

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

DATE & TIME: May 17, 2022 – 6:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building, Kingston
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman Heppner
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Levine, Roberts, & Ronk
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Cahill, Nolan, Uchitelle, & Walters, Legislative Counsels Gordon & Ragucci, Minority Counsel Pascale, Sheriff Figueroa, Deputy County Executives Contreras, Kelly & Rider

Chairman Heppner called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

Resolution for the May 17, 2022 Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 285: Adopting Proposed Local Law No. 2 Of 2022, A Local Law Amending The Charter Of The County Of Ulster, Amending The Administrative Code, Repealing Chapter 44, Ethics And Disclosure, Of The Code Of The County Of Ulster, And Establishing The “Ulster County Ethics Law”

Resolution Summary: This Resolution adopts Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2022 – Ulster County Ethics Law

Motion No. 1: **Resolution No. 285 MOVED FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels

Discussion:

Chairman Heppner advised the members that the amendments made at last week’s regular committee meeting have been distributed to the full body for consideration at this evening’s Legislative Session. He added that an amendment to the effective date remained to be discussed.

Motion No. 2: **MOTION TO AMEND the Effective Date of Proposed Local Law No. 2 of 2022 to be October 1, 2022**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels

Discussion:

Legislator Ronk stated that he had been in touch with Chair Bartels, Legislative Counsel and Minority Counsel regarding the start date. He added that the change provides for the earliest possible timeline to seat a new Ethics Board and to avoid a situation where the county would be without an Ethics Board. Chair Bartels thanked everyone for their willingness to consider the amendment. She added that the timeline considers the maximum amount of time the Executive is permitted to hold a public hearing and act on the Legislation.

Chair Heppner stated that a September 1st date was also within the allowable timeline, adding that the Executive has agreed to act swiftly on the law. Legislator Ronk commented that with the upcoming Special Election, it was uncertain who the Executive would be.

Deputy County Executive Rider mentioned that the timeline for noticing and holding a Public Hearing is the main driver of the schedule. Legislator Gavaris cautioned against planning for a best-case scenario, noting that unexpected situations often occur. Legislator Levine agreed and expressed his support for an October 1st effective date.

Legislator Uchitelle asked what the worst-case scenario was that the October 1st date sought to avoid. Chair Bartels responded that there would be no Ethics Board. Legislator Uchitelle stated that, although a board may not be seated, the law would still be in effect and any complaints or requests for advisory opinions would just be delayed. Legislator Cahill agreed and stated that the Board, when seated, may face a backlog of work, but agreed that the law itself would be in place. The members discussed a possible September 1st effective date.

The members also discussed the necessity of amending Section 4 of the law referring to the term of the Board of ethics to coincide with the effective date of the law. There was no formal motion to adopt the effective date change(s) because the Rules dictate that the amendment must be made on the floor and considered by the full body.

The members discussed the timeline for the signing of the law by the County Executive. Chair Bartels stated that she, the Majority Leader and Minority Leader have all pledged to begin working on their appointment recommendations for the Executive so they can be confirmed as soon as possible.

Voting In Favor:	Legislators Bartels, Gavaris, Heppner, Levine, Roberts & Ronk
Voting Against:	None
Votes in Favor:	6
Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	Resolution ADOPTED

Chairman Heppner asked if there was any other business and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By:	Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By:	Legislator Bartels

No. of Votes in Favor:	6
No. of Votes Against:	0

TIME: 6:10 PM

Respectfully submitted: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Minutes Approved: June 16, 2022