



ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION
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Statement on Executive's State of the County Address by Majority Leader Ronk

"To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible, we must be truthful." - Edward R. Murrow

The job of an official is to persuade those he or she works with that their agenda is correct. The County Executive has laid out quite an agenda this evening, and I will say that we look forward to working with him to accomplish great things to benefit the residents of Ulster County. After the events of last Friday at 3:00 pm, however, I must say on behalf of our caucus, that it's hard to believe that Executive Hein plans to work with us at all. In fact, it is hard to believe anything he says.

After leading us to believe that we were negotiating the bylaws of the LDC in good faith, and after consistently agreeing that the Legislature as a whole would elect three LDC directors, the County Executive changed the bylaws unilaterally with no legislative input or even notice. Legislator Donaldson called the County Executive's actions with regard to Golden Hill "the big lie" months ago. I learn more and more from David, a long time veteran legislator, each day.

From the inception of the LDC, and the first draft of the bylaws that we received on December 2, 2011, ironically at around 3:00pm in the afternoon, the bylaws called for an up or down vote on the floor of the Legislature: democracy in action. We are greatly disappointed that County Executive Hein arbitrarily took the democratic process away in a tyrannical fashion by denying the full legislature from choosing the legislative LDC members. Instead, he elected to let politics rule the day.

Moreover, do not let the County Executive fool anyone with his claim that this is about timing issues. The Legislature promised we would elect LDC board members by March 10 - the same time line the County Executive is requesting appointments by. This is about control and Democratic deals by the County Executive - nothing more, nothing less - a raw power grab. There was no stalemate to break - there was a date for a vote - and then there was the thwarting of that vote. The County Executive did not break a stalemate, he broke his word.

Instead of working with us in an honest and transparent manner, he has chosen to perpetrate a classic bait and switch - he promised legislators could elect three LDC board members, and when it became evident that our three would be independent - just like Comptroller Auerbach called for, he pulled the switch.

We in the Republican Caucus can make one promise to County Executive Hein: honest, open and transparent government. While we will not always see eye to eye with the County Executive's office, we will be truthful.

Everything the County Executive said tonight is suspect because he failed the Murrow test. Good leaders have to be persuasive. To be persuasive, it all starts with being truthful. The truth is we were ready to vote by March 10 and we still are. The truth is we told the County Executive that in writing. The truth is he chose politics over independence. The truth is, sadly, I did not find Michael to be persuasive.

I look forward to efforts by the County Executive to rebuild our trust in him.

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