

The Legislature of Rockland Countyd



MICHAEL M. GRANT
LEGISLATOR – DISTRICT 2
CHAIR, BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. M. Grant, Chair
Leg. A. Wolfe, Vice Chair
Leg. I. Schoenberger, 2nd Vice Chair
Leg. H. Cornell
Leg. T. Earl (late 12:58)
Leg. J. Hood, Jr.
Leg. J. Murphy
Leg. P. Soskin
Leg. F. Sparaco

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Leg. N. Low-Hogan

OTHERS PRESENT:

Leg. D. Jobson
Leg. A. Wieder
E. Yeger, Esq.
S. Grogan
D. Greenberg
M. Widmer
M. Hook
D. Friedman
Leg. C. Carey
N. Doliner
S. DeGroat
S. Powers
A. Pinzow
L. Toole
D. Castelihero

MINUTES
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2014
12:45 P.M.

ROLL CALL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 2, 2015

MOTION TO ADOPT:
CORNELL/HOOD, JR.

UNAN

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 9, 2015

MOTION TO ADOPT:
WOLFE/SCHOENBERGER

UNAN

1. Referral No. 9500

- a. Levy Of County Taxes Pursuant To The 2015 Budget. [Department Of Budget and Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance)
DL#2014-05216

Chairman of the Legislature Alden Wolfe explained that a Budget and Finance meeting was held on November 25th where the committee talked about what had been done on the 2014 property tax bill where the County Property Tax Levy was split into two separate lines on the bill - Rockland County Property Tax and the other New York State Medicaid Tax. This was an effort to comply with the requirements of the Rockland County Mandate and Taxation Information Act and the Rockland County Taxation Transparency Act (both passed by the Legislature in 2012 and intended to inform taxpayers about the impact of State mandates on local taxes).

This was not complied with because the Towns print the tax bills not the County. At that meeting, it was discussed that there is no such thing as NY State Medicaid Tax and felt it was misleading, confusing and inappropriate to have it split off on two separate lines. Leg. Wolfe assumed the decision to do so came from the County Executive's branch; it certainly did not come from the Legislature.

At the meeting of November 25th, it was mentioned that the Legislature was interested in entertaining a split in the levy for 2015. At that point, there was sufficient time to deal with the issue, but a lack of willingness on the part of the Administration to take care of it. The Legislature was originally prepared to pass a resolution today, however, the Towns have not only just printed the template for the property tax bills, but have already printed the actual property tax bills. It would not be fair to the Towns to essentially force them to reprint the bills and cause additional expense to County residents.

Leg. Wolfe wanted to be clear that this does the taxpayers a disservice, because the information on the tax bill is wrong, it is misleading. There is no such thing as a New York State Medicaid tax. This is an issue that will be addressed in 2015 and the Administration has now been put on notice.

Leg. Schoenberger stated the County is required to provide services by State Law. Our State mandates exceed our Real Property tax levy. We are mandated by the State of New York to provide services so the costs can be more than what we raise in real property taxes. The idea of putting information on the bill is for the public's benefit.

Leg. Schoenberger said it was his understanding that the Town of Clarkstown tax bills are already on-line and ready to be mailed. The Town of Haverstraw tax bills are also ready to be mailed. To make changes now would cause a great deal of disruption and confusion among the taxpayers and the towns. There will be discussions on how to handle this in the future.

Leg. Cornell stated she appreciates what her colleagues are saying and believes that an explanation on the bill can be done with 2 or 3 lines.

Budget & Finance Chairman Grant said Legs. Wolfe, Schoenberger and Cornell are accurate in their statements. There cannot be transparency without clarity, accuracy and honesty.

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
SCHOENBERGER/SOSKIN**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- b. Adoption Of 2015 Tax Rates – Clarkstown, Haverstraw, Orangetown, Ramapo And Stony Point [Department Of Budget and Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance)
DL#2014-05337

MOTION TO APPROVE: **UNAN**
HOOD, JR./CORNELL

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- c. Levy Of 2015 Towns, Districts And Other Taxes. [Department Of Budget and Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Budget & Finance) **DL#2014-05201**

MOTION TO APPROVE: **UNAN**
SOSKIN/MURPHY

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- d. 2015 Town Statements – Clarkstown, Haverstraw, Orangetown, Ramapo And Stony Point. [Department Of Budget and Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance) **DL#2014-05207**

MOTION TO APPROVE: **UNAN**
SPARACO/CORNELL

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- e. Levy Of 2015 Town Highway Items 1, 2, 3 And 4. [Department Of Budget And Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance) **DL#2014-05218**

MOTION TO APPROVE: **UNAN**
HOOD, JR./WOLFE

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

2. Referral No. 8770

- a. Provide For Collection Of 2015 Sewer Rent For Rockland County Sewer District No. 1. (Dianne Philipps, Director Sewer District No. 1)
DL#2014-05453

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
SCHOENBERGER/SOSKIN**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- b. Provide For Levy Of 2015 Tax For Rockland County Sewer District No.1 (Dianne Philipps, Director Sewer District No. 1)
DL#2014-05454 rev 12/23/14

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/MURPHY**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- c. Providing For Adoption Of 2015 Tax Rate And Unit Charge For Rockland County Sewer District No. 1. (Dianne Philipps, Director Sewer District No. 1)
DL#2014-05455

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
SPARACO/CORNELL**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

3. **Referral No. 2867** - Provide For Collection of 2015 Charges For The Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority. [Department Of Finance]. (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance)
DL#2014-05217

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
CORNELL/HOOD, JR.**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

4. **Referral No. 7516**
 - a. Rejecting And Canceling Certain Village Tax Assessments In Rockland County. [Department of Budget and Finance] (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance)
DL#2014-05212

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
EARL/HOOD, JR.**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

- b. Rejecting And Canceling Certain School Tax Assessments In Rockland County. [Department of Budget & Finance] (Stephen DeGroat, Commissioner Of Finance)
DL#2014-05211

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
EARL/SCHOENBERGER**

UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS: Legs. Schoenberger, Cornell, Earl, Hood, Jr., Soskin, Sparaco

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: 1:08 PM
MURPHY/SOSKIN**

UNAN

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