

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Legislature Makes Major Changes To Law Governing Sewer District

Falciglia: Changes Will Increase Oversight & Transparency

Executive Director Must Provide Quarterly Updates

Elected Officials On Sewer Board Will Not Be Paid

Felony Conviction Results In Immediate Removal

Pay Docked For Public Members With Unexcused Absences

New City, NY (May 23, 2016) – The Rockland County Legislature has voted unanimously to amend significant portions of the local law that governs Rockland County Sewer District No. 1.

The major changes include reducing the size of the Board from 13 to 10 members; docking the pay of those who fail to attend or who have no documented excuse for missing meetings; and tighter reporting requirements regarding the status of the Sewer District’s overall operations.

Additionally, in what is believed to be the first such requirement of a board in Rockland, any Sewer District Commissioner convicted of any felony is automatically and immediately disqualified from the Board.

“I believe this is a major step in what we all demand: Oversight and accountability,” Rockland County Legislator Charles Falciglia (R-Suffern) said. “Going forward, there will be more circular reporting now.”

Falciglia worked with Planning & Public Works Committee Chairman Ilan Schoenberger (D-Wesley Hills) and Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe (D-Montebello) to draft the changes and sponsor the resolution.

In a bi-partisan move, Legislators voted 17-0 to amend the Rockland County Code that created the Sewer District and specifies how it must legally function. The changes will begin implementing in coming weeks.

“This will help us to tighten up the rules and ensure that we – and therefore the public – are receiving the information that is needed to allow the system of checks and balances to work more efficiently,” Legislator Ilan Schoenberger said.

Sewer District No. 1 provides sewer services to homes and businesses in the town of Ramapo - except in the Village of Suffern - and in the town of Clarkstown, as well as several properties in Orangetown.

“Our residents count on all public servants to do the right thing when it comes to how governments function,” Wolfe said. “These changes make it clear that we are all expecting improved transparency when it comes to the Sewer District and its activities.”

Under the amended rules, the Sewer District’s Board of Commissioners will include four members of the public at-large. They will be the only members eligible to be paid for their participation; no elected officials serving on the Board will be paid.

The Sewer District will also be required to hold a minimum of nine board meetings per year. Regular attendance at all regular and special meetings is expected. At-large members will have their pay docked by 1/12th for each meeting they miss. Absences can be excused due to an emergency, a documented medical excuse or for religious observance.

The Sewer District’s Executive Director must also report all attendance to the Clerk to the Legislature on a monthly basis. Anyone with excessive absences – defined as three or more unexcused absences – shall be immediately reported to the Clerk.

The Executive Director must also provide quarterly written reports to the Legislature on the status of all operational, legal, financial and personnel matters regarding Sewer District No. 1.

All resolutions and minutes of the Sewer District’s Board of Commissioners must be filed with the Clerk to the Legislature monthly.

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