

## LEGISLATIVE AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE MINUTES

DECEMBER 4, 2006 – 4:30 P.M.

Present: Chairman A. Johnson; Supervisors Peck, Raymond, Sausville, Trottier and Gutheil; David Wickerham, County Administrator; Mark Rider, County Attorney; Bruce Calvin, General Code; Press.

Chairman A. Johnson called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mr. Trottier, seconded by Ms. Raymond the minutes of the November 2, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Johnson said there is a local sales tax option for solar energy equipment. It is exempt from New York State Sales Tax and the State has given the local counties the option of implementing the exemption as well. Information regarding the exemption was distributed to all committee members for their review.

Mr. Johnson said he would consult with Mr. Pitcheralle, the County Treasurer for details on how this would financially impact the county if implemented.

Mr. Calvin presented the committee with a PowerPoint presentation on the codification system and gave a brief explanation of how it works. He said a code puts everything in one place, and it is cross-referenced and foot noted. General Code has worked with many of the communities in Saratoga County, and about 800 in New York. Other counties have codified their laws as well, including Suffolk, Westchester, Monroe, Rockland etc. In counties the code can be a little bit different. It can conclude simply the local laws and resolutions of a general and permanent nature, or rules and regulations of the various board committees.

Mr. Calvin said the code would contain at this point administrative regulations and things that deal with the daily operation of the county government and regulations where there would be some sort of minor function.

Mr. Calvin said the document could be made available to the public on the Internet, E-Code. There are now over 1,000 code books on the website, which would be a link from the county homepage to General Codes. This is a great tool for people to be able to go to the county website to find out the laws of the community.

Mr. Trottier asked if there was a fee for the service? Mr. Calvin said initially the fee would be included in the proposal, thereafter, the fee for both the in-house version and the E-Code version would be \$880 to maintain the files electronically.

Ms. Raymond said she was in favor of codifying local laws. I think that we have an obligation to the people that follow us, to give them what has been done in the past in an orderly way that is up to date and modern. It gives us an opportunity to review some of the things that are on the books to determine if we want them in the form they are in or if they need to be updated or changed.

Mr. Calvin said by codifying the local laws it would minimize the risk of legal action against the community. It makes enforcement easier because you actually have the legislation codified. It also provides continuity between administration. When new people come in, the new people have the same laws the old people had.

Mr. Johnson asked how far back would the documents be codified? Mr. Calvin said they typically go back fifty years.

Mr. Johnson asked if there would be a topical version? Mr. Calvin said, yes, there would be a paper version with an index.

Mr. Johnson asked if this would replace the laserfiche? Mr. Calvin said, no, it would be in addition to. This would be for the local laws. What is in the laserfiche program can be anything, minutes, billing records etc. The proposal calls for fifty hard copies of the code and a version electronically put on the network.

Ms. Raymond asked what the price difference would be if they researched local laws prior to fifty years and forward? Mr. Calvin said he would research and report back with the figure. Ms. Raymond said she would be in favor of codifying local laws going back to the first county local laws beginning approximately 1792.

Mr. Calvin said the proposal would include an initial conference and research of the records, putting together a manuscript of all the laws that are found. All the amendments would be put into the document where they belong. A history would be compiled to describe how it came to be. There would be an analysis of the laws, pointing out where there are inconsistencies and duplications both internally and with statutory provisions. A final report would then be prepared with suggestions and put into a workbook. The County would make all final decisions.

Ms. Raymond said the end result is that the county ends up with logical laws that agree with the statutes of the State of New York. This will be a foundation for future Boards to follow up.

Mr. Calvin said he would review and report back to the committee his suggestions of how many hardcopies should be included. He suggested fifty copies might be too many.

Mr. Calvin said once the committee makes the changes, General Code will incorporate them and publish the book with the changes. The legislation will then be submitted for review to the County Attorney and Supervisors.

Mr. Johnson suggested revising the proposal based on discussions of today's meeting.

Mr. Calvin said a CD would be included with every update to the book.

Mr. Johnson suggested recommending to the 2007 Legislative and Research Committee that they move forward with the new Codification Plan.

**A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Trottier to recommend to the 2007 Legislative and Research Committee that they move forward with the new Codification Plan. Unanimous.**

Mr. Johnson thanked all members of the committee for their support and dedication.

**On a motion made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Trottier the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Sansom