

**Laws & Rules, Governmental Services Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: February 13, 2020 – 6:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairwoman Bartels
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Petit, Legislative Counsel Ragucci, Minority Counsel Pascale, Deputy County Executive Marc Rider, Acting Commissioner Tyrone Wilson – Human Rights Commission, Tom Kadgen – LWV, Ivan Paul Auer – U-Act Voting

Chairwoman Bartels called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Motion No. 1: Moved to APPROVE Minutes of the December 16, 2019 meeting

Motion By: Legislator Roberts
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED**

Resolutions for the February 18, 2020 Session of the Legislature

Legislator Ronk motioned, seconded by Legislator Heppner, to take Resolution No. 18 out of order to accommodate Mr. Tyrone Wilson who was present.

Resolution No. 18: Confirming Appointment Of Tyrone E. Wilson As Ulster County Commissioner Of Human Rights

Resolution Summary: This resolution confirms the appointment of Tyrone Wilson as the Commissioner of the Ulster County Human Rights Commission.

Motion No. 2: Resolution No. 18 MOVED FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion:

Chairwoman Bartels introduced Mr. Wilson to the members, thanked him for attending the meeting and asked him to take a moment to tell the members about himself. Mr. Wilson informed the members that he is originally from Harlem, but has lived in Kingston for the past 17 years. He shared the numerous community service based organizations he has been affiliated with, including the Peace Corps, after school programs, and most recently served as Executive Director of Harambee based in Kingston.

Legislator Ronk stated that he and Legislator Heppner served on the county Task Force formed to craft the county’s new Comprehensive Human Rights Law. He added that many county residents are not aware that the Human Rights Law exists and asked what Mr. Wilson’s plans were to raise awareness of the law, especially in underserved communities. Mr. Wilson responded that one of his first conversations with the County Executive was about outreach, including Town visits and regular “office hours” in different communities. He added that literature in is being developed in multiple languages to “brand” Human Rights and raise awareness of individuals’ rights and protections provided for in the law.

Legislator Ronk asked if Mr. Wilson would be open to co-hosting informational forums with Legislators in their districts. Mr. Wilson responded that he was open to the idea. Legislator Roberts invited Mr. Wilson to Plattekill to meet community members. Legislator Heppner welcomed Mr. Wilson and stated that he has heard nothing but positive and encouraging things about his work in the community. He added that he was looking forward to getting to know him and encouraged him to reach out to Towns to collaborate with Boards who are interested in pursuing similar Human Rights laws on the local level. Mr. Wilson advised the members that he was pursuing a regional Human Rights Association and already had a meeting scheduled with the Woodstock Town Board’s subcommittee formed to consider local Human Rights legislation.

Legislator Gavaris suggested Mr. Wilson reach out to Ms. Maude Bruce, regional NAACP President who lives in Ellenville to discuss outreach. He added that the Legislature is emphasizing the importance of tracking the effectiveness and efficiency of county programs and requested that the commission record and make available information on the number of complaints received, conflicts resolved, cases referred to the State, etc. Mr. Wilson advised the members that he has been collecting data on the cases presently before him and informed the members that there are currently 15 cases under the commission’s consideration.

Chairwoman Bartels asked if there were any more questions for Mr. Wilson or any further discussion on the Resolution, and hearing none called the question.

Voting In Favor:	Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk
Voting Against:	None
Votes in Favor:	5
Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 7: Adopting The Ulster County Code Of Conduct

Resolution Summary: This resolution adopts the Ulster County Code of Conduct

Motion No. 3: Resolution No. 7 MOVED FOR DISCUSSION

Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion:

Chairwoman Bartels advised the members that she would like to have the Resolution postponed. She explained that she has had conversations with Minority Leader Ronk, members of her caucus, and Legislator Haynes who was a member of the Code of Conduct working group, and would like to have time to take a holistic look at the proposed Code. Legislator Ronk thanked Chairwoman Bartels for the additional time.

Motion No. 4: Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 7

Motion By: Legislator Roberts

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution POSTPONED

Resolution No. 11: Appointing Chairman David B. Donaldson As The Ulster County Legislature's Member To Serve On The County Jury Board

Resolution Summary: This resolution appoints Chairman Donaldson as the Legislature's member on the Ulster County Jury Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2020.

Motion No. 5: Resolution No. 11 MOVED FOR DISCUSSION

Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 17: Confirming Appointment Of A Member To The Ulster County Board Of Ethics

Resolution Summary: This resolution appoints Lou Klein to the Ulster County Board of Ethics for a term commencing immediately and continuing through December 31, 2024.

Motion No. 6: **Resolution No. 17 MOVED FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion:

The members spoke highly of Mr. Klein’s integrity, experience and service on numerous county boards and commissions and expressed their gratitude for his agreeing to serve on the Ethics Board.

Chairwoman Bartels asked if there was any further discussion on the Resolution, and hearing none called the question.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Roberts & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Chairwoman Bartels asked if there was any New Business. Legislator Ronk advised the members that he would be scheduling a meeting with the Executive’s staff, Chairwoman Bartels and others to discuss requested changes to the Ethics Law that has been under consideration for the past couple of years. He stated that Deputy Executive Milgrim advised him that they were almost ready to meet on their concerns. Chairwoman Bartels stated that she would like to meet with Legislator Ronk and Counselors Ragucci and Pascale to go over their memos and address concerns raised towards the end of last year. Legislator Ronk stated that he expected to receive new concerns from the County Attorney’s Office. Counselor Ragucci recommended counsel be present at meetings with the Executive or County Attorney.

Chairwoman Bartels asked if there was any other new business. Legislator Gavaris commented that proposed laws should have a clearly stated, and understandable legislative intent section to allow future legislative bodies to understand the desired purpose of legislation as drafters may not be available. He added that it would help to alleviate unintended and possibly harmful consequences if the intent behind the law was adequately articulated. Chairwoman Bartels agreed and stated that there have been many occasions when Legislative Committees and members have debated a previously enacted laws’ intent. She recommended that the Laws and Rules Committee prioritize a more thorough review of legislative intent sections as part of their review process. Legislator Heppner agreed that there needs to be more consistency and clarity provided as part of the legislative intent section.

Chairwoman Bartels advised the members that she would like the Committee to commence a review of the Rules of the Legislature. She added that she has been pulling together notes over the past couple of years which the Clerk has been compiling. The members discussed whether they should form a subcommittee or have a dedicated special committee meeting to consider the changes. The members asked Legislative Staff to forward a copy of the Rules with proposed changes indicated for review well in advance of the discussion.

Chairwoman Bartels asked the members if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Roberts

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

No. of Votes in Favor: 5

No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:26 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk

Minutes Approved: March 16, 2020