

ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT GROUP

November 23, 2015

NOT APPROVED

Committee Members Present: K. LaForge, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, C. Jessup, Brenda Rigby Riehle, Terri Ross, C. Crandall (Absent: J. Adams, R. Oakerson)

Others Present: L. Ballengee, D. Edwards, K. Graves, D. Healy, T. Miner, R. Scott

Media Present: No media present.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:59 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Mitch Alger, and carried to approve the Allegany Affordable Government Committee minutes of October 28, 2015.

Water and Efficiencies Discussion

Sewer Treatment Plants Report – Tom Hull

Legislator LaForge reported Tom Hull went home sick. Department of Health Director Lori Ballengee presented the report on behalf of Tom Hull. The committee reviewed the Sewer Treatment Plants Report. The report looked at the nine municipal sewer treatment plants in Allegany County. The report includes the type of class of each sewer treatment plant and operator certifications. Legislator LaForge stated it takes three years of experience working in a sewer treatment plant, and passing a test in order to be certified. Dave Edwards stated there are classes you take to become certified, and only 30 to 45 percent pass. So, there are some concerns about the passing rate. Mr. Edwards also noted there was nothing in the report about treatment of leachate, and suggested looking at it because it causes havoc in the plants. Legislator LaForge noted there are some areas of concern. A solution may be to share services in the future. Mr. Edwards wondered if they have considered having a County employee that is certified at the highest level, and offer help to districts that have issues. Legislator LaForge said long-term that may be a good idea, and the County could charge the various systems for the employee. Mr. Edwards commented it may be cheaper for municipalities to pay a higher rate at 3 hours (by law), then paying less per hour but more hours a day (such as 7 or 8 hours). Chairman Crandall asked if engineering firms do this; Mr. Edwards replied yes.

Wayne County Water & Sewer District Visit

Legislator LaForge and Legislator Jessup visited the Wayne County Sewer and Water District, and met with the Director. They learned how they set up their system, and the Director had some good ideas on how to develop something like this. Legislator LaForge said he will go back, and have a meeting with the Director and their attorney to review the data of the Allegany County systems. He stated they are also willing to come down, and talk with the committee. Legislator LaForge added Jamie Herman had suggested using Wayne County as a model. The authority would have advantages with the tax cap. Legislator LaForge said Wayne County started by facilitating inter-municipal agreements, then a few years later they bought a water system. Now they control all but two of the villages and townships in Wayne County. He also

said they have agreements with Monroe County to buy water. There was some discussion on being an authority versus a district. The State is hesitant to create new authorities; however you can still get it.

Chadwick Bay Water & Sewer District Visit

Legislator LaForge hoped to meet with the Chadwick Bay Water & Sewer District serving the Dunkirk and Fredonia areas; however the person had a death in the family, so they could not meet. Legislator LaForge said they did have a phone conversation with the Director of the Board. They are strictly doing everything with rate payer funds in order to avoid impacting the tax cap. Legislator LaForge stated the tax cap is a big thing when you want to do capital improvement projects.

Legislator LaForge stated to move forward a plan should be developed and presented to the municipalities with water and sewer systems to gauge their interest. Chairman Crandall wondered if it was going to be an outline of a plan or a complete plan because of costs. Chairman Crandall said he understands you have to have a plan in order to get implementation money. Legislator LaForge said it initially will be an outline of a plan to create buy-in, so they have enough participants to be successful. Chairman Crandall said there was some money available to implement the plan. Legislator LaForge noted it will be a gradual process, and some systems will not be able to solve their issues by themselves.

Land Bank Project Updates

Legislator LaForge reported at the Inter-County meeting last Friday, Chautauqua County did a presentation on their land bank project. He noted it was similar to the one they presented a few years ago, but there were some updates. First, administrative costs were allowed in the latest Attorney General Grants. Second, the money can be used on mix-use property such as store fronts with apartments above them. He noted this would be very positive for Allegany County, and we should try to apply. A new grant should be coming out soon to create 10 new land banks. Director of Planning Kier Dirlam said that if the County does not get the grant, there are other housing programs they can pursue. Chairman Crandall wondered about the cost to move this project forward because it has to be a local law, and a public hearing would have to be set. He said this is what Legislators are going to want to know. Legislator LaForge and Mr. Dirlam discussed possible funding streams such as County Planning Implementation Group (CPIG). County Attorney noted he is concerned about adding another local development corporation because the Allegany County Telecommunication Corporation is new, and they are searching for a new County Administrator. A motion to move land bank legislation forward to Planning and Development was made by Kier Dirlam, second by Legislator Jessup, and carried.

Refer to Planning and Development

Good of the Order

Legislator LaForge wondered if the committee wanted to undertake the study of the workers compensation insurance plan for the County. He believes they should do an analysis on how to move forward because the employee who does workers compensation is retiring. He wonders if it should stay in-house, outsource it, or if there are other options. He added Legislator Ungermann had asked about determining the value and benefits of this at a previous meeting. County Treasurer Terri Ross is concerned about the timing and replacement of the position. She noted it is important because the County is self-insured, and we self-insure villages and towns. County Administrator Mitch Alger said the local law that created the

County's Workers Compensation needs to be updated. Mr. Alger said he had a consultant look at the local law, and make recommendations on how to bring it up to date.

New Business

Legislator LaForge encouraged committee members to bring suggestions and ideas to the meetings.

The meeting in December is cancelled. The next meeting will be in January. Legislator LaForge hopes to meet on January 11, 2016, and at the regular scheduled meeting of January 25, 2016.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m. following a motion by Kier Dirlam, seconded by Mitch Alger, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Scott, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators