

Energy & Environment Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes

DATE & TIME: January 22, 2013, 6:15 PM
LOCATION: Surrogates Court, 3rd Floor, COB, Kingston, NY
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Tracey A. Bartels
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Krista J. Barringer, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Manna Jo Greene, Kenneth Ronk, and Mary Wawro
EXCUSED: Richard Parete
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Lynn Archer, Kenneth Wishnick, Hector Rodriguez, Mary Beth Maio, and Craig Lopez, RRA Executive Director Tim Rose, RRA Board Member Charlie Landi, Ulster County Resident Thomas Kadgen, and League of Women Voters Representative Vic Melville.

Chair Bartels called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM.

Chair Bartels noted Legislator Parete's absence was excused due to an existing conflict in his schedule.

Legislator Greene requested a discussion regarding the Committee meeting schedule. Following discussion, Chair Bartels noted the first choice for the schedule of the Committee would be the 2nd Tuesdays at 6:30 PM and a second choice would be the 1st Thursdays at 6:30. She noted this was tentative and she would check with Legislator Parete.

Motion No. 1 Resolution No. 30 – January 30, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 30** - Reappointing Members To The Soil And Water Conservation District Board

Motion Made By: Legislator Wawro

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Greene

Resolution No. 30 Summary: This Resolution reappoints Legislators Tracey A. Bartels and Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr. to the Soil and Water Conservation District Board for terms from the present to December 31, 2015.

Discussion:

Chair Bartels noted her rather new experience in serving on the Soil and Water Conservation District Board and the ability for Legislator Ronk and her to address basic open meeting procedures. Legislator Ronk noted some upcoming trends expected to be addressed on the Board.

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Greene, Ronk and Wawro
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

New Business: Appointments

Chair Bartels provided an overview of the Climate Smart Committee and noted it was established from the dissolution of the Global Warming Committee. She stated the Committee tried all last term to appoint members to the Committee and was channeling former Committee Chair Belfiglio in stating she was going to get it to happen. She suggested Committee members bring forth names at the next meeting. She provided copies of Resolution No. 185 and note the Climate Smart Committee membership included one member from the Energy and Environment Committee. Chair Bartels asked Legislator Greene if she would consider accepting this appointment to which Legislator Greene replied she would consider it. Chair Bartels also noted appointments would be needed from the Public Works and Capital Projects Committee, Area Transit, Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning and Transit Committee, Business Community, Environmental Management Council and Town Government. Legislator Ronk suggested former Legislator Laura Petit could be appointed as either the Environmental Organization representative or the Town Government representative. Chair Bartels noted Ms. Petit's continued interest in serving on this Committee.

Chair Bartels noted there were other unresolved issues for the Committee and requested a packet of the documents provided to the Special Committee on the Future of the RRA be provided to Legislator Greene as well as any other Legislator who so requests it. She noted there were issues such as the RRA Board make-up that need to be addressed.

Legislator Ronk noted his prior service on the Committee and indicated he contacted recently RRA Executive Director Rose. He provided a brief overview on the current status of the RRA until he recognized RRA Executive Director Rose present at the meeting.

Chair Bartels recognized RRA Executive Director Rose to provide an overview of the current status of the RRA. He noted the 2013 tonnage was at 118,700 - 118,800 which

was right on target. He indicated the budget is developed in June/July and in 2013, they had only had the benefit of six months of flow control to project the expenses for 2014. He stated they estimated 120,000 tons for 2014 and felt based on the 2013 tonnage, the agency should hit this in 2014. He noted the business was dependent on the economy.

RRA Executive Director Rose noted the big ticket number would be the per ton price which was set in 2013 at \$100 per ton and wondered if this would be the right number. He indicated he felt it seems to have been. He noted the Board increased the rates by 3% (\$103 per ton) and felt they should be on target to break even. He noted the New York State Comptroller's recommendations that they hold 10-15% of their budget in reserves based on the instability of revenue in the industry. Chair Bartels asked where the current reserves were set. RRA Executive Director Rose replied the current reserve was at an estimated \$3 million and of that, \$2.4 million would be needed in March to pay the debt service. He noted with flow control, they should be able to build up their reserves and discussed the development process of the RRA budget.

RRA Executive Director Rose noted the final disposal and trucking contracts were up this year and they would be bidding these out in June or July. He stated Colony and others had expressed interest in bidding. He noted a decrease in tipping fees could be weighed with the ability to increase the reserve.

Legislator Wishnick stated he was receiving questions from his constituents wondering why the fuel charges were not going down. RRA Executive Director Rose replied the diesel fuel was not going down like regular gas prices. He stated this price was set monthly with a one month lag. He noted they set the price based on the cost of "on road diesel". Legislator Wishnick discussed the increased demand for home heating oil in diesel.

RRA Executive Director Rose discussed the financial successes of flow control including the Agency's ability to wean itself from the County's net service fee and an increase of entrepreneur activity through new small hauling businesses.

Legislator Greene asked if she could have a copy of the draft Solid Waste Management Plan. RRA Executive Director Rose replied it was in the hands of the New York State Department of Conservation and he was not authorized by that agency to release the document. He discussed the cycle of people expressing concern or commenting on the document. Deputy Clerk Barringer noted the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Future of the RRA foiled the document from the DEC last year and the Legislature has a copy. Chair Bartels requested a copy be distributed to all Committee members and any other Legislator who so expresses interest. RRA Executive Director Rose reiterated the issues of public comments to the draft document. Legislator Rodriguez stated this is a new Legislature and a new Session. He felt there was a different level of experience on the Committee and encouraged RRA Executive Director Rose to be open to this new experience. He highlighted the RRA is a public benefit corporation for the purpose of

providing service to the County of Ulster. Chair Bartels noted the distinction between a draft budget as requested and reviewed by the Committee last year and a comprehensive document.

Legislator Greene noted the difference between creating a Climate Smart Committee and a Climate Smart Taskforce. She suggested the Legislature might want to look at the creation of a Taskforce. Legislator Ronk thought the County had already taken the pledge and requested Deputy Clerk Barringer to confirm this. Legislator Rodriguez felt this was completed by former Legislator Brian Shapiro in 2009. Chair Bartels stated this item would be on the agenda for the next meeting. Legislator Ronk confirmed via the DEC website that Ulster County is one of the 120 communities that have taken the Climate Smart pledge.

Chair Bartels discussed the terms of the Environmental Management Council. She noted the term limits started with the date of the Charter and the existing members would have exceeded their terms had it not been for the creation of the Charter. Chair Bartels noted the inclusion of the correction for these terms in a future Charter referendum. Legislator Greene noted the benefit of institutional memory and suggested staggered terms. Legislator Ronk noted the Legislature's prior intent was to allow the members to stay longer.

Chair Bartels noted there are two RRA appointments that have expired and noted this would be discussed at the Democratic Caucus. Chair Bartels noted the difficulty in finding volunteers for the boards and commended those who have remained committed in the long term to these entities.

Chair Bartels noted she would communicate to the Committee when the meeting date and time has been finalized for the Committee and invited the Committee members to communicate with her any items they would like to see included on future Committee agendas.

Old Business:

Chair Bartels noted she expected Smart Meters to be revisited and Legislator Wishnick noted Dutchess County was looking at legislation to allow for the opt out option.

New Business: Energy Improvement Corporation

Legislator Greene requested the Committee consider the County's ability to participate in an Energy Improvement Corporation. She noted this would finance energy retrofits. She

stated she would circulate information and suggested the Committee invite Mark Thielking, the Chairman of the Energy Improvement Corporation, to speak at a February or March Committee meeting. She noted this was a good asset to have available for the people of Ulster County. Chair Bartels stated she would reach out to Mr. Thielking and seek his availability to attend a Committee meeting.

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Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Wawro

No. of Votes in Favor: 4

No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 7:03 PM

Dated the 28th day of January, 2014

Krista Barringer, Deputy Clerk

Minutes Approved on: February 11, 2014