

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

**DATE & TIME:** July 18, 2016 – 5:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** COB, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Karen Binder Library  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman John Parete  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Belfiglio and Briggs  
**ABSENT:** Legislators Greene and R. Parete  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislator Donaldson, Tom Kadgen – League of Women Voters, Deputy County Comptroller Evan Gallo, Mr. Kristopher Aadahl

Chairman J. Parete called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

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**Motion No. 1:** **Moved to Approve the Minutes of the June 20, 2016 meeting**

**Motion By:** Legislator Belfiglio  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Briggs

**Discussion:** None

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators J. Parete, Belfiglio and Briggs  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 3  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Minutes approved

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Chairman J. Parete opened the meeting up to public comment and asked those present if they had any comments. Hearing none he moved on to resolutions.

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Resolutions for the July 19, 2016 Session of the Legislature

**Resolution No. 297:** Establishing A Policy For The Ulster County Office Of The Comptroller That Governs The Accessibility And Timeliness Of Information And Records Possessed By Various Departments, Offices, Units, And Programs Of The County

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution establishes a policy specifying timeframes and methods by which county departments must respond to requests for information from the County Comptroller or his office.

**Motion No. 2:** **Resolution moved for discussion**

**Motion By:** Legislator Belfiglio

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Briggs

**Discussion:**

Legislator Belfiglio stated that he understood the need for the Comptroller to have timely access to information when requested. He added that it was his understanding that the Comptroller's Office has the same access to the county's financial system as the Legislator's Financial Analyst. Deputy Comptroller Gallo responded that certain information is restricted and must be requested through the Commissioner of Finance. He added that the staff does not always know what information is restricted until he or she attempts to access it.

Legislator Belfiglio added that he felt there was a lack of cooperation between the Comptroller's and Executive's offices. He asked Deputy Comptroller Gallo what the process is for requesting information. Deputy Comptroller Gallo responded that general staff to staff requests on simple matters of invoice audits are made via phone call or email and have a quick turnaround time. He continued by saying that information necessary for more in depth audits and/or reviews are requested in writing. He added that information from Departments is provided at the last possible time allowable per the protocol agreed to by the two offices and may or may not be complete. He gave the members examples of incomplete information including information on the sales tax agreements and surveys sent to Departments that were returned late or not at all.

The members discussed Ulster County Charter Section C-57 which speaks to the power and authority of the Comptroller. Legislator Belfiglio stated that he felt the Resolution was unnecessary as the Charter is clear on what the Comptroller is entitled. He added that if the Comptroller believes he isn't getting information in a timely manner, then a revision to the Charter may be necessary.

Chairman J. Parete said he felt that a change to the Charter might be extreme. Legislator Donaldson advised the members that he requested the Comptroller's office draft the resolution after he attempted to get unbiased information on sales tax figures from the Comptroller. He added that the purpose of the Comptroller is to be unbiased and if he can't get information in a timely fashion it is denying him the tools he needs to provide Legislators and the public with the information they need as well.

Mr. Tom Kadgen commented that the Charter gives the Comptroller subpoena power. Legislator Donaldson commented that should not be necessary. Deputy Comptroller Gallo added that the Comptroller felt that was a last resort, but that he was getting close to using that power.

Chairman J. Parete informed the members that he asked the Executive's Office, in writing, for information on the amount the infirmary was insured for. He added that he sent a follow letter a few months after receiving no response and still has not received the information. He said he didn't feel it was difficult information to access or provide and stated he understood the reasoning behind the resolution and felt subpoenaing information was a serious step.

Legislator Briggs said that although he supports the Comptroller he felt the resolution was not necessary. He added that he would support a future resolution of this nature once the Comptroller has exhausted all avenues that are currently provided to him by the Charter, including subpoena

power. Deputy Comptroller Gallo stated that the Comptroller should not have to subpoena for responses to simple yes or no questions asked of departments.

Legislator Belfiglio suggested going into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter between individuals in the Comptroller's and Executive's offices. The members discussed criteria for Executive Session and decided it was not appropriate.

The members discussed how the resolution was generated. Legislator Donaldson again stated that he asked the Comptroller to draft it. Legislator Belfiglio commented that some information might not be provided in what the Comptroller feels in a timely manner because Departments might be busy with other matters. He added that he feels the issue is about personnel and personalities in the two offices and should be resolved without a formal policy resolution. Deputy Comptroller Gallo stated that he met with Chairman Ronk who shared that belief and recommended a meeting with the Deputy County Executives, the County Attorney and the Comptroller's office. He added that they are waiting for a response from the County Attorney's office. He continued by saying that he did not think any more conversations would be helpful. Legislator Belfiglio suggested a meeting between the Legislative leaders and the Comptroller's and Executive's offices.

Legislator Briggs called the question.

**Motion No. 3:**                    **Moved to adopt Resolution No. 297**

**Motion By:**                    Legislator Belfiglio

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Briggs

**Discussion:**                    None

**Voting In Favor:**                Legislator J. Parete

**Voting Against:**                Legislators Belfiglio and Briggs

**Votes in Favor:**                1

**Votes Against:**                2

**Disposition:**                    Resolution is DEFEATED

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Chairman J. Parete moved on to old business on the agenda.

- Update on removal of the "Strainer" from Esopus Creek: Chairman J. Parete informed the members that the contracts have been signed and removal was moving forward. Legislator Briggs asked if there was a certain timeframe within which the work had to be done. Chairman J. Parete responded that all of the debris in question was on the bank and that all of the contracts for its removal have been signed. He added that the Waterways Advisory Committee had reached out to the DEC to inquire about the rules for debris removal with and without a permit.
- 6/24/16 sent letter to Public Health & Social Services Chairman Lopez re: Healthy Vending Options: Chairman J. Parete informed the members that the letter included copies of the communications between the Committee and the Purchasing Director
- 7/1/16 sent Memos to Department of Health/Mental Health Commissioner Smith re: Mental Health Services provided pre and post privatization, and Local Law Number 6 of 2015 – A Local Law Establishing a Tobacco Retail License and Reducing Youth Exposure to Tobacco

- 7/1/16 sent Memo to Office for the Aging Director McMullen re: Legal Services provided to Ulster County Seniors

Chairman J. Parete informed the members that a list was being compiled of everything the committee has been looking into.

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Chairman J. Parete moved on to new business. He distributed a packet of Local Laws adopted from 2008-2015 and asked the members to review the laws and identify any that they felt might merit further review.

Legislator Befiglio provided the members with a 2013 memo from BOCES in regards to Local Law No. 1 of 2013 – A Local Law Establishing the Ulster County School-Based Mental Health and Safety Act. He said the schools felt it was an unfunded mandate and requested funding in order to consider complying.

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

**Adjournment**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Briggs  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Befiglio  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 3  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**TIME:** 5:44 PM

**Respectfully submitted: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk**  
**Minutes Approved: September 19, 2016**