

**Government Efficiency & Review Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: November 21, 2016 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: COB, 6th Floor, Karen Binder Library
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman John Parete
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Belfiglio, Ronk and Greene (arrived at 5:11 PM)
ABSENT: Legislator Briggs and R. Parete
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Tom Kadgen – League of Women Voters, Evan Gallo- Ulster County Comptroller’s Office

Chairman J. Parete called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

Motion No. 1: **Moved to Approve the Minutes of the October 17, 2016 meeting**

Motion By: Legislator Belfiglio

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Belfiglio, J. Parete and Ronk

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 3

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Minutes approved

Chairman J. Parete advised the members that, as the sponsor, he would be withdrawing Resolution No. 460 - Authorizing The Formation Of A Special Committee To Investigate All Matters Related To The Proposition To Move The Ulster County Family Court From The City of Kingston, With All Powers Granted Pursuant To Section 209 Of New York County Law. He stated that the resolution was introduced to investigate why an existing potential plan to renovate the current Family Court facility was not shared with the Legislature. He informed the members that as most of the committee was not present he would prefer to wait in order to have a more thorough discussion.

Chairman J. Parete moved on to item number one under new business, Resolution No. 276 of 2014 – Creating an EMS Advisory Board for the County of Ulster. He informed the members that the EMS Advisory Board was part of a larger group formed to discuss the Heroin issue in the county. He stated that the group was created to assess the needs of the EMS community and determine how the Legislature might help. He gave as an example the Town of Olive which was having a serious issue finding volunteers to serve. Because of the lack of volunteers the town decided to

contract with a professional provider. He added that he hears the same story about the lack of volunteers across the county.

Chairman Ronk added that there are a few municipalities like, Ellenville and Wawarsing, who pay Mobile Life Support for a dedicated Ambulance during certain hours when volunteers are in shorter supply. Chairman J. Parete added that the contract Olive entered into put them above the cap, but the town agreed there was a problem that had to be addressed. He informed the members that Rich Mullerleile, UC EMS Coordinator, who was invited to address the committee, contacted legislative staff earlier in the day to say he could not attend the meeting.

Legislator Belfiglio commented that he has had meetings with Mobile Life and 911 saying that the Esopus Ambulance Squad is getting calls to respond to emergencies in the City of Kingston. Mobile Life, a for-profit organization, took issue with the volunteer company being dispatched to calls outside of the town. He commented that seemed to be a case of too much coverage. Chairman J. Parete said that the opposite problem exists in the mountains. He added that a reason for the last minute cancellation was not offered.

Chairman J. Parete informed the members that their meeting materials included a copy of the letter sent to RUPCO thanking them for their work and asking for any suggestions or ideas to address county housing concerns. He stated that they have not yet responded. Chairman J. Parete advised the members that he submitted a budget amendment to update the housing study that was done for the Housing Consortium in 2005. He added that there is active low income and senior housing, but workfare housing is lacking. Legislator Belfiglio asked about the Housing Consortium and mentioned the absence of a sunset clause in the Resolution which formed it. Chairman J. Parete responded that there are many reports out of Albany and elsewhere that there is a lack of housing and it is expensive to build. Legislator Belfiglio stated that the committee suggested contacting RUPCO, the Birchez and other developers throughout the county for their input. He added that he was pleased that RUPCO was contacted, but suggested reaching out to other developers as well.

Chairman J. Parete stated that he RUPCO had expressed an interest in addressing sober homes which no one else has. Legislator Greene added her support for contacting other developers in the county for their input on how to resolve the Housing Consortium vs. Continuum of Care issue so that the committee could make an informed recommendation to the Legislature. She added that she was glad the committee decided to address the issue and identified it as a loose end that should be tied up.

Chairman J. Parete commented that the updated study he was proposing as an amendment to the budget would be presented to the Legislature as part of the committee's recommendation on the housing issue. Legislator Greene commented that the Chairman of the Legislature has expressed some opposition in the past to conducting study after study on issues. Chairman Ronk responded that updating a study that was done that long ago was a worthwhile purpose. Chairman J. Parete asked if anyone would like to co-sponsor the budget amendment. Legislator Greene and Belfiglio agreed to co-sponsor.

Legislator Belfiglio shared with the members an issue in Esopus with a home that was potentially violating building codes. He said the owner eventually addressed the issues, but because of the lack

of housing stock, was able to take longer than would have been acceptable if the building didn't provide subsidized housing. Chairman Ronk informed the members that one hurdle to affordable housing stock is a public assistance requirement mandating separate rooms for each child in a family. Room sharing by siblings of the same gender is not allowed. He added that the requirement also applied to families being lodged in motels. The members briefly discussed the various income levels and professions of individuals outside of the traditional definitions of low-income who could not find affordable places to live in the county.

Chairman J. Parete asked the members if there was anything they found adopted or implemented that they would like the committee to look into. Legislator Belfiglio asked for the status of the letter sent to the Department of Health about services provided pre and post privatization of mental health services. Legislative staff said a response was received and would be re-sent to the committee. Legislator Greene commented that the topic has come up a number of times in her caucus and suggested that the County Comptroller should look into it. Legislator Belfiglio mentioned that a woman approached him about a program that is no longer available to her son. Legislator Greene stated that there are two concerns that should be addressed when evaluating services pre and post privatization; the individual program cuts, and a determination about how effectively the money is being spent and whether the county is receiving the services it should be.

Chairman J. Parete stated that Legislators do not find out about problems unless they run into someone. He asked the members to review the response from the Department of Health and see if they have any follow up questions.

Chairman J. Parete reminded the members to review the lists of previously adopted Local Laws and Policies they have been given and consider which might merit further review.

Chairman J. Parete asked if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Belfiglio
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 5:30 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
Minutes Approved: November 21, 2016