

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

DATE & TIME: February 9, 2023 – 6:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building, Kingston
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Heppner
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Gavaris, Levine & Ronk
ABSENT: Legislator Roberts
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Erner, Hansut, Litts and Uchitelle, Legislative Counsel Ragucci, Minority Counsel Pascale

Chair Heppner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Motion No. 1: **Moved to Approve Minutes of the December 19, 2022 Meeting**

Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes Approved**

Resolutions for the February 14, 2023 Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 6: Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 1 Of 2023, A Local Law To Allow Enrolled Volunteer Firefighters And Volunteer Ambulance Workers To Be Eligible For A Real Property Tax Exemption Under Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) § 466-a, To Be Held On Tuesday, March 14, 2023 At 7:10 PM

Resolution Summary: This resolution sets a public hearing on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 At 7:10 PM to provide the public an opportunity to comment on Proposed Local Law No. 1 of 2023

Motion No. 2: **Resolution No. 6 Moved For Discussion**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Levine

Discussion:

Chair Heppner advised the members that the Proposed Law is sponsored by himself and Legislator Roberts and he welcomed anyone to sign on. Legislator Ronk stated that the entire Republican Caucus has signed on. Legislator Gavaris stated that he would be abstaining. Legislator Ronk stated that he would not be

abstaining, adding that he did not believe that laws of general obligation that apply to everyone in a certain subset do not provide a special benefit to himself.

Chair Heppner asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Abstention: Legislator Gavaris
Votes in Favor: 3
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution Adopted**

Resolution No. 7: Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 2 Of 2023, A Local Law Designating **Affordable** Housing As An Ulster County **Public** Purpose, To Be Held On Tuesday, March 14, 2023 At 7:15 PM

Resolution Summary: This resolution sets a public hearing on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 At 7:10 PM to provide the public an opportunity to comment on Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2023.

Motion No. 3: **Resolution No. 7 Moved for Discussion**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion:

Legislator Ronk stated that he believes housing is a local zoning and planning issue, adding that subsidized housing is not the only answer to the county’s housing problem. He added that many towns have gone to large acre zoning which discourages housing development, among other town action that makes multiple dwelling structures difficult. Legislator Uchitelle stated that he felt the law aligns well with the concerns expressed by Legislator Ronk. He commented that the law sets up the county to provide a carrot to the towns to encourage them to make changes to zoning and other laws to provide for housing development.

Legislator Ronk stated that he had concerns that the law only refers to affordable housing, adding that young new professionals will not qualify. Legislator Uchitelle responded that he would have taken the reference out but was advised by the Planning Director that the inclusion was necessary to align with state housing laws. Legislator Gavaris echoed Legislator Ronk’s concerns adding that the law was a public sector solution to a problem created by the private sector. He added that local zoning is the biggest challenge, noting that Wawarsing has 5 acre zoning, which has precluded developers from creating multi dwelling housing units. Legislator Uchitelle responded that he was excited to work together rto use the legislation to motivate the towns to change zoning laws. He added that if the local municipalities were responsible for providing temporary housing as is the DSS responsibility, he believed zoning laws would be changed immediately.

Legislator Gavaris stated that he felt the county has the ability currently to withhold county funding from municipalities. Legislator Uchitelle stated that doing so without the enactment of the law may be illegal. Legislator Erner stated that the private sector is displacing people and stated that the law may provide greater ability to combat it. Legislator Ronk stated he would support the Public Hearing.

Chair Heppner advised the members that there are amendments requested by the sponsor presented before them.

Motion No. 4: To amend the Proposed Local Law as presented
Motion By: Legislator Heppner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion:

Chair Heppner asked if there was any discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution Adopted with Proposed Local Law As Amended

Resolution No. 9: Appointing Chairwoman Tracey A. Bartels As The Ulster County Legislature’s Member To Serve On The County Jury Board

Resolution Summary: This Resolution appoints Chairwoman Bartels to the Ulster County Jury Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2023.

Motion No. 5: Resolution No. 9 Moved for Discussion
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion:

Chair Heppner asked if there was any discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution Adopted

Resolution No. 73 – Establishing A Policy To Prohibit Appointees Of Ulster County Elected Officials And Board Of Elections From Holding Any Elective Public Office Of Any City, Town or Village Within Ulster County

Resolution Summary: This resolution prohibits the following from holding any elective public office of any City, Town or Village within Ulster County: appointed members of the County Executive’s staff, including Deputy County Executives, Department Heads, and all other assistants, officers, and employees; the Commissioners of the Board of Elections and all employees of the Board of Elections; the Clerk of the Legislature and all employees of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature, and any appointees of the

Comptroller, County Clerk, District Attorney, and Sheriff. The elected offices of Town or Village Judge, and Fire, School and Library Districts are not included.

Motion No. 6: **Resolution No. 73 Moved For Discussion**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion:

Legislator Ronk advised the members that he had introduced the measure a couple of years prior and was accused of targeting one individual. He stated that individual was no longer employed by the county, and he believes the discussion is important. He added that he is open to changes, but believes financial decisions and other county priorities can be swayed by individuals who work for the county but are elected to represent a specific constituency.

Chair Heppner stated that the Democratic Caucus had a productive discussion on the policy but are united in their opposition to the current form. He added that there was willingness to have further discussions and recommended postponing the resolution. Legislator Gavaris commented that the positions are too broad in the current version. The members briefly discussed the positions that are exempted from the policy. Legislator Ronk commented that he has received recommendations from the Executive’s Office and others that he is considering. He stated that the Chief Diversity Officer, which is the Executive’s Office primary concern would not have been an issue if the position remained under Personnel.

Chair Heppner asked if there was any further discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of postponement.

Motion No. 7 **To Postpone Resolution No. 73**
Motion By: Legislator Heppner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution Postponed**

Resolution No. 74 – Adopting Proposed Local Law No. 11 Of 2022, A Local Law Amending Chapter 166 Of The Code Of The County Of Ulster Providing For The Administration And Enforcement Of The New York State Uniform Fire Prevention And Building Code

Resolution Summary: This resolution adopts Proposed Local Law No 11 of 2022

Motion No. 8: **Resolution No. 74 Moved for Discussion**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

Discussion:

Chair Heppner asked if there was any discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution Adopted**

Resolution No. 75 – Adopting Proposed Local Law No. 13 Of 2022, A Local Law Adopting Recommendations Of The Periodic Compensation Review Committee And Applying Salary Revisions For Certain Elected Ulster County Officials Serving For Fixed Terms

Resolution Summary: This resolution adopts Proposed Local Law No. 13 of 2022

Motion No. 9: **Resolution No. 75 Moved for Discussion**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Levine

Discussion:

Legislator Gavaris stated that he would vote to move the measure to the floor but was undecided on his final vote. Chair Heppner asked if there any further discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Gavaris, Heppner, Levine & Ronk
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution Adopted**

Chairman Heppner advised the members of four resolutions listed on the agenda under Forthcoming Resolutions/Local Laws forthcoming Resolutions, and asked if there was further discussion, old or new business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gavaris

No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:19 PM

Respectfully submitted: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Minutes Approved: March 9, 2023