

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Labor Relations Committee

DATE: January 14, 2009

TIME: 4:30 PM

PLACE: Administrative Conference Room, 6th Floor

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Honorable Philip C. Terpening (Chair), Honorable David B. Donaldson, Legislators Wayne Harris, Roy Hochberg and James Maloney

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislators Decker, Gerentine and Stoeckeler

OTHERS ATTENDING: John Nilsen (BSOIW and UHCLC)
Joe Libonati
Jen Fuentes (HVALF)
Brittany Turner (HVALF)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:05pm.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed to all committee members by Jessica Damrath and Brittany Turner via e-mail. If anyone requires additional copies, they are available.

3. Introductions

The group introduced themselves and welcomed Legislator Roy Hochberg, who has been appointed to fill the remainder of Legislator Peter Kraft's term.

4. Contractor Licensing

Legislator Hector Rodriguez drafted the legislation to match Rockland and Westchester Counties. However, this draft legislation does not reflect the "A" (Contractor) and "B" (Home Improvement) differentiation originally requested. There are a number of other modifications that are not reflected in the original draft.

The Subcommittee of the Labor Relations and Negotiations committee which was assigned this drafting has been inadequate. The Labor Relations and Negotiations Committee decided that the best approach will be to revise the draft legislation within the full Labor Relations and Negotiations committee. Legislators Hector Rodriguez and Kevin Roberts will be invited to the February workshop meeting to share their input, if desired. Jimmy Bodrato, Executive Director of the Construction Contractor's Association, will also be invited to attend the meeting. Dan Heppner, Ulster County Legislature's Counsel, will receive a copy of the draft for his review.

The Labor Relations and Negotiations Committee, along with Legislators Rodriguez and Roberts, and Jimmy Bodrato (CCA), will be responsible for drafting Contractor Licensing at the February workshop meeting and in subsequent meetings, if needed.

Brittany Turner will provide all committee members, Legislators and guests with an electronic copy of the most recent draft, reflecting her modifications and tracked changes to Legislator Rodriguez' original draft.

5. Electrical and Plumbing Licensing

Tabled until Contractor Licensing draft is completed. Copies of sample language are available from Sam Fratto (IBEW 363) and UA 373.

6. Heterosexual Domestic Partner Health Insurance

The resolution on Heterosexual Domestic Partner Health Insurance was not sent to committee in time for the meeting. The Personnel Committee did not meet and there is no longer a Personnel Committee. The next likely step will be the Health Committee.

Jen Fuentes indicated that Ferncliff already has this policy in place; it does not differentiate based on sexual orientation of employees. This is the ideal formula for domestic partner health insurance.

As the health benefits are still taxed, it is generally utilized only by individuals who have no existing health care coverage as it is too costly. This is true of both Ferncliff and Ulster County's existing same-sex domestic partner health insurance policy.

There is limited support for this resolution in the Ulster County Legislature and it is unlikely that this committee will continue to discuss the issue.

7. Ulster County Community Service Initiative Projects

Legislator Donaldson will be sending a new letter to elected officials representing Ulster County in solicitation of financial support. In addition, once a location has been identified, area businesses will be identified and solicited for support.

The High Falls project at 1105 Berme Rd. will be the first priority in the spring. The modifications to the walkway and step will require about 4 volunteers. The Item 5 fill to raise the walkway has already been donated by Callanan's and only a small amount of lumber is still needed.

The Saugerties project at 37 Old Patch Rd. will likely be second priority for 2009. The handicap ramp will require volunteers and lumber.

A number of other potential projects have come to light, including the Walker Valley Firetower and the bridge in Chichester. These projects will be added to the existing list and considered at the March meeting of the Labor Relations and Negotiations Committee.

Legislator Harris will assess the situation with the Walker Valley Firetower.

Legislator Donaldson will provide photographs to accompany the engineer's assessment of the Chichester bridge.

Brittany Turner will e-mail all committee members with the full list compiled in 2008 and updated in 2009.

8. Additional Business

Jen Fuentes expressed concern over UCDC's efforts to again undermine the labor policy for the IDA. She explained that she does not want to see another media circus and that this appears to be the only thing UCDC does. Tax incentives have been added as an incentive and the PILOT has been extended from 10 to 15 years. There are also new points on the system matrix. In theory, anyone meeting the labor policy would meet the new requirements. Now prevailing wage is being eliminated and the standard will be the inadequate and ambiguous "living wage," yet the incentives will remain. Ms. Fuentes does not have the votes necessary to keep the labor policy and as such, would rather not have media attention as it is eliminated altogether. Ms. Fuentes feels it is disingenuous to pretend there is an adequate labor policy when, in fact, there is nothing. The Governance Committee of the IDA will be meeting Wednesday, January 21 at 5:00pm and she will not be mobilizing for the meeting.

Ms. Fuentes highlighted examples such as the Hampton Inn and the roller skating rink and indicated that the IDA is a puppet for UCDC. She also expressed concern over the future of a designated labor seat on the IDA; she suggested that the Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation provide resumes for potential labor seat candidates, assuming that the seat is even kept if she resigned and the labor policy eliminated.

Legislator Donaldson noted his interest in pursuing a Labor Day parade. He indicated that it is still early enough to plan something like this and suggested Rosendale as a possible location. John Nilsen expressed concern about using Rosendale as the location, due to the ongoing construction on the bridge, which will not be finished this year.

Brittany Turner and Jen Fuentes suggested a picnic or some other event instead of a parade. Legislator Donaldson agreed and thought a block party would be ideal. This could be done in late August or early September. Ideally the event will occur around Labor Day but not necessarily on the exact date. Broadway near Cedar to Henry St. in Kingston was a suggested location. John Nilsen also suggested Route 209 in Hurley. Legislator Donaldson proposed that Levon Helm might want to get involved and also indicated that the event could have a history of labor theme due to the quadricentennial. Ulster County Tourism can be utilized to help advertise the event.

9. Set Up Next Meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday, February 11, 2009 at 4:00pm. The meeting will be held on the 6th Floor of the County Office Building, located at 244 Fair St. in Kingston, NY.

10. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the January 14, 2009 Labor Relations and Negotiations Committee Meeting at 5:19pm was made by Legislator Donaldson, seconded by Legislator Harris.

Ayes 5. Nays 0. Abstentions 0. Absent 3 (Legislators Decker, Gerentine, Stoeckeler).

Motion approved.

BT/bt