

**Allegany Affordable Government Group  
(formerly)  
CONSOLIDATION & EFFICIENCIES AD HOC COMMITTEE  
MARCH 18, 2015**

**\*\* NOT APPROVED \*\***

**Committee Members Present:** K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, Darwin Fanton, J. Herman, C. Jessup, B. Riehle, T. Ross (Absent: C. Clark, D. Edwards, R. Heineman, R. Oakerson).

**Others Present:** C. Crandall, R. Budinger, P. Curran, Dwight Fanton, K. Graves, M. Healy, T. Hopkins

**Media Present:** No media present.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 4:45p.m. by the Allegany Affordable Government Group Chairman, Legislator Kevin LaForge.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by County Planner Kier Dirlam, and carried to approve the Consolidation & Efficiencies Ad Hoc Committee minutes of August 27, 2014.

**Introduction of Policy/Implementation Core Committee**

**Mission Information**

Legislator LaForge stated the purpose of the committee is to further develop and implement efficiencies and consolidation projects identified by the ad hoc committee from 2014 in order to meet and exceed the Governor's annual zero percent tax freeze initiative such as:

1. Town and village water and sewer initiatives
2. Justice court efficiencies
3. Potential land banks
4. Purchasing, volume purchasing
5. Municipal service delivery efficiencies
6. Assessment, code enforcement.

These topics will be discussed with municipalities at the scheduled meeting at Crossroads on March 31.

Brenda Rigby Riehle, Clerk of the Board of Legislators, reported reservations for meeting attendance from municipalities are coming in.

**Tangible Goals including Towns & Villages 2015-2020**

Legislator LaForge discussed a questionnaire to assist in gathering information from towns and villages, then compiling this information to formulate a report that states the tangible goals for the next five years. This will provide the required demonstration to the state of the cost-savings efforts that have already been made and will continue to be made at the County level. The bottom line is the need to avoid a tax cap override in the future.

**Water/Sewer Consolidation**

Kier Dirlam, County Planner, informed the group of a report put together by a student intern from Houghton College. The intern conducted interviews and wrote a detailed report of the water and sewer treatment facilities and systems in Allegany County. Plans include having the student intern present a summary of the report to the Committee at a future meeting. There are 18 water and sewer treatment systems currently operating in Allegany County.

Legislator LaForge touched upon some of the concerns mentioned from previous research by Jamie Herman and Dave Edwards including the likelihood of facing a staff shortage when existing staff retire. Some of the contributing factors include education and experience requirements for system operators, the demands of the job duties, and the lack of adequate compensation for work performed.

**Code Enforcement**

Legislator LaForge mentioned code enforcement officers tend to not be very popular with the public. Discussion ensued about whether it would be more efficient to operate services centrally. This is a topic for discussion with towns and villages at the meeting on March 31.

**Assessment**

Committee member Darwin Fanton stated by using a shared municipality services agreement, Wellsville is currently combining assessors with Alma and Scio. Ideally, he is looking to partner with two additional towns and/or villages to save costs. The assessor job requires considerable resources including time, training, and expense.

**Land Bank**

Legislator LaForge discussed the Chautauqua County Land Bank Program presentation in the fall of 2014 and touched upon some of the successful outcomes of land bank programs. There are currently 10 programs in New York State. Positive outcomes include reducing blight in communities, property rehabilitation, and returning properties to the County's tax roll.

Chairman Crandall mentioned the popularity of regional efforts with funding sources and stated this type of program might be more successful with a regional approach. Steuben, Livingston, and Wyoming Counties were mentioned for future consideration. Chairman Crandall agreed that further discussion regarding a land bank program in the Allegany County is worthwhile.

**Justice Court**

Legislator LaForge reported that Dr. Robert Heineman had researched justice court models and shared information. Legislator Graves mentioned at a NYSAC meeting Skype technology was being utilized to assist courts with arraignments. Mr. Herman mentioned the expense of transportation for arraignments is substantial to towns and villages. He explained during the jail complex construction phase, the concept of central holding and intakes for arraignments when town and village magistrates aren't available was promoted as a viable option. The use of District Courts in Pennsylvania was also mentioned. Members agreed that central intake and the possibility of using Skype technology have potential to save costs and maximize resources and should be explored further. Legislator Crandall mentioned that indigent defense funding could be explored also.

**Group Purchasing**

Legislator LaForge noted group purchasing is an area we can gain efficiencies and support towns and villages. At past NYSAC trainings, other counties' group purchasing efforts

have produced online catalogues and centralized purchasing in collaboration with towns and villages.

**Good of the Order/Next Meeting Date Details**

Mr. Dirlam asked for clarification concerning meeting facilitation for March 31 at Crossroads.

Legislator LaForge responded that Chairman Crandall will provide the welcome and introductions followed by Mitch Alger, County Administrator; Terri Ross, County Treasurer; and Kier Dirlam, County Planner, providing an overview of the meeting purpose and intent in order to educate municipal leaders on the state mandates, offer partnership, discuss options, distribute a questionnaire, and give direction for the future. He sees the County's role as providing assistance to municipalities through this partnership and together formulating a plan to submit to the state.

Mitch Alger, County Administrator, discussed the NYSAC efficiency toolkit with Committee members. A copy is attached for reference. County Treasurer Terri Ross, confirmed that the cost-savings report represents savings of one percent of the tax levy amount, and the report is due to state June 2015.

Legislator Graves inquired as to why Public Works wasn't a topic on the agenda. He mentioned equipment expense alone is substantial to towns and villages. Ms. Ross stated that Public Works has already implemented and accomplished cost savings practices and shares resources using shared services agreements with several municipalities.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by County Administrator Mitch Alger, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Adams  
Assistant to the County Administrator

**ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT GROUP  
APRIL 29, 2015**

**\*\* NOT APPROVED \*\***

**Committee Members Present:** K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, C. Jessup, R. Oakerson, B. Riehle, T. Ross

**Others Present:** L. Ballengee, C. Crandall, C. Santora

**Media Present:** No media present

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Group Chairman Kevin LaForge

**Amendment & Approval of Minutes**

Following changes in Committee membership, there was some confusion in the list of attendees. The list of Committee members present at the last meeting should be amended as below:

**Committee Members Present:** K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, Darwin Fanton, C. Jessup, B. Riehle, T. Ross (Absent: ~~C. Clark, D. Edwards, R. Heineman~~, R. Oakerson).

**Others Present:** C. Crandall, R. Budinger, P. Curran, Dwight Fanton, K. Graves, M. Healy, **J. Herman**, T. Hopkins

Also, Darwin Fanton requested the following changes:

**~~Assessment~~ Code Enforcement**

Committee member Darwin Fanton stated by using a shared municipality services agreement, Wellsville is currently combining ~~assessment~~ **code enforcement** with Alma and Scio. Ideally, he is looking to partner with two additional towns and/or villages to save costs. The ~~assessment~~ **code enforcement** job requires considerable resources including time, training, and expense.

add:

**Assessment**

Committee member Darwin Fanton stated assessment is next on the Town of Wellsville's order of business to see if other towns or villages would like to join the existing consortium and combine efforts to accomplish this function. The Town of Wellsville is already collaborating with the Town of Alma.

A motion was made by County Administrator Mitch Alger, seconded by County Planner Kier Dirlam, and carried to approve the Allegany Affordable Government Group minutes of March 18, 2015, as amended.

**Allegany County Municipal Water Systems Efficiency Report**

Houghton College Intern Jed Fiato was unable to attend the meeting due to end-of-semester obligations. However, County Planner Kier Dirlam reviewed the particulars of the report Mr. Fiato prepared regarding the status of the water and sewage treatment plants in Allegany County. The report analyzes 17 different water services and examines a wide variety of factors that affect how the service is organized in the County's towns and villages. Indicators such as rates, number of operators, retirement issues, debt service, linkages, number of customers, and whether or not the operators are multifunctional, all affect the status of a particular system. Mr. Fiato's report concluded that every individual case varies in many respects from all other cases in the report. There are five cases that have retirement problems, but there are other systems that are dealing with different issues of equal importance, such as debt load. There are seven cases of debt issues with two having retirement issues as well. In

those cases, the County might have more success offering a plan of assistance than it will in healthy cases such as Wellsville and Alfred. Many of the systems have higher labor expectations for their operators than simply the labor attached to water service work. This means that any county-wide response to water systems with retirement issues will have to take into account the wider obligations of water operators in those towns or villages. There was some discussion regarding the particulars of the report. Legislator LaForge noted that for those municipalities with only one operator, they are only one heartbeat away from having no operators should something untoward occur. He added that Department of Health requires at least two operators, so many districts are already in violation. Mr. Dirlam noted that if a district has no debt service stated in the report, to his mind, that means that it hasn't conducted a major project in a while, typically, 39 years which is the general length of a bond. This he sees as problematic. He predicts that those districts with no debt service will have a big project coming in the near future. Mr. Dirlam concluded his review by saying that in general, this report is a great starting point and has a lot of information. The Committee felt that there are definitely some issues that need a more thorough investigation. Mr. LaForge wondered if Mr. Fiato would be available to continue his research for the Committee. Dr. Oakerson said that Mr. Fiato would be around for another year, so that might be possible. Public Health Director Lori Ballengee told the Committee that her office could also offer some information to Mr. Fiato for his research. Chairman Crandall said he believes the Department of State may have funding available, maybe not for putting together a study or a plan, but for implementation. Legislator LaForge asked Mr. Dirlam to reach out to Kyle Wilber at the Department of State to see what might be available. (Note: Since March of 2006, Kyle has been responsible for the implementation of the new Shared Municipal Services Incentive Program.)

### **Land Bank Meeting with Steuben County**

Legislator LaForge told Committee members that there had been a meeting with Steuben County officials regarding land banks and that another was coming up on Friday, May 8, at 2 p.m. at the Kerr-Pegula Athletic Complex. He added that there is a lot of work to do to pursue the land bank issue, including local laws in each county as well as municipal agreements. Dr. Oakerson said he has a student working on land banks in New York State which details what is required, so he will have that next time the Committee meets. Mr. Dirlam indicated that Steuben County seemed interested and excited about the prospect of a land bank at the last meeting. Mr. Alger said that all structure, etc. has to be in place even before we apply for land bank status. Legislator LaForge added that at some point, we need to come to an agreement, pretty well set, so we can present it to both Legislatures. He added that City of Hornell Mayor Hogan reached out to NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman who said it was a no-brainer. Chairman Crandall said that there is no hard deadline; this is a continual open application. He also noted that in the past, land banks were done primarily in cities, not county-wide/ or in partnership. It was noted that only Chautauqua and Erie counties boast county-wide land banks. Perhaps, it was said, we could use their agreements to model our own approach. Mr. Crandall added that he would be surprised to see many counties jumping at a land bank program. He added that a two-county land bank would be unique at this time. There was discussion on how to equitably determine where (if granted) the money and attention would be utilized. Dr. Oakerson put forth the question of how we would target who got the funding; e.g., villages, hamlets, countryside, towns, villages.... Should there be a governing board to assure equity. He went on to say perhaps the land bank would focus on a "corridor" to improve its appearance rather than (or in addition to) a village or a city. He also said that in terms of economic development, there may be more areas of the County where there would be a priority because they have more county-wide importance. There was also discussion of commercial vs. residential needs. Dr. Oakerson added there are various ways to think about how to focus our

efforts. What you can't do, he said, is make sure that every town gets a piece of the funding. Legislator LaForge proposed some sort of revolving basis where each municipality has a chance to get funding although, he added, there will never be enough money to do something in every town or village every year. There was also discussion about weighting the funding decisions by population or land mass. It was felt that if the decisions were based on the number of cities, Allegany County would fall short as we have the Village of Wellsville while Steuben County has two cities. Mr. LaForge asked County Treasurer Terri Ross to talk to Pat Donnelly, Steuben County Commissioner of Finance, to discuss some options for determining land bank funding. Mr. Dirlam then proposed a timeline for the project: research into land banks completed by June 15; negotiations and basic legal background by early August; and local laws by September 30. This will be a concrete proposal that could be brought to the May 8 meeting.

### **Review of Feedback from Affordable Government Survey Results Completed by Towns & Villages**

Legislator LaForge noted that about half of the municipalities have responded. There was a discussion of the responses. There was also some discussion regarding the fact that the towns want services, and sharing might be the only affordable way to accomplish that, particularly as it is becoming harder to find qualified people to do some of these jobs. That being said, discussion centered around whether or not the County should take over some of these services....Mr. Dirlam indicated that the County has a very good highway superintendents' group which must have a pretty good idea of what works for them and what doesn't. He suggested having conversations with this group, but also advised treading lightly to avoid the misunderstanding of potential job loss.

At the end of the discussion, Legislator LaForge reviewed the meeting's outcomes:

- Ms. Ross would talk to Mr. Donnelly about possible ways to use land bank funds that would be equitable for both counties;
- the Committee would like to find a way to take the water study to another level and refine it somewhat, so Mr. Dirlam will have a conversation with Karl Wilber, and Dr. Oakerson will find out if Mr. Fiato would like to do some more work.

### **Good of the Order**

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, May 27, 2015, at 3 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Mr. Alger, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board  
Allegany County Board of Legislators

**ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT GROUP**

**June 24, 2015**  
**NOT APPROVED**

**Committee Members Present:** C. Crandall, K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, D. Fanton, C. Jessup, B. Riehle

**Absent:** K. Dirlam, R. Oakerson and T. Ross

**Others Present:** T. Miner

**Media Present:** No media present

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Group Chairman Kevin LaForge.

**Amendment & Approval of Minutes**

Assistant to the County Administrator Jodi Adams requested the following changes (delete the words with double strike-throughs; add the letters/words in all caps) to last month's minutes under the section:

**Review of Affordable Government Survey Results Completed by Towns & Villages**

Assistant to the County Administrator Jodi Adams distributed the updated results of the survey, saying that the highlighted municipalities are those that ~~did~~ HAVE not responded to the survey YET. ONE MUNICIPALITY RETURNED THE SURVEY WITHOUT ANY OPTION BEING SELECTED. SHE PLANS TO MAKE FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALLS TO MUNICIPALITIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ~~There are three entities that entirely opted out of joining with the County.~~ The yellow highlighting, she said, indicates the areas of shared services most desired by the municipalities, and included ~~Regional Justice Courts, Purchasing, Municipal Services Delivery Efficiencies, Tax Assessment, and Highway Services.~~ However, there was some discussion speculating that perhaps the municipalities did not quite understand what the survey was asking. There followed a lengthy discussion regarding how to educate Town Supervisors and Mayors, particularly when newly elected, regarding available services. County Planner Kier Dirlam indicated that the State does provide training, but many of the newly elected choose not to travel to Batavia for that training. He thought that if there were enough officials in Allegany County and environs, perhaps there could be a training session at a closer location.

A motion was made by County Administrator Mitch Alger, seconded by Darwin Fanton, and carried to approve the amended Allegany County Affordable Government Committee minutes of May 27, 2015.

**Review Amendment to Local County Purchasing Law**

County Attorney Tom Miner distributed copies of the amended Comprehensive County Procurement and Acquisition Policy for review and discussion. He explained that in addition to the lowest responsible bid purchase option, the amended policy will provide for best value purchasing. Best value purchasing involves using a scoring or rating scale to acquire goods and/or services. The bid for public transportation services was an example of the County using best value methodology to purchase services. Mr. Miner further explained that adding this new dimension to the existing procurement and acquisition policy will provide for greater flexibility and accountability. Best value is defined as the basis for awarding all service and technology

contracts to the offerer that optimizes quality, cost and efficiency, among responsive and responsible offerers. Such basis shall be, wherever possible, quantifiable (State Finance Law §163 (1) (j)).

Superintendent of Public Works Guy James asked if the amendment addresses the ability for other municipalities to piggyback on Allegany County bids. Mr. Miner stated that the proposed amendment does not address piggybacking. He recommends working with the Public Works Superintendent and the Public Works Committee to further amend the policy. Mr. James expressed his desire to reciprocate the piggybacking option for other municipalities. Currently, the County benefits by piggybacking on bids but cannot offer this benefit to municipalities that are located outside of Allegany County.

Mr. Miner added that there are County, State, and Federal laws for piggybacking, and each has different rules and regulations that are applicable. He noted for projects dealing with prevailing wages, you wouldn't want to piggyback. Prevailing wage projects involve pay rate that is required to be paid to all private workers (non- government) on all New York State public works projects. Generally, prevailing wage rates apply to construction, repair or renovation of government facilities (state or local) or building service contracts. The New York State Department of Labor issues wage schedules on a county-by-county basis that contain minimum rates of pay for various job classifications (State Labor Law Articles 8 and 9).

Legislator LaForge stated that County Treasurer Terri Ross was unable to attend today's meeting and contacted him to express her concerns and to seek further clarification regarding the purpose and implementation steps for the amended policy. He stated that out of respect for the County Treasurer, he has agreed to not act on the amended policy until he has an opportunity to meet with her. County Attorney Tom Miner offered to respond to the Treasurer's questions. Legislator LaForge expressed his interest in meeting with the County Attorney and the County Treasurer to discuss the amended policy in hopes of presenting the policy at the Planning & Development Committee for approval. A motion was made by Mr. Fanton, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried supporting Legislator LaForge, the County Attorney, and the County Treasurer meeting to finalize an amended policy for presentation to the Planning & Development Committee.

Legislator LaForge noted the previously expressed added value and support for joining cooperative purchasing networks for cost savings, like MEGA. He reminded members that at the last meeting Kevin Morsman and Dean Scholes shared their desire to have the County join purchasing networks.

Mr. James reported that he recently attended a Highway Superintendents' meeting and was asked whether the County is allowing others to piggyback. He informed the group that Allegany County was the only County that currently does not allow municipalities outside of the County to piggyback on bids. He wants Allegany County to be able to reciprocate the time-saving practice. He mentioned that language in the contract provides vendors with options to participate in piggyback locally, regionally, or to opt out of piggybacking.

### **Land Bank Meeting**

Legislator LaForge stated that the application would be pursued in August or September.

### **Review of Affordable Government Survey Results Completed by Towns & Villages**

Assistant to the County Administrator Jodi Adams reported receiving surveys back from all but six local towns and villages. Survey results indicate the areas of shared services most desired by the responding municipalities include Purchasing, Tax Assessment, and Highway Services.

Legislator LaForge noted he would like to move forward with the water and sewer report in September. Legislator LaForge concurred with Chairman Crandall's recommendation to send a letter to local municipalities to encourage participation.

### **Review of County Efficiency Plan**

County Administrator Mitch Alger stated we are waiting for approval of our plan from the state.

### **Inventory Analysis**

Clerk of the Board Brenda Rigby Riehle will work with a student intern from the Employment & Training Center beginning July 6 for approximately four to five weeks. One of the projects assigned to the intern will include assisting with inventorying the office furniture stored on the third floor in the County Office Building. It was noted that several items stored on the third floor belong to other departments and should be labelled as such. The Clerk of the Board will notify department heads of the plans and request that items be labelled.

### **Dutchess County Shared Services**

For informational purposes, brochures from Dutchess County were distributed to members. Dutchess County has a fairly comprehensive cooperative purchasing program that is administered by their Office of Central and Informational Services Department. The information included in the brochure can be accessed at [www.co.dutchess.ny.us](http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us).

### **Lease Options**

Legislator LaForge mentioned that lease track and rollover options is a popular trend for vehicles and equipment. Superintendent Guy James noted that these options require an initial investment but the expectation is there will be long-term financial savings. County Attorney Tom Miner noted the County District Attorney's Office would like to lease a vehicle.

### **Good of the Order**

Mr. Fanton informed committee members that he recently read an article related to overcoming barriers to shared services. He distributed copies of the article for members to read at their leisure. Legislator LaForge noted the article lists the four C's to promote shared services as communication, coordination, collaboration, and cooperation.

**Next Meeting Details**

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, July 22, at 3 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m. following a motion by Mr. Alger, seconded by Mr. Fanton, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jodi Adams  
Assistant to the County Administrator

**ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
JULY 22, 2015**

**\*\* NOT APPROVED \*\***

**Committee Members Present:** K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, Darwin Fanton, C. Jessup, B. Riehle, T. Ross (Absent: R. Oakerson)

**Others Present:** D. Healy, T. Miner, C. Santora

**Media Present:** No media present

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:05 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by County Administrator Alger, and carried to approve the Consolidation & Efficiencies Ad Hoc Committee minutes of June 24, 2015.

**Local Law & Amended Purchasing Policy**

Committee members were provided with the proposed amended Local Law authorizing the use of "Best Value" in the competitive bidding process. In addition to the lowest responsible bid purchase option, the proposed amendment to the local law will provide for best value purchasing. Best value purchasing involves using a scoring or rating scale to acquire goods and/or services. Adding this new dimension to the existing procurement and acquisition policy will provide for greater flexibility and accountability. Best value is defined as the basis for awarding all service and technology contracts to the offerer that optimizes quality, cost, and efficiency, among responsive and responsible offerers. Such basis shall be, wherever possible, quantifiable (State Finance Law §163 (1) (j)). County Attorney Tom Miner said that once the local law was passed, we would also amend our procurement purchasing policy by adding language that is taken pretty much out of the local law that would enhance our current purchasing policy. He added that the best value portion is the more critical aspect and we can do the piggybacking portion in a second step. County Treasurer Terri Ross indicated she'd prefer to see both issues added at one time. She added that Superintendent of Public Works Guy James has told her we are the only County that does not allow piggybacking on our bids at this time, although we have the ability to piggyback on others. Mr. Miner said that he would like to work with the Public Works Committee and/or DPW personnel to further amend the policy to allow for piggybacking. He added that whichever way it is done, it will adhere to the various County, State, and Federal laws for piggybacking. He added the language must be specific which is slightly different from simply "tacking" on such a provision to the proposed amended local law. Legislator LaForge said he would like to move the amended Local Law to the special Planning and Economic Development meeting scheduled for Monday, July 27, and then on to Ways & Means, eventually landing on the agenda for the full Board. To that end, a motion was made by Wellsville Town Supervisor Darwin Fanton to proceed with best value and piggybacking with appropriate language allowing other municipal entities to use contracts generated by Allegany County. The motion was seconded by County Administrator Mitch Alger and carried. **Refer to Planning & Economic Development and Ways & Means**

**Water & Sewer Efficiencies Discussion in Preparation for Reconvening Stakeholders in the Fall**

The discussion centered around the projected dearth of Water and Sewage Treatment Plant Operators that will occur when current operators begin retiring in the near future. This is a topic that has been discussed before. The question remains, how will the municipalities facing this shortage deal with it. The discussion then moved on to whether there should be one common unit to address the need, and if so, should a County-wide Water and Sewer District be created or should the operation be absorbed by the Department of Public Works or the Health Department. Legislator LaForge did not wish for the municipalities to fear a County “takeover.” Legislator LaForge reminded Committee members that at the last meeting, it had been decided to send a letter to the various municipalities (towns and villages) with water and sewage systems inviting them to a session to discuss these issues. The next question would be what benefit the County might offer them to encourage them to participate in a joint venture. The water and sewer study done by the Houghton intern was distributed again. Mr. LaForge noted that the study points out that there will be a critical shortage of water and sewer treatment plant operators. This would be a logical place to begin sharing services among the various water and sewer systems. Legislator LaForge noted that if the municipalities are agreeable to sharing services, perhaps all operations should be joined under one common entity. His suggestion at this time would be to have those operations become a function of either the County’s Department of Health or the Department of Public Works. At this point, it might not be necessary to create a County-wide Water and Sewer District. Placing these operations under a pre-existing County department would be a doable way to begin. Then, based on the size of the system and the need for operators, there would be a fee schedule billed to various systems and districts in the County.

County Planner Kier Dirlam noted that whatever the County comes up with, the municipalities with those systems need to understand that they will continue to see revenues which would make this joint venture less onerous to them. He added, “I suspect we’ll have to sell this thing, so we have to know what we’re selling, so we will need a pretty good “carrot” to sell it.”

County Treasurer Terri Ross suggested a separate Water/Sewer District rather than having the operations become a function of a County Department. Mr. LaForge said he had also entertained that notion, but that is why he wanted to continue the discussion before convening the municipalities. He added that having a County-wide system from the get-go is probably going to be “big and scary” at first and then we might not get as much participation. That’s why he suggested taking this baby step first and then determine the next step. There was some discussion regarding researching how other counties handle this issue. Mr. LaForge noted that Wayne County is similar to Allegany County, and it seems to have a good system going as all but one village participate. However, he said, we can’t compare ourselves to Erie or Monroe Counties. Mr. LaForge said one would think that the critical need would cause municipalities to see the logic in sharing the services. Wellsville Town Supervisor Darwin Fanton suggested that “perhaps we could identify two or three municipalities that have relatively good systems in place already and try to get them to figure out what type of savings they could figure out without great capital expenses and go from there.” Legislator LaForge then said that we would set a framework up so that others can join in the future.

Mr. Dirlam noted that it seems there is some motion to consolidate—Caneadea, Fillmore, and Belfast are still three different entities but are all using the same water service now. He added that even though they are taking baby steps, Alfred and Almond are thinking

about doing some stuff together as are Andover and Wellsville. "I think they're starting to realize they need each other," he added.

Ms. Ross wondered if the County could have a Water Sewer Board and start with asking people to be on the Board and say we need to talk about finding a consolidated way of doing things. Mr. Dirlam said we might have something akin to the Highway Association for beginning discussions and see where that goes.

One of the biggest problems with the current system, said Mr. LaForge, is that each municipality that has a water or sewer operation needs equipment to maintain it. He added that each town that has a water or sewer system has at least a quarter of a million dollars' worth of repair parts sitting on a shelf and that figure may even be higher. He added that most have backhoes, dump trucks, etc. If, he said, we had a couple of maintenance crews in the northern part of the County and in the southern part of the County, and they could arrive just as fast as the current crews could, that would make a real savings there. Consolidating inventory and equipment would be the second phase. Some of the concerns that could crop up might include the fact that there might be a time when municipalities think they won't get their water shut off fast enough, or if they had a leak, it would take forever to address, "but I think it would be overcome easily," he said.

Mr. LaForge went on to say that beyond maintenance districts, if the different water and sewer systems were together, as far as bonding, capital projects, and engineering, there should be economies of scale there, too.

Subsequently, there was some discussion of how the tax cap would affect a shared sewer/water organization. The question arose whether there is any way to set it up so it would be "outside" that tax cap restriction. There was discussion about setting up a Water and Sewer Authority, but it was noted, the State is not giving out any more "authorities." Ms. Ross felt that it would still fall under the cap. The idea of a utility corporation was brought up, as was the suggestion that we come up with a totally different, non-government model. Other brainstorming ideas were brought up by committee members on ways to find financial benefits for the municipalities with sewer and water operations to join together. It was thought that if this joint venture could be set up so it's not subject to the tax cap, that would be the appeal in itself. It was determined that more research should be conducted on other examples where this is being done. Mr. LaForge said he wouldn't mind hardening that data on the treatment plant operations a little further. "I think that's what will get municipalities officials' attention. They may realize they have a looming problem with a shortage of operators, but may not realize that other municipalities in the County are having that same problem. He added that he would like more discussion before we convene in October or November. Legislator Healy suggested looking at NACO (National Association of Counties) to see if there is a better model that exists outside of New York State.

### **Old Business**

Clerk of the Board Brenda Rigby Riehle told Committee members that her office had conducted an inventory of furniture and equipment that is stored on the third floor. She added that the Health Department has decided that anything of theirs can be used by other departments as long as the fixed asset sheets reflect this transfer. She also said that a lot of the items stored upstairs are junk and need to be disposed of. It was noted that the fixed assets needs to be transferred to scrap then to DPW to take care of this.

**Good of the Order**

**Next Meeting Details**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 2015, at 3 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers. Legislator LaForge said he will reach out to Dave Edwards and Jamie Hermann for more input on the municipalities' water and sewer systems.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m. following a motion by Mr. Alger, seconded by Ms. Ross, and carried

Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia Santora, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board  
Allegany County Board of Legislators

## **ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE**

**AUGUST 26, 2015**

**NOT APPROVED**

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

**Others Present:** L. Ballengee, B. Budinger, D. Edwards, J. Herman, T. Hull, C. Santora, R. Scott

**Media Present:** No media present

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Mr. Fanton and carried to approve the Allegany Affordable Government Committee minutes of July 22, 2015.

### **Water and Sewer Efficiencies Discussion**

Legislator LaForge stated the main focus of the discussion is to examine potential consolidation of sewer and water systems in Allegany County. Legislator LaForge hopes to bring every town representative together in the late fall to present ideas and details to possibly consolidate some of the systems.

### **County Study Analysis**

A student of Dr. Oakerson completed a study six months ago, and Deputy Public Health Director Tom Hull refined the study into the Municipal Water Systems in Allegany County: Certified Water Operator Status Report dated August 26, 2015. The report focuses on the source and treatment of the water and the staff operating the systems. Review of the report by the committee discovered there are 17 municipal supply systems and seven were identified as potential concern. Possible retirement, lack of proper operating certification to match the system, and lack of certified staff with experience, were considered when identifying districts of concern.

### **Expert Comments and Recommendations**

Legislator LaForge stated, based on the review of the report, there is a need to look at how the County may address the issue of a potential shortage of certified operators. Jamie Herman discussed how other New York State entities have addressed this issue by contracting operators and hiring project managers. Operators who are not certified are supervised by the project manager. The project manager may cover more than one system. Mr. Herman also suggested that if municipalities were to consolidate, to consider how the municipalities would be included. The New York Rural Water Association can provide free assistance to municipalities with less than 10,000 customers. Mr. Herman also suggested using Wayne County as a model when considering consolidation. Wayne County had a goal, vision, and purpose and has followed that through the entire process.

## **Next steps**

Legislator LaForge asked Mr. Hull if he would be willing to do a similar study for the sewage systems in the County and the debt service of the municipalities. Tom Hull stated he would. As a result, the County will have its own comprehensive water and sewer study. Legislator LaForge also suggested researching Chadwick Bay with help from Jodi Adams to look at their system.

## **Tompkins County Comprehensive Assessment**

The Committee briefly reviewed the Tompkins County Comprehensive Assessment.

## **Land Bank Program**

Legislator LaForge stated he met with Attorney General Eric Schneiderman to discuss dilapidated housing and land banks. The County was encouraged to continue working with Steuben County to address this issue. There will be a conference call with Steuben County on Monday, August 31, 2015. An in-person meeting will be held on September 17, 2015. Legislator LaForge stated the application will be submitted by November 17, 2015. A round of funding may be awarded at the end of 2015 or the beginning of 2016.

## **New Business**

Brenda Rigby Riehle introduced Becky Scott as the new Secretary to the Clerk of the Board as Cindy Santora will be retiring this week.

Terri Ross attended a conference conducted by Cattaraugus Allegany BOCES on sharing services. The conference focused on why, who, what, and how. Ms. Ross distributed a report generated by the conference.

Kier Dirlam stated he has had several communications with New York State representatives regarding the water study and land bank. There is \$150 million available in the Governor's budget for the next three years to fund efficiency projects. The committee needs to discuss what to apply for and identify the parameters of the grant. Mr. Herman stated there was a webinar and he would be willing to share his notes with the committee. The webinar may be archived on the Environmental Facilities Website.

## **Good of the Order**

Brenda Rigby Riehle stated there will be a reception for Cindy Santora on Thursday, August 27, 2015, from 1 to 3 p.m.

**Next Meeting Details** - September 23, 2015, at 3 p.m.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m. following a motion by Mr. Dirlam, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried

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

**ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT GROUP**

**September 23, 2015**

**NOT APPROVED**

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

**Others Present:** H. Budinger, D. Edwards, B. Gamache, J. Herman, T. Miner, R. Scott

**Media Present:** No media present

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Allegany County Affordable Government Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Mr. Fanton, and carried to approve the Allegany County Affordable Government Committee minutes of August 26, 2015.

**Sewer System Efficiencies Discussion**

**County Analysis**

Legislator LaForge announced Deputy Public Health Director Tom Hull has been ill, and was not able to prepare information for today's meeting.

**Expert Comments and Recommendations**

Legislator LaForge asked Jamie Herman to give an update on the water systems. Mr. Herman stated he sent contact information via email to Legislator LaForge for one private company downstate. The representative from the company is willing to speak with Legislator LaForge.

**Land Bank Program**

**Updates**

Legislator LaForge talked about the approach to setting up a land bank program. He has worked out some of the steps and will continue to pursue the feasibility of having a program in Allegany County. Legislator LaForge identified one problem, the land banks that have been created are not really in rural areas. The closest rural program is in Chautauqua County, and the type of property they have in the program is not similar to Allegany County. About a year ago, Chautauqua County did a presentation about the land bank. They had three categories of property they take on in their land bank. The first are properties that need to be demolished. The second are properties they can rehabilitate and they put back on the market. The last ones are foreclosures and "zombie properties." Legislator LaForge stated he was not sure Allegany County has that formula here. He believes most properties would fall into the first and second categories. He does not believe there are a lot of foreclosures or "zombie properties." Legislator LaForge stated the Attorney General has created 10 more slots for land banks in New York State with possible funding available for the programs. Programs need to have a workable model to qualify, so Legislator LaForge is working on the idea and hoping to determine in the next couple of weeks if it is feasible for Allegany County.

## **New Business**

### **Shared Services**

County Treasurer Terri Ross briefly reviewed the information from the Sharing Services handout she distributed at the last meeting. Ms. Ross attended the presentation at the County Treasurer's Conference. The handout is a reference for how, why, why would you share services, how are you going to share services, what you don't want, and who should be involved. It helps answers questions someone may have when sharing services, and where you may have to go to get more information. County Planner Kier Dirlam asked how many towns have combined and shared services. Ms. Ross responded that only 2 out of 3,179 have consolidated successfully since 2009. Ms. Ross stated in her opinion some of the ideas that have been discussed at the committee meetings seem to be inter-municipal agreements rather than adding another layer or governing body. Legislator LaForge noted the handout had a lot of information about purchasing and piggybacking. He stated on Monday there will be a public hearing and vote on purchasing, piggybacking, and best value practices law.

### **The Legislator in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Clerk of the Board Brenda Rigby Riehle talked about the Legislators going paperless. She stated she has had conversations with Legislator LaForge about getting computers, laptops, or iPads for the Legislators. Ms. Rigby Riehle received prices from Information Technology Director Keith Hooker. Mr. Hooker suggested if the computers were not being taken home, a desktop computer would be the best value. They have a longer life and are cheaper to buy. County Treasurer Terri Ross thought it would be better to get tablets because they are mobile. Legislator LaForge stated Ms. Rigby Riehle has been in contact with Steuben County because they have gone paperless. She reported there was initial grumbling, but everyone has accepted it. She also stated they have saved money and have gone green. Legislator LaForge stated Brenda Mori from Steuben County may have answers to many of their questions. He suggested having her meet with the County.

Darwin Fanton suggested strict policies and procedures should be in place, including designating an authorized person to release information to the Press. County Planner Kier Dirlam agreed there should be a single point of contact. He also suggested all the Legislators have a County email address. Legislator LaForge stated the County may want to look at having a Public Information Officer. Ms. Ross stated there is an unwritten policy that all public relations material needs to go through the County Administrator's office for approval. She also stated there is an existing electronic use policy and an appendix to that policy may be a good idea if the Legislators will be responsible for the equipment. Mr. Dirlam stated local area schools have students using tablets, and it may be a good idea to look at their policies and procedures..

Legislator LaForge stated some of his colleagues will not like the idea. This will not eliminate paper completely, but will significantly reduce it. County Attorney Tom Miner agreed going paperless is the way to go. He suggested having a wireless printer nearby if the Legislators want a hard copy. Ms. Ross suggested having the first year be a test year where Legislators can voluntarily try it out. Legislator Jessup thinks going paperless is worth a try. Legislator LaForge requested to advance from the Allegany County Affordable Committee to Ways & Means to consider electronic devices for all Legislators subject to policy review with pending review by the Facilities and Communications Committee with final concurrence at Ways & Means before it goes to whole Board. The request was approved on a motion by Darwin Fanton, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means. Refer to Facilities and Communications.**

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m. following a motion by Mr. Dirlam, seconded by Ms. Rigby Riehle, and carried

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

## **ALLEGANY AFFORDABLE GOVERNMENT GROUP**

**October 28, 2015**

**NOT APPROVED**

**Committee Members Present:** K. LaForge, J. Adams, M. Alger, K. Dirlam, Dar Fanton, C. Jessup, B. Rigby Riehle, T. Ross, C. Crandall (Absent: R. Oakerson )

**Others Present:** A. Forster, K. Hooker, C. Knapp, T. Miner, M. Schlueter, D. Scholes, R.Scott

**Media Present:** No media present.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Allegany Affordable Government Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Dar Fanton, and carried to approve the Allegany Affordable Government Committee minutes of September 23, 2015.

### **Vehicle & Equipment Lease Options**

Department of Public Works Deputy Superintendent Dean Scholes introduced Al Forster and Mark Schlueter from Kenworth Northeast Group, Inc. Mr. Forster and Mr. Schlueter were invited to talk about leasing and vehicle options. Mr. Forster described the different ways industries can lease vehicles and equipment. The first is a full-service lease, where the equipment is titled to the leasing company. The problem with a full-service lease is the County will lose the tax-exempt status, so it may cost more to have a full-service lease. Mr. Forster noted the most popular lease is the municipal lease. Multiple banks such as First Niagara, M & T, and General Electric Credit offer this type of lease. He stated it is a custom lease where the interest rates are credited back for the depreciation of the vehicle. The vehicles are titled to the municipalities, so they would be exempt from taxes. The County would be able to set up a payment schedule that fits the County's cash flow. So, the County can pay annually, semi-annually, or quarterly. Mr. Forster stated a benefit for the County is they can secure more equipment for the same size budget. The municipalities are paying over a period of time instead of one lump sum. He noted it eliminates the need for bonding, and taking on additional debt. Mr. Forster stated leasing has become more popular, and about 35 percent of the municipalities he deals with are leasing instead of buying the trucks or equipment outright.

Legislator LaForge asked how Federal Excise Tax is treated in a Capital Lease, and if they receive exemptions. Mr. Forster replied yes because the vehicle is titled to the municipality, and at the end of the lease it is a \$1 buyout. Legislator LaForge asked about the maximum amount of time for the lease. Mr. Forster stated the longest he has seen is seventy-two months. Legislator LaForge asked what would happen if someone wanted to switch their whole fleet out. Mr. Forster stated they would have to come to an agreed value based on the age of the equipment, and start new leases on equipment. Legislator LaForge asked who in Western New York is doing a large program of equipment leasing. Mr. Forster noted most of them are leasing about five to six vehicles, and financial institutions can give more information on who is leasing. Legislator LaForge asked if the lease factors were fairly low. Mr. Forster stated they are fairly low; when he checked the rates forty days ago, it was in the high three percent, but they are subject to market change. The lease rate is set at the acquisition of the vehicle, and does not change over the life of the lease.

Legislator LaForge asked Mr. Scholes to relate this information to their current replacement program, specifically how many they are replacing a year. Mr. Scholes replied they are replacing about two or three a year, and the fleet is aging. County Treasurer Terri Ross asked if the fleet he is referring to is heavy equipment. Mr. Scholes replied yes. Legislator LaForge asked about the average age of the heavy equipment. Mr. Scholes responded they have equipment ranging from the late 1970s to brand new 2016 trucks. Many of the equipment Mr. Scholes listed are from the 1990s.

Mr. Scholes asked Mr. Forster to talk about opportunities the County may have in three to five years with the trucks they just purchased from Kenworth. Mr. Forster stated a lot of municipalities trade-in between five and ten years. The average trade-in on a vehicle less than ten years old is in the mid \$20,000 and up to \$50,000 depending on how it is equipped. Mr. Scholes asked if more municipalities are doing trade-in programs instead of leasing programs. Mr. Forster responded that more people are trading-in instead of leasing. He added it is strictly a cash flow decision because leasing allows someone to stretch their money, whereas purchasing requires an outright amount of money. Legislator LaForge asked about depreciation. Mr. Forster stated at the five and six year mark is where the depreciation starts to slow down. He noted the first three years has a high depreciation. At five to seven years the value of the equipment decreases, but the maintenance costs increase.

Legislator LaForge asked if the County was serious about doing a capital lease would Kenworth get quotes. Mr. Forster stated yes, or they can have the lenders come directly to the County. Legislator LaForge surmised that Superintendent Guy James and Mr. Scholes would want to conduct more research, and determine what a five or ten-year rotation might look like. Ms. Ross noted there may be budget issues, and the County would have to discuss it. Ms. Ross asked if there was a structure for a trade-in option without leasing a new vehicle. Mr. Forster stated they do not have a guaranteed value system right now.

Legislator LaForge asked about the base warranty. Mr. Schlueter stated it ranges based on a number of variables. He noted the Department of Public Works purchased an extended warranty package that covers all the major components except for wear and tear for five years. Legislator LaForge asked about the cost of the extended warranty. Mr. Schlueter replied \$1,000 to \$1,500 on the \$175,000 tractor the County recently purchased. It averages to about \$300 a year. The warranty is based on miles, and Mr. Scholes noted the five years will expire before they hit the mileage. Mr. Fanton added he liked the five-year extended warranty for \$1,500.

Mr. Scholes stated they are interested in this idea, and would like to thank the committee for taking the time to listen. He added they are an emergency response agency, and need the equipment to respond. Mr. Scholes noted the Department works with towns and villages on projects, and they use some of the equipment. Ms. Ross asked if Kenworth has heavy equipment too. Mr. Forster stated no only trucks. Mr. Scholes noted Caterpillar and John Deere have similar programs. He can make a list and give it to the committee, and also put together a portfolio of where the equipment is housed, etcetera. Chairman Crandall talked about expanding the list to add operating expenses.

Legislator LaForge asked if Kenworth has worked with natural gas. Mr. Forster stated Natural Gas is a valid project for them. He noted New York State is primarily Compressed Natural Gas, and there isn't a large network for fueling. Mr. Forster stated the biggest success with natural gas is with trash companies. They are able to generate natural gas with their own trash. He noted the benefits of natural gas are decreasing because of lower gasoline and diesel prices. Another issue is the lack of public fueling stations in Western New York. Mr. Forster also noted the re-salability of natural gas vehicles is very limited. Legislator LaForge said natural gas is better with emissions than diesel fuel. Mr. Forster agreed, but stated diesel fuel is

burning much cleaner than before. Legislator LaForge thanked Mr. Forster and Mr. Schlueter for attending the meeting.

Ms. Ross asked if there was a goal to look at all the vehicles including cars and trucks, not just heavy equipment. She noted they met with Enterprise in January, and can pass on the information she received. She stated she has the list of all the County vehicles. Legislator LaForge stated they would like to look at the whole thing. Mr. Dirlam wondered if there was a way to calculate the savings of rotating vehicles at a certain period of time versus keeping them for a longer period of time. Ms. Ross said companies will do that for a fee, and it was a lot of work. Dar Fanton stated he heard that ten years is when to rotate the stock to see some savings. However, he has yet to see the details to prove that it makes sense to keep a vehicle five years and not pay the maintenance on it. County Attorney Carissa Knapp noted local finance law says the life cycle for a sedan is three years, so you wouldn't want a five year lease. Legislator LaForge stated there has to be an optimum point where buying new and not paying maintenance costs will reap some benefits. Mr. Scholes asked if the Committee has a direction they would like the Department of Public Works to take that may be helpful in the future. Legislator LaForge suggested taking a particular group of vehicles and analyze it for age, use, mileage, hours it is used, and where it is housed. Mr. Scholes stated he could do that, and can take some pictures of the equipment.

### **Land Bank Program Updates**

Legislator LaForge noted the land bank program is still in discussion, and it may lead to a local corporation law. County Attorney Tom Miner noted it has to go through the Planning and Economic Development Committee, and then to the full Board. Mr. Miner talked about the process of getting it approved through the State including the Empire State Development, Banking Commissioner, and Secretary of the State. Legislator LaForge said it is a minimal investment of time. Mr. Miner stated it is fairly minimal in the beginning, but there are administrative reporting obligations. Legislator LaForge asked if it wasn't successful, what they would have to do if they wanted to go out of business. Mr. Miner stated since it is a not-for-profit; it would have to be dissolved. Any funds awarded to the not-for-profit would go back to the funder. Chairman Crandall and Legislator LaForge asked what would happen if the not-for-profit did not receive any funds. Mr. Miner stated it would sit there waiting for funds, but the reports will still have to be done. Legislator LaForge stated they should have another meeting about this issue before it is brought to the Planning and Development Committee. County Planner Kier Dirlam stated Legislator LaForge, Bryan Gamache, Jodi Adams, and he have been doing research on how to move forward, and Mr. Miner has worked on the legal issues. He stated they have a basic plan that creates a separate corporation. County Treasurer Terri Ross would like to see the plan before it gets presented, and how it will work. Mr. Dirlam stated Mr. Gamache called the State, and currently there is no money available, and there isn't information for the next round of funding. Legislator LaForge stated the idea is to be ready if they have another round of funding, so they can apply. Chairman Crandall stated the Board will have to think about impact versus the cost if they want to put money into the project.

### **County Efficiency Plan**

County Administrator Mitch Alger stated the County Efficiency Plan was accepted. He noted the checks for this year will be distributed in November 2016. The checks that will be going out this November are for staying under the cap last year. He noted a few items were not approved, but overall the County still met the target. County Planner Kier Dirlam asked how many towns or villages participated in the plan. County Treasurer Terri Ross noted thirteen of

twenty-nine towns, four out of ten villages, and three out of five fire districts participated. Legislator LaForge thanked all who worked on the plan.

**Good of the Order**

Discussion on the November meeting date. Currently, the meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 25, 2015, at 3 p.m. There was some concern that is it the day before Thanksgiving, and some committee members may not be present. It was decided the next meeting will be Monday, November 23, 2015, at 3:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m. following a motion by Dar Fanton, seconded by Legislator Jessup, and carried

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

## **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