we went down, had a meeting with a lady from the Governor's Office, a lady from DEC, I can't remember from the top of my head, anyways, had a very good meeting. They explained to us basically that once the solid waste plan is approved the money will be released. The money is there; they want to get rid of the money. The lady there said, I don't like sitting on money because $300,000 today is five years from now, that's probably $210,000 in value." So, I think we saw last week, Mike sent out an email, we did get a $300,000 payment.

MASCARENAS: We actually have $600,000; I got more after I sent the email.

WOLF: A day later it came.

BRASSARD: That's news to me.

HUGHES: That's great

BRASSARD: So, $600,000, so they owe us $300,000 still, correct?

WOLF: Right

MASCARENAS: We're pretty current, current years is all that's owed.

HUGHES: That's awesome.

THURSTON: That is awesome.

BRASSARD: So, Steve, he did get us in the room, apparently with the right people. I was happy to report the $300,000, but I guess it is $600,000

WILSON: Is twice as good.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I think our next part of that plan is renegotiations, so we did prepare a lot of written material that they took with them, that kind of spelled out our case that we were able to hand over. Yes, getting our money paid was the first part of that. In the future, I think our next priority is it's not enough.

BRASSARD: Correct and we did talk about that.

HUGHES: For the value perspective.

BRASSARD: And what was said was, I can't go back to her boss and say, they want more than $300,000 when she hadn't spent what is owed to us. You know what I am saying?

MASCARENAS: Yeah

BRASSARD: So, I think now that we are current or relatively current.

MASCARENAS: As current as you can be.

BRASSARD: I think it's the point now that we can go back and say, listen $300,000 is not cutting it. We need $750,000.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, what $300,000 got us back in 1998 isn't the same.

WILSON: It's not cutting it and we're spending a million out of the County's budget to underwrite operations across the County. So, as I look at this, I think there's two things for this group coming

out of this. One, when they finish reviewing our Solid Waste Management Plan, we're going to have to probably push back on a number of details within that. So, when Jim and Mike get that we'll review that and help with the, what are we going to push back on in that Solid Waste Management Plan, because that's the last step to the final, for the funding to be more systematic and not a fight every time. So, I think that we'll need to be a part of that, push back on the Solid Waste Management Plan and then the second part is really the money part. How do we strategically get through the negotiations of it and get the Solid Waste Plan approve, but then really say, we've been spending a million dollars, that would be a good place to start with ongoing, annual funding that keeps us from putting the burden on the residents of having to truck our solid waste out of here, because of a State law. So, I think that's where it's really going to call on us to go to Albany.

MASCARENAS: So, our written material went there.

WILSON: Yup

MASCARENAS: So, they're aware.

BRASSARD: They're very aware.

MASCARENAS: I think the next thing, too, is getting it out of the DEC. The funds were never meant to be weaponized, to be utilized as an enforcement action. They were specifically meant to relieve the burden of the local taxpayers for paying for the trash. So, with that being said, at some point in time, it switched from the Governor's budget to the UPF and once the UPF got it ahold of it and DEC got a hold of it that's when we stopped getting paid and it was changed to an enforcement action. So, using the money for the intent of what the money was used for and not necessarily being weaponized is key to me. I think pushing that back under the Governor's guidance and getting it out of that line item is critical.

WILSON: And that's going to be a political fight more than anything.

HUGHES: It would be nice if that agreement had an escalator, every year.

WILSON: Oh, yeah, that's all, it's got to have, it's got to grow with the growing costs.

HUGHES: Absolutely

WILSON: So, we will be doing a lot of strategy and some, I plan to make some trips to Albany and interestingly enough, the Adirondack Council, you know one of the biggest environmental groups in the Park, they're looking at this as, this is an issue of community support. They are, they made this one of their legislative priorities in Essex and Hamilton Counties, the funding because it's not fair for New York State to say, our residents have to pay the cost of protecting the Adirondacks for a State that says we can't have landfills. So, we've got an ally with good lobby machine.

HUGHES: Excellent lobbying machine.

WILSON: And we're going to have to develop our lobbying skills on an issue like this to really get a long term solution that's good for the County.
And then inside of our operation, we've got our Serkil contract coming up.

THURSTON: Yup

DOUGAN: The Serkil contract is actually good until the end of 2028, but in order to, if we follow the contract we have to notify them 6 months ahead of time, so that is roughly by the middle of 2028, we've got to let them know and with the way that contract is setup we, you know we really need to do a lot of work on it prior to ever putting it out to bid again. So, this group would really want to start working on, may not be today, but if the group can understand how solid waste is really handled in the County and what Serkil does to create a new one. The last time it was bid, the only other bidder was Casella, and their numbers were astronomically higher, mostly because of the same towns. They were really glad to go, they would have been really glad to serve North Elba, but it wouldn't have been cost effective for anybody else.
So, back to the Solid Waste Management Plan for a little bit, I do think we're going to get those comments pretty soon. I can tell you that there's a few things that I specifically directed the engineering firm to not put in there because we are different than all but Hamilton County in that we aren't allowed to have an actual landfill. You know one of the things that a Solid Waste Management Plan is, they want us to track biosolids, we don't create biosolids, the County doesn't create them. The only one that does, you have a sewer plant, you do, but you're ready in a permit and you're already required to report. Cynically, I think they're trying to push that reporting department into one entity of the County and there's a number of things. I will probably send out a letter than I sent just before they finalized this draft to DEC of the Solid Waste Management Plan to this group, just so you all have a chance to see some of the things that I said. I know what DEC's requirements are, but we're a little different. So, I don't want you to go far with a few things, because that's probably the same battle that we're, once we get the comments back, probably still the same battle that we're going to have fight.

WILSON: And they're doing that kind of dumping stuff on municipalities; I'm going through a contract negotiation with DEC over running the Garden Parking Lot and they want to control everything but not have to do anything.

THURSTON: Right

WILSON: And I think it's the same thing here and we really have to organize our counter argument and be consistent with that.

DOUGAN: In that Spectrum News piece when the Commissioner spoke, she said, they have to get more creative with recycling, was one of the things she said, and she just doesn't understand the way financing and the way this works here. We are, recycling is a good idea, sure it is and if

we had a landfill, even though recycling puts more of a financial burden on us, because really our system runs on tons. The more tons, the more cost effective it is. You still have to provide people that work at your transfer stations even if you only get one bag that day. The same works through the whole system but the more you pull out of it, Joe Pete's the perfect example, he had Casella there for zero sort for a little while and it was costing you all kinds of money because people would come, they would recycle like crazy, but they wouldn't even leave their garbage there. For us, if we had a landfill you might recycle, it might be worth the cost of making the landfill cell last longer. But without that landfill cell it's just an extra cost per person.

THURSTON: Speaking of the landfill cell, when does our contract with Franklin County end?

DOUGAN: Our contract with Franklin County, we just approved it last year and it was a five year contract, so I will get you that update.

THURSTON: Four years.

WILSON: So, just in case people don't know, all of our solid waste gets trucked to a landfill in Franklin County. So, we're burning a lot of diesel fuel, putting a lot of trucks on that road that costs money.

MASCARENAS: I will send this group what we brough to Albany because it actually shows the mileage, it shows the math.

DOUGAN: And this is something that Mike had in it.

MASCARENAS: It's pretty good.

DOUGAN: It's a 176 miles round trip from the main site here in Lewis to where they disposed of it up near Chateaugay and coming back and even though some of the stations, they go from there back, every one of the trucks actually starts in Lewis, every day. So, you still have that 176 miles by the time that you get back home at a minimum. So, you know I gave you a figure on how much diesel fuel that we bought last year.

WILSON: So, I think there is a lot of material here for us to lobby on and make our case. Because it's going to be public pressure, too. It's not going to be just closed offices in Albany. This is going to be a big project to get the State to commit to supporting the residents of this County and how we handle solid waste.

MASCARENAS: I am going to say something quick and it's not going to be super popular and I'm not advocating for it, so understand that and make sure that it gets put in bold letters in the minutes, but you also have the ability to apply for a permit to open a landfill. The lawsuit is about to sunset. Now, do you want that? No. I think people, but at the end of the day, it's a tool in the toolbox.

BRASSARD: Listen, I had it ready to go. Steve told me to keep my mouth shut. I said, I got a lot of mineshafts, I can haul a lot of garbage. (Laughter)

MASCARENAS: Can I talk about this just briefly? A smaller project for this group around solid waste that I would love to do is how do we handle our own? And what I mean by that is the County. I would love to do kind of a smaller project with this group in how we handle our own trash. What I get a lot of times is, I have 24 departments, a bunch of different contract agencies, the State of New York, with all different ideas of what my employees should and shouldn't be doing in terms of how they do that and we really don't have that. Well, our clear definition of what they should be doing is really just take everything, every day. That's kind of it. I mean I don't know about all of you, but when I am at my home, in my house, I don't take my trash out until it's full. I don't take it out every day. So, I think it's a little bigger than what I am making sound like, but I think understanding what we produce at the County Buildings for trash. What's the tonnage involved with that? How do we want to handle that? Do we want to separate food from normal garbage? Do we want to have just central collections for food? Where the cleaners aren't going every day to empty out a bag that probably doesn't need to be empty. Do you put more of the ownest on the employee to take their own trash once it's full to a certain location? There's a lot of possibilities there because what I see is a lot of wasted plastic bags, also. Where 1/3rd empties or ½ full bags are constantly getting taken out just because what Mike Mascarenas thinks and what Jim Dougan thinks could be two different things and somebody may call and say, I want garbage emptied and you go over there and there's a couple pieces of paper in it, when another person is like, what are you doing? I only have a couple pieces of paper in there. So, I think us coming up with some clear direction, I would love to do that kind of us like, I can even do a template.

WILSON: When you send out the material will you give a little information, anything you have prepared or examples that you have? So, we can use that as a starting place.

MASCARENAS: Yes, the Cleaners gave me a list that they prepared already, kind of what they do and it's something I have been sitting on for lack of time for just myself to do this plan.

WILSON: If you send out the rough materials with just this little intro that you haven't used then we can go further.

THURSTON: So, I have a couple of different ideas here and first one was shredding. There should never be any paper in the trash, it should be for shred, you know, absolutely we can do that. That should be a policy that things go to shred. Kitchen scraps and things like that, we can work on composting because there are companies now that will come and take your food scraps and turn it into compost, so that's a good way to get rid of a huge amount of tonnage for free.
Then, also I've been beating this drum for years, so those of you that have heard me beat it, I apologize, but I am not going to stop until this happens. I personally want to see us, and all of our surrounding counties and towns get together and come up with a solution where we're trucking our trash to a facility for it to be burned. I really want to see that happen and not just for Essex County, but Franklin County, Clinton County, Hamilton County, this could really work and benefit everyone because it can provide energy and also eliminate the need for a landfill. So, I am not

going to stop until it happens or I die, one of the two. So, I really want to see that happen. I do plan on visiting, there's one in, I thought it was Glens Falls.

HUGHES: Fort Edward

THURSTON: Fort Edward, so I do plan on visiting that facility this year and seeing what we can do to make that happen. I know Joe Pete and I have talked about it a lot.
The other thing that I just want to just briefly touch on, and I know we all know this, but with the recycling, nothing is going to change in this Country until the Government forces these manufactures to take back their products for recycling. So, we are fighting an uphill battle with a broom in a snowstorm and we're never going to get anywhere until it changes on the Federal level.

MASCARENAS: The recycling market is largely falling apart for all of you that don't follow the garbage industry at all. I never did until I had this job. China doesn't take most of the items anymore, the value has plummeted and what the good folks don't realize is when there's no value, it turns into garbage. It's no longer a recyclable when there's no value to be gained from it. So, that's kind of what has happened in and around our area.

THURSTON: Which is also why I was very happen when we got that glass pulverizer because now, we are eliminating glass. So, we're turning that into sand.

MASCARENAS: We're the only ones doing that.

THURSTON: And I think that is wonderful, that was one of the best things we ever did.

MASCARENAS: Joe Pete, another thing on that, Jimmy and I have been discussing a lot lately on tires. Tires are an ongoing issue. That's kind of our next get off our list like the glass was. Define a product that we want to figure out, and we made a usable product. We want to do the same for tires.

THURSTON: There is a place in, I want to say Frog Town, but I know that's not it, it's up near Akwesasne and they take tires, used tires, very inexpensively, they ship them to Canada where they get turned into that rubber tire mulch. We might want to look at that, because it's really not that much further and if we're only going once a month with tires, it might make sense to use that service.

MASCARENAS: And while you've thinking that way, think of the Solid Waste Management Plan that we're going to review and how do we turn that into dollars with those recommendations? So, that final product that we put together that goes to the DEC, Anna knows what I am getting at. We want to define projects. If you want us to reduce, get rid of recycling, now we these things listed, we get grants through the DEC then on the backend to get some of these accomplished that we want to get accomplished. So, start thinking of those kinds of things before we do that final.

THURSTON: I will find out exactly where those tires go because I know it's up in that area.

MENSER: I've got a couple of things. One about the solid waste, there's a company that Matt and I have received a little bit of a brief on, called Bright Sand that is going to be, hopefully, moving into Ticonderoga, next to the Mill. It's going to be taking all their solid waste and processing it and turning it into fertilizer. They're going to have a multi-story greenhouse that they're going to be growing vegetables for a large grocery store.

THURSTON: So, you're saying compost, like compost?

MENSER: Like all solid waste.

THURSTON: Biosolids?

MCNALLY: Yeah, sewer systems.

BRASSARD: And I asked a question in the meeting that we were at, would you be able to take the town's solid waste, you know what I am saying? From our sewer plant. And they said, once they build, their plans are to have one on the lakeside and then one over where the landfill is. So, their plans are once they get up and running and get that second facility, they're actually going to tap into that.

MENSER: Open it.

BRASSARD: Open it and start using that waste.

MASCARENAS: The gas?

MENSER: No, the solid waste that are buried. They're going to take it all back out and start processing it.

WILSON: Keep us posting on this.

BRASSARD: That's when they said they would be able to take from the existing.

WILSON: Keep us posted.

MENSER: I have one other thing besides that, and I have already talked with Davina a little bit about this, but under this Environmental Health Committee thing I think we need to as a County look at the battery storage systems that the power companies are wanting to install. Rather than each town fighting the battle to say that we don't want it here, because I am going to be definitely presenting this in Crown Point this week, but I think as a County we need to look at it, because as I have been told, if one of these facilities is in the County and it has an issue, we do not have enough firefighters in the entire County to deal with that fire and it burns extremely hot, you can't

even get close to it. The people that do fight it have to have special training, they have to have special equipment and special materials to put on that kind of a fire to contain it, they can't put it out. All they can try and do it contain it in an area. The fumes from it are hazardous. We don't know how far that stuff will travel. As a County we need to start something to deal with this, whether it's a moratorium or what. Crown Point is going to do a moratorium. Davina has already started a moratorium.

THURSTON: We've done one.

MASCARENAS: Mr. Menser, I don't even know if there's guidance currently on how we fight those kinds of fires.

MENSER: There isn't.

MASCARENAS: And what, my only experience is we had one on the Northway with an EV and it tools I don't know how many firemen.

WILSON: Six hours they were there.
So, this is an interesting point so all the other stuff we talked about in this committee is really operational. Things that the County does or is involved in and that's getting into purely legislative. So, maybe we can kick it around a little in here but bring it more to the Full Board and the Legislative Committee.

MENSER: Right because this is the Environmental Health Committee, I think this Committee needs to start the ball rolling to the rest of the Board of Supervisor to say, okay, this is something that we need take some serious looking at and do we just do a moratorium for now so that we have more time to study it, but in the meantime ban it from the County. Because I mean right now, we're not allowed to have a landfill, this could be so much worse than a landfill, it's unbelievable.

REYNOLDS: We said that before about the solar and that's in and now, we're seeing the repercussions 30-years later about it.

MENSER: So, we need to start early.

WILSON: And maybe a good place to start would be to talk to Emergency Services to Josh about what are recommendations, what are some best practices, what are they aware of?

REYNOLDS: And code enforcement officers need to be trained, as well.

WILSON: Well, thank you everybody. I feel like we got a good slate of real concrete things to work on and then some bigger, more legislative pieces. So, this is really helpful. Thank you for taking the time here and we'll get some minutes out, some notes. Mike is going to follow-up with some stuff. Jim is going to follow-up with some stuff.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE, IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 12:13 PM

Respectively Submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy Clerk
Board of Supervisors