

## Energy & Environment Committee

### Regular Meeting Minutes

**DATE & TIME:** May 9, 2016  
Howard C. St. John Business Seminar Room, Clinton Hall, SUNY Ulster,  
Stone Ridge

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Richard A. Parete

**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn A. Tantillo, Deputy Clerk

Legislators Tracey A. Bartels, Jonathan Heppner (arrived 6:20), Ron G. Lapp, Jr. and Mary Wawro (departed at 7:45)

**EXCUSED:** None

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislator Manna Jo Greene; Deputy County Executive Kenneth Crannell; Amanda LaValle, Coordinator of the Department of the Environment; Vick Melville and Tom Kadgen, League of Women Voters Observer; Kathy Nolan, UC Trails Advisory Committee and Ulster County Tourism Advisory Committee; Joseph Barbartto

Chairman Parete called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

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**MOTION NO. 1**            **RESOLVED To Approve the Minutes of March 7, 2016 as presented**

**Motion Made By:**            Legislator Bartels

**Motion Seconded By:**        Legislator Lapp

**Discussion:**                None

**Roll Call Vote:**                No

**Voting in Favor:**            Legislators R. Parete, Bartels, Heppner, Lapp and Wawro

**Voting Against:**            None

**No. of Votes in Favor:**        5

**No. of Votes Against:**        0

**Disposition:**                Approved

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Guest Presentation – Kenneth Crannell and Amanda LaValle gave the committee a report on the Elm Ash Bore that included a map indicating trees along county roads that were being impacted and

detailed the progression of the damage in the region. They explained how the county is dealing with the danger of trees falling on the road or utilities. The County is contracting to remove some of the trees. They also detailed how citizens can report “Hazard Trees” that may fall on the road through Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Mr. Kadgen noted that a 4 acre lot may have 100 dead trees. He learned that if a tree falls on a house or other property most insurance companies don’t cover the damage. He also asked about the procedure to follow if tree removal is near a road.

Ms. Nolan told the committee about an aphid that kills Hemlock trees.

Mr. Crannell praised Ms. LaValle’s efforts to secure funding for a large scale composting facility. To date they have been unsuccessful in receiving funding but the woodchips from the insect damaged trees could be a major component of such a project.

Legislator Heppner described how local laws can help slow the spread of the insects via logging trucks.

Mr. Crannell and Ms. LaValle distributed a report on the vehicle electric charging stations located on County property. 5 electric vehicles were recently added to the County fleet and they are studying how different departments use the vehicles to understand where they will be most efficient. They described efforts to work with local municipalities and local businesses to acquire electric vehicles and locate charging stations.

Legislator Bartels recommended that the County wrap the vehicles to publicize the County owned electric vehicles.

Legislator Greene suggested parking the county owned vehicle that is usually parked in the lot at the COB to an adjacent parking space where the charger would reach without blocking the spaces designated for electric vehicle charging to insure there is space available for charging other vehicles. She also asked for the report to be sent electronically to share with the Climate Smart Committee.

Mr. Crannell and Ms. LaValle also reported on progress with solar projects.

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**Motion No. 2 – Resolution No. 265 - Confirming Appointment Of A Member To The Environmental Management Council**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Bartels

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Heppner

**Discussion:** None

**Roll Call Vote:** No

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators R. Parete, Bartels, Heppner, Lapp and Wawro

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor: 5**  
**No. of Votes Against: 0**  
**Disposition: Approved**

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**Motion No. 3 – To approve Resolution No. 278 - Authorizing The Commissioner Of Finance To Accept The New York State Department Of Environmental Conservation’s Offer To Purchase A Parcel Of County-Owned Real Property In The Town Of Esopus And Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Convey Such Parcel – Department Of Finance**

**Motion Made By: Legislator Heppner**

**Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels**

**Discussion:** Chairman Parete shared a map of the property and explained that it was mostly wetland and would become part of an open space area.

**Roll Call Vote: No**

**Voting In Favor: Legislators R. Parete, Bartels, Heppner, Lapp and Wawro**

**Voting Against: None**

**No. of Votes in Favor: 5**

**No. of Votes Against: 0**

**Disposition: Approved**

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**Climate Smart Committee**

Legislator Greene gave a brief report on activities of the Climate Smart Committee and various events to assist municipalities and the public at large to learn about topics from municipal street lighting to solar. A discussion ensued regarding predatory practices of companies seeking solar leases on large parcels and farms.

**Solid Waste Management Improvement Commission**

Legislators Bartels and Greene discussed the efforts of the Solid Waste Management Improvement Commission. They received a three month extension to deliver the report. She indicated that the Commission is moving along, commissioners are reviewing the draft report and the Legislature will have the report “around the corner”. The Commission plans to seek public comment on the report before giving it to the Legislature.

## **New Business**

### **Ulster County Environmental Management Counsel**

Legislators Bartels and Wawro said Legislative Chairman Kenneth Ronk was approached by members of the Ulster County Environmental Management Counsel (EMC). Chairman Ronk suggested the EMC contact Legislators Wawro and Bartels. The EMC invited them to a retreat at Omega Institute and they attended dinner and a working session for a give and take on legislation and the need to improve communication. Legislator Bartels reported that the EMC has good communication through Ms. LaValle with the County Executive's office but in the past few years the Legislature has "overlooked" them, noting that they could have been a useful resource. The Legislator's invited members to attend the Energy and Environmental Committee and laid out ways they can work together moving forward.

Legislator Bartels said several community groups are discussing a ban on plastic bags and the EMC can be a conduit to coordinating a discussion with multiple municipalities that are considering such a ban. A discussion ensued regarding the patchwork of regulations that currently exist, the issues the SWMIC found at landfills and challenges of past efforts.

### **Public Service Commission**

Legislators Bartels and Heppner told the committee that the Public Service Commission (PSC) is accepting comments on Nuclear Power Plants receiving subsidies under the Clean Energy Standards. They intend to distribute information and draft a letter opposing the subsidies for Legislators to sign on to. The PSC will be holding a public hearing in Kingston May 26 and the deadline for written comments is June 6. A discussion ensued regarding a potential late resolution.

### **Motion to adjourn**

There being no further business before the Committee, a motion was made by Legislator Bartels, seconded by Legislator Lapp and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Fawn A. Tantillo, Senior Legislative Employee  
Minutes Approved on July 11, 2016