

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Environmental Committee

DATE: April 15, 2009

TIME: 6:00 PM

PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor
County Office Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Brian Shapiro, Deputy Chairman Laura Petit
Legislators Gary Bischoff, Hector Rodriguez, Dean
Fabiano and Kevin Roberts

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislator Richard Parete

OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Heppner, Esq., Counsel to the Legislature
Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of
Environment
Victor J. Melville, LWV - Observer Corp.

Chairman Shapiro called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Approved minutes from March 18, 2009

Updates: Department of Environment

Amanda LaValle updated the committee on the following issues:

- Attending CEC meetings in various towns throughout the County. Towns gaining familiarity with Department and what needs the towns have.
- County Stormwater Management. Workshop well attended by all communities and representative from DEC in Albany, NY. Representatives from Dutchess and Orange Counties attended as well. Annual Report format has changed and there was a step by step review on how to complete the report. Serves as good reminder to towns that they have to file their Stormwater Reports annually.
- Natural Resources: A Biodiversity Workshop is scheduled for April 28, 2009 at SUNY Ulster. The session will offer information regarding the benefits of natural areas and wildlife to health, quality of life and the local economy; tools for protecting natural areas and their uses; the role for local governments in natural resource protection; how to protect biodiversity in the site planning process; model legislation for natural resource overlay zoning; the uses of natural resource inventories; best practices in Ulster County; and implementation of the Ulster County Open Space Plan. Seminar would benefit any municipal board member involved in making decisions above development issues and local environmental committees working with planning and zoning. Seminar is part of the Ulster County Planning Seminar Series.

- New recycling effort in County buildings. Co-mingle standards are being used county-wide. Buildings and Grounds reports that they are capturing more recyclables.
- Energy Conservation Block grant has been awarded as part of the ARRA Program. County is ready with Energy Policy already adopted. Moving forward with Energy Efficiency & Conservation Study.
- There are several other grants available NYSERDA & Environmental Facilities Program. Focus on innovative green projects: green infrastructure, stormwater, water saving measures, green roofs, etc. (Criteria for grants was discussed).

Legislator Bischoff asked Amanda LaValle about assistance with plastic bag fee notification and options. Ms. LaValle has source list for suppliers/costs.

Resolution - Appointing And Reappointing Members To The Soil And Water Conservation District Board

Legislator Rodriguez motioned to move the resolution, seconded by Legislator Fabiano. All in favor.

Discussion - Proposed Introductory Local Law (A Local Law Requiring Nontoxic Landscape Maintenance On Land Owned Or Leased By The County Of Ulster, With Exceptions And Waivers In Appropriate Circumstances)

Chairman Shapiro turned floor over to Legislator Rodriguez, who brought forward the above local law with himself and Legislator Zimet as sponsors. They were encouraged to bring legislation forward by their Village CEC. Neighboring counties have initiated the same type of legislation and through an employee suggestion, contracts with pesticide applicators were ended and Buildings and Grounds now does the applications. Legislator Rodriguez encouraged everyone to read the introductory local law and understand its intent. He emphasized that the use of non-toxic is important with waivers granted for a) natural or b) least toxic. He was not assuming that this would move forward to a public hearing at this time.

The committee discussed the following points:

- Authority of EMC as an advisory board and their involvement in handling waivers;
 - Suggestion that Soil & Water and Cornell Cooperative Extension be involved in the advisory process
- Review of the proposed local law by Counsel to the Legislature and the Laws and Rules Committee on Monday, May 11, 2009;
- Current procedures by Buildings and Grounds;
 - Building and Grounds has certified applicator training
- Setting Public Hearing;
- CMRR use of County property - issues arose in the past and never resolved
- Penalties
- Local Law versus policy;
 - Local Law or policy can be changed; policies can be changed easier than law
 - By adopting a local law, it shows a stronger commitment toward being non-toxic

Legislator Rodriguez acknowledged that the proposed introductory local law is a draft and welcomed input from committee members.

Legislator Roberts: "Why wait until July?" He stated that this issue is seasonal and the committee won't necessarily feel any different next month. Legislator Roberts motioned, seconded by Legislator Shapiro to move the proposed local law forward and set a date for a Public Hearing in June. All in favor.

Chairman Shapiro reminded the committee that having a Public Hearing invites public comment and input on the subject.

Legislator Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Legislator Fabiano to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 6:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Binder, Deputy Clerk
Ulster County Legislature