

Legislative & Research Committee Minutes
May 15, 2019 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Kusnierz; Committee Members Alan Grattidge, Todd Kusnierz, Tara Gaston, Art Johnson, Ed Kinowski. Supervisors Preston Allen, Tom Wood; Chad Cooke, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Barbara Thomas, League of Women Voters.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Johnson, the minutes of the April 4, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Grattidge, to oppose New York State Senate Bill 2837 and Assembly Bill 2750 of 2019. Motion Passed. Ms. Gaston was opposed.

A copy of a resolution passed by Orange County Legislature recently was distributed. Mr. Kusnierz said that these bills are currently in the labor committees of the respective houses. This measure would oppose the legislation which would allow for collective bargaining rights for farm laborers, would provide for 8 hour days, and at least 24 hours of consecutive rest per week. This is opposed by the New York State Farm Bureau and was brought to the Board of Supervisors by a county resident who was the former president of the County Farm Bureau. Mr. Kusnierz said that agriculture is a significant part of New York State's economy and contributes over \$5B annually, of that \$2.5B is generated at the farm gate by Dairy producers. There are significant dairy farms in Saratoga County so we need to be sensitive to the financial impact that adopting this legislation will have on their business operations. Farmers are already struggling and cannot, for the most part, meet the cost of production with the revenues received on the sale of their milk. Anything that is detrimental to their farm operations is something that can have a ripple effect on the state and local economies.

Ms. Gaston said that the Orange County resolution deals with family farming and the bill specifically exempts family members of those who own the farm. She recommended that the Saratoga County resolution not focus on family farming as the bill automatically exempts them. Ms. Gaston said that she will not be voting in favor of the motion regardless, but as a suggestion for those who may wish to, it would make more sense.

Ms. Gaston noted for the record that she arrived late to the meeting, after the vote approving the minutes. Ms. Gaston would like to note her disapproval of the minutes of April 4, 2019. Ms. Gaston said that she had requested an edit based on her request and denial of more information from the County Clerk and the Sheriff, which was not included in the minutes. Mr. Kusnierz said that they had corresponded on this issue. Mr. Kusnierz said that when minutes are taken, it is not an all-inclusive synopsis on what takes place and he does not want to tell the Clerk how to do his or her job, or set a precedent for changing minutes.

On a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Grattidge, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board