

Government Review & Efficiency Transcript

11-4-2021

SPEAKERS

Steve Bulger, Tara Gaston, Michael Hartnett, Matt Veitch, Kevin Tollisen, Craig Hayner

Matt Veitch

No problem. Well, welcome to the Government Review and Efficiency Committee for November 4th. Attendance has been taken. We do have a quorum. The first item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes from the October 7, 2021 meeting. So I'll ask for a motion for that.

Tara Gaston

I'll move that. Supervisor Gaston.

Matt Veitch

Supervisor Gaston. And is there a second?

Kevin Tollisen

Second.

Matt Veitch

Supervisor Tollisen, second. Any discussion? All in favor, say aye.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Matt Veitch

Any opposed? Carried. Alright, so the first item on our agenda for today is one that we've actually had on the agenda a few times, but it's now ready to go. It is the Press Release and Media Relations policy, and this replaces a policy that we had in our policy manual that was very short and one sentence and done before we had a media relations person and so it basically made sense for us to write a new policy regarding how we do media relations. And with the work of our Deputy Administrator Ridge and our Public Relations Specialist, Christine and the County Attorney and the County Administrator they've come up with a policy for us to review. It was attached to the agenda, I believe, and everybody on the committee should have a copy. So I'm not sure if we want to go over like the highlights of what's in it but if everybody's reviewed it, I guess I would say if there's any questions or comments, before we move it, I would open the floor up at this point. Supervisor Gaston.

Tara Gaston

Can I move it? And then have a discussion or do you wanna.

Matt Veitch

Sure.

Tara Gaston

Okay, so I'll move it.

Matt Veitch

So we have a motion? Is there a second?

Kevin Tollisen

I'll second it.

Matt Veitch

Second, Supervisor Tollisen. Any discussion?

Tara Gaston

So my only, one of the questions that I had last time was regarding elected officials' use. I think, in general, the definitions and everything it clarifies it, I think, clears up a lot of the issues. But in Section five B, it mentions any press release, public statement, etc., that is made on behalf of the Board of Supervisors or County of Saratoga should be subject to the Chair. How is that being defined? That's, that's because I know part of the discussion was can a Supervisor use the Director of Public Relations for any, you know, purpose, that's obviously related to County business, not, so is the assumption that any of these press statements, appearances, etc. that is done on County business, is the assumption that it's on behalf of the Board? Or that's where my quest is, like, where are we drawing? And I'm I know, I'm sorry, but it's the lawyer in me.

Matt Veitch

No, no, no, I think it's a good point. I'm not sure what the intent was when it was written. It was, done we, it was done based on the discussion that we had in one of our earlier meetings so I'm not sure who contributed to that part of it, because I didn't actually write that language so I'm just wondering, County Attorney I mean, you've got your microphone light on, so.

Michael Hartnett

Thank you, Chairman. Mike, Hartnett here. So when we put this together, it was entirely based on the discussion at the last Government Review and Efficiency Committee, which I believe was in August, when this last came up, and there was earnest discussion about it. The purpose and I guess, impetus behind the exclusion in five, roman numeral five B, is that one individual member of the Board of Supervisors would be precluded from speaking for the entire legislative body without approval from the Chair, but not restricted in speaking in their individual capacity. So, of course, there are no restriction on elected officials right to, First Amendment or otherwise, to speak on their own behalf. But when speaking for the entire group, would require the Chair's approval. I don't know if that answers your direct question about usage of the Director of Director of Public Relations and how that would play into

it, but that was the purpose behind that exclusion was not to, to was to provide a carve out for Supervisors to be able to speak for themselves in elected capacity or individual capacity, but not be able to speak for the legislative body without the Chair's blessing, so to speak.

Tara Gaston

Practically speaking, how would that change from now?

Matt Veitch

I think the

Tara Gaston

I have the distinct impression I'm about to get thrown out a window.

Tara Gaston

No, no. I mean, I think the difference is that, I guess, if I'm looking at it, I'm thinking about it from my own personal perspective, if I put out a press release myself, using my email, even if it's a County email, anything that I do that I put out through that would be my statement and not the County's statement. If I want to have something put out by the County Administration, on my behalf, then I would need to get approval for that. So like, for example,

Tara Gaston

Right.

Matt Veitch

I'll use the I'll use the most recent one. So we're preparing to do a something that NYSAC is proposing for the veterans and it's the light the County up green, right, so as Buildings and Grounds, we kind of got onto that we're going to get some green light bulbs and we're going to light up the County green, we may light up the veterans office services location green, and I can put out a press release that says without getting authorization that says hey, we're gonna do this on my behalf as Supervisor of Saratoga Springs, right? I don't need approval for that, I don't need to go through anybody for that. But if I wanted the County of Saratoga to put something out on their social media, or do a press release from the County, I need to ask somebody for that. Which isn't really that much different than what the way it is now, I think.

Tara Gaston

So is the distinction if we're going to use County resources?

Matt Veitch

Right.

Tara Gaston

Because that's not what this says. This says that any of these statements made on behalf of the Board has to get approval, I can say whatever the heck I want.

Matt Veitch

Right.

Tara Gaston

Both as it, first amendment, and you know, the Chair can obviously come out and go, this human is just making stuff up. And that's fine. Like, that's fine. Yeah. But this doesn't say that. This says any statements have to get approval. So I would, I suppose I would move to amend it that any of these that are made on behalf of the Board of supervisors or county of Saratoga, and utilize county resources should require the approval as opposed to, because what this, I read this and it looks to me like if I make a statement that I'm trying to say, like if the meet NYSAC wants to do a podcast about the women in government program.

Matt Veitch

Yes.

Tara Gaston

So do I have to get approval to do the podcast for the women in government program, because it is a program that Saratoga County did? And this to me reads that I would have to get approval before I go on that podcast to talk about something that's a County program, which is not the intention. The intention is, is what I'm (inaudible), the intention is, if we're using County resources, which makes sense, if we're using the administration, or public relations, that makes sense. So that's I, I would suggest that we amend that to make that more clear.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, I think that makes a lot of sense. Well, I just think we just say,

Tara Gaston

Any official press release (inaudible) by a member of the Board of Supervisors that is made on behalf of the Board of Supervisors or the or the County of Saratoga, I put the article there, using County resources. Or we could say using County staff and what

Michael Hartnett

I don't know, I'm jumping in here. I apologize.

Matt Veitch

Yeah, go ahead.

Michael Hartnett

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think if you do that, though, you're going to run into problems with using County email, and things like that, because then there's a very difficult line to

Tara Gaston

Using County staff?

Michael Hartnett

But even then any program, for instance, if you're using the soroptimist program, great program, but there was County staff involved in development of that. So I don't I don't think that the distinction is based on the utilization of County resources it's when the individual was speaking for more than just themselves.

Steve Bulger

Yeah, I like to add to that, because whether you use County resources or your own resources, if a Supervisor says, tells a media person, yes, I'm speaking on behalf of the County, then that goes against this. So it doesn't really matter.

Tara Gaston

But we can do that.

Steve Bulger

What's that?

Tara Gaston

We can do that, we can say that? I'm not saying it's a good idea. I'm not saying it's correct.

Steve Bulger

Well.

Tara Gaston

I'm not saying that wouldn't need to be corrected.

Steve Bulger

But that would be in violation of the policy. And I think that's why it's

Tara Gaston

And what would be the punishment?

Steve Bulger

That not

Matt Veitch

That's a good point.

Tara Gaston

And but that's what I'm saying. If we have a rule that doesn't have the distinction is if we're talking about using County personnel or County staff or County resources, which I understand I understand your point, then the punishment, if it were is you can't use them. So there's a way to enforce it. If we have a rule that has no enforcement policy, like why do we have it? What would we do with it? I know I'm not disagreeing with you. I just,

Tara Gaston

I would look at it from a practical, different practical standpoint. Right. So if it's, if it's something that, again, it's I get the County resources part, right. So if it's if that is something that you a message that you want to get out, from the official county communications apparatus, if you want to call it that, then you need to make sure that the chairman of the board supports and approves that message. Right? You can't you can't just go to the Director of Public Relations and be like, put out a press release for me, please. And that director doesn't report to me number one, as a supervisor, so that puts the director of kind of a strange position. But number two, you know, you're now using that county communications apparatus, if you will, for your own personal message, if you want to call it that. It may be on behalf of the County, but I think that's what the intent of this is.

Tara Gaston

I know and I get that. I'm just saying I don't so if I wanted to go on the podcast and talk about the women in government program, would that be in violation of this if I did not get prior approval from the Chair?

Matt Veitch

No, because you are as an individual going on to that podcast and making that statement.

Tara Gaston

But I couldn't represent that I am representing the County or the Board of Supervisors anyway.

Steve Bulger

Unless you cleared that with the Chairman first.

Tara Gaston

But you but you but you could, but you could, though, because you're not using the County's communication apparatus to do that.

Tara Gaston

But that's not what this says.

Matt Veitch

Right.

Tara Gaston

And that's, that's why I was trying to edit it to include that. I mean, it's whatever, I'll vote for it, it's fine. We need a policy, the definitions are fine. What I'm saying is five B is County Attorney, you will recognize, it's void for vagueness. And it's unenforceable as it stands, in my opinion and I would just, I would rather us have a rule that couldn't, that we didn't have to trip over the line in order to figure out where it needs to be. But I think in general, the policy is good. I appreciate that we have one, I think that's pretty much, that's important. It just, it does become very sticky when you start putting, I mean, even ours is tighter than the independently elected officials. It's more restrictive than the independently

elected officials even though we are also independently elected. But it just it gets, it's gonna be fun sussing out the policy. That's all I'm saying.

Matt Veitch

Yeah, no, I understand what you're saying. And, and, and there's a difference, I think between, you know, an independently elected official, as the fact that they are countywide elected officials, so they already have the backing or the support of the people of the County, right. Whereas somebody, somebody like myself, has the Saratoga Springs population that voted for them, but I'm not necessarily, I'm not elected County wide so I don't have the same right to be able to speak on behalf of my department or the County of my own. Right. So I think that that's a that's a little bit why it's written that way. But again, I think it's, it's when a individual supervisor, requests or wants to use the county's official communications, you know, again, system or apparatus, I would call it where you need to get that approval.

Tara Gaston

So is there any way that we can amend this to fit that , since my staff or resources isn't working? Or we're not? I mean, if we can't parse that out we can't. I just, I feel like it's not going to be very difficult. I mean, I would almost rather remove the section and just say, something like members of the Board of Supervisors are not subject to that, or whatever. I just think it's going to be more trouble. But I do, again, in general, I think it's a good idea. And I don't I do not want any Supervisor using official county app, myself or anybody else to send out whatever we it's Tuesday, we should all go eat nachos, like whatever.

Matt Veitch

Right.

Tara Gaston

We shouldn't be doing that. I'm sure the Director has a couple of things to do, and does not need that to happen. I just

Matt Veitch

Well, I mean, I think maybe the best way to go here is leave it leave it in, unless there's any other suggestions for amendments from anybody, and see where it takes us. I mean, I think I think we know what the intent is and if we abide by that, we'll be fine. I agree with you sometimes not knowing where the line is until you cross it can be problematic, but let's just see how it goes and if we have to revisit this, I mean, look, this, this is what we're here for is to look back at policy and amend it if necessary. So we're not going to let this sit on the shelf for 30-35 years, like the prior policy did. So

Tara Gaston

By then we'll probably be holograming into each other.

Matt Veitch

Yeah. Is that okay.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, that's fine. I would just say that again, there's no enforcement mechanism here. And I also do not think that official County resources, staff, apparatus, whatever should be used to speak against a Supervisor should they speak and it inadvertently is in violation of this policy?

Matt Veitch

Yep.

Tara Gaston

I don't want tit for tat to happen.

Matt Veitch

Okay. Understood.

Tara Gaston

Okey dokey.

Matt Veitch

Any further discussion?

Kevin Tollisen

I had one other thing and mine was I think a little easier. On the violations, violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, is that as outlined in the County Disciplinary Policy Manual? Or how is that?

Michael Hartnett

This is Mike. Yeah, it would be subject to disciplinary, the disciplinary policy under the HR rubric, so to speak, or other insubordination or whatever the case may be, depending on the context of, of the communication or somebody, a staff member going in front of the, and so on and so forth. That that was my intention in drafting those provisions, I think.

Kevin Tollisen

Yeah, I think

Michael Hartnett

I can check with Ridge and Christine, but yeah.

Kevin Tollisen

Okay. That that was my only question. I think it's fine. Good. I'm ready to vote.

Matt Veitch

All right. Hearing no more discussion, all in favor, say aye.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Matt Veitch

Any opposed. Oh, there's only four of us, motion carries, carries on to Law and Finance. Thank you. All right. Next on the agenda is the travel and discretionary funds policy, another one that has been tabled for a few months for further review. It looks like we are ready to move this forward. So I will start off, I actually had a couple of potential changes to this, minor changes, basically, but just something as a point of note, so the section 4 letter F, where the authorization is provided, in the in the first one for members of the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator, there are actually two National Association conferences per year. There's only one listed here. So we have a legislative conference that is in March or February next year and that should be on there as well. Those are the two main conferences for NACO that if a Supervisor is looking to go to they would get that approval, as it's part of our dues that we pay to be a part of the member organization. Um, I don't think there was anything else on here that I had a question on other than that, just to include that as the two conferences a year, and then the state and NYSAC ones as well. Any anybody have any anything else before we, we can still do it in discussion if we want to after a motion, but

Kevin Tollisen

I'll make a motion we move forward to approve.

Matt Veitch

Moved by Supervisor Tollisen. Is there a second?

Tara Gaston

I'll second.

Matt Veitch

Second, Supervisor Gaston. Any further discussion?

Tara Gaston

Did you have? How many changes do you have?

Matt Veitch

That was the only one.

Tara Gaston

Oh, that was

Matt Veitch

Just to add the second NACO conference because it only had one listed.

Tara Gaston

Okay. So in the four A, it mentions any legislative or administrative committee meetings with County or other officials and meetings with citizens groups, so F is there's a presumption of approval.

Matt Veitch

Yes.

Tara Gaston

And in A there's a mandate to attend any legislative or administrative committee, is that is that limited to all?

Michael Hartnett

That that's meetings such as

Matt Veitch

Go ahead.

Michael Hartnett

That's for meetings, such as the one we're at now. For travel to and from legislative and committee meetings with County officials. For instance, subcommittee meetings, or going to departments to take a tour would be or seeing department, you know, if you had an appointment with Public Health Services or Department Social Services, your travel would be reimbursed under that portion of the policy.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, so I don't know if that the Chair needs to approve anything that you do as part of your official duties. Right, I think I would think that this would be more for anything outside of your like, I don't want to say official duties because really, some of your NYSAC and NACO work is your official duties? But

Tara Gaston

That's kind of where my question is because meetings with citizens group concerning proposed county actions. So let's say the County had to make the decision, we'll go back a couple of years when the County could, was potentially on the hook for opting out of certain marijuana usages right? If I go meet with a citizens group in California to talk about marijuana policy, this says it's a mandate that I get to go do that and I do not think that that's what it meant.

Matt Veitch

Right?

Tara Gaston

Or what it should mean. And I also agree with Supervisor Veitch that like traveling to County to, County meetings, or even to County Departments on a fit like that. I don't read the second sentence is requiring the Chair's approval for that but I also don't know why that would be part of that block.

Matt Veitch

Right. I mean, right now, like, for example, your mileage reimbursement is for any of that and there's, you're entitled to that per County law I think, when it comes to

Michael Hartnett

I believe the voucher is still signed by the Chairman.

Matt Veitch

Yes.

Michael Hartnett

Which I think is an auditing function that requires approval Chairman approval. Right.

Tara Gaston

Right. Right, right. Because then, you know, you don't want to claim mileage for things that aren't part of your official duty and right need to prove that.

Michael Hartnett

That's right. I believe this was lifted from the current.

Tara Gaston

Oh, okay. But I agree that if you're, you know, again, if you're a member of the, like, Western interstate region, or something like that, from NACO, which we would never really be a member of that as an eastern state, but if you were, or some associated committee, right, they hold committee meetings could be anywhere in the Country and, you know, there's no blanket approval for that, I mean, you'd have to ask for the Chair's approval for expense reimbursement. Or if one of us ever gets appointed to like the Board of Directors of NACO, or the Board of Directors of NYSAC, those meetings are held elsewhere, not in Saratoga County and so we would, we would need approval for that. I think that's what this is trying to say.

Tara Gaston

Well, and that's my question is because I wasn't the, that makes sense with F, where it says, you know, it'll be approved for these conferences and it makes sense to say, you know, the Chair has to approve additional ones like, I'm in the leadership of EELU, which has a board meeting at the Western interstate conference, I don't go to it, because it's way out yonder.

Matt Veitch

Right.

Tara Gaston

But here it says you will be allowed to do X, and that seems in conflict with the Chair having the authority to determine.

Tara Gaston

So should we just replace the language in A with what's in E and just take that other stuff out, because I think that that other stuff is already allowed by County law. So it'd be you know, the Chair of the Board shall determine authorization approval for travel expenses for members of the Board of Supervisors, to attend out of state conferences, conventions and trainings, including any mileage travel, or even out of

county, frankly, shall require the approval of both, well that part is not applicable, but something like that.

Michael Hartnett

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, again, I'm going back to the this is the approval process and what I think perhaps is a fix to this is to just combine those two sentences of the Chair of the Board shall determine authorization and approval travels, travel expenses of members of the board, including attendance at legislative or administrative committee meetings with county or other officials regarding proposed county actions, meetings with citizen groups concerned concerning proposed county actions that provides the approval mechanism,

Matt Veitch

Okay.

Michael Hartnett

of the Chair of the Board, if we just kind of put those two together.

Matt Veitch

Yeah. I mean, it's usually approved after the fact and I think that's where the question, why it's questioned, because, again, I'm as a as an elected official in the county, I'm entitled to mileage. I've been tracking that all year, as I normally do, I won't my approval until after it's over.

Tara Gaston

Can we solve with the first part of just saying within the County? Because that's, that covers, essentially what we're talking about there, right?

Matt Veitch

Yes, we can say that.

Tara Gaston

I mean, that might solve the problem of no County Attorney shaking his head, no.

Michael Hartnett

Well, but again, the F section was built in following the discussion at the August meeting, about certain conferences being presumed to be allowed. So A is the authorization mechanism, F is like, the these ones are going to usually be approved absent something extraordinary, extraordinary circumstances justifying denial. So the F provision isn't the overall authorization mechanism, it's an exception to it.

Matt Veitch

Alright, yeah, I think I know what you're saying. So the first the first A, B, C, D and E are basically that, this is how you get approval, but F is basically saying that for these two, these various things, there will be somewhat automatic approval.

Michael Hartnett

Right. Almost a presumption of approval. So F2 is the conferences arising out of election or appointments, so for instance, the State Treasurer's conference,

Matt Veitch

Right.

Michael Hartnett

The County Attorneys Association, those types of things that are tied to your appointment, and one, the sudden division roman numeral I one was based on that discussion that there was some conferences that Supervisors routinely attended will need I think the I don't mean cloture verbiage,

Matt Veitch

Yeah.

Michael Hartnett

but that are functions of your membership on the Board of Supervisors such as NACO that will be presumed to be authorized.

Tara Gaston

Right. Right, as well as our membership in those organizations.

Michael Hartnett

Right.

Matt Veitch

By the fact that we pay dues to them. So

Michael Hartnett

Right. So I think the Chair Chair's authorization and approval in A is the actual approval mechanism, F is just these ones are going to be approved absent something extraordinary going on.

Tara Gaston

Okay. All right. I'm ready to vote.

Matt Veitch

Okay. Anybody have any other comments on this on this policy?

Tara Gaston

For those on the phone.

Kevin Tollisen

Aye.

Tara Gaston

They may be asleep. I'm sorry.

Matt Veitch

I take my time to make sure that you have time to answer. Alright, so that was our discussion. All in favor, say aye.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Matt Veitch

Any opposed? All right, carried. Thank you very much. Next on our agenda is just an update on the Records Management next steps. I believe that we are having a trip to Albany County on November 9, if I'm not mistaken, to see their records management operation that is down there and I'm looking forward to that because I know they do some pretty, pretty good things down there. And, you know, their, their records management team can show us what they do down there as well. Additionally, at the request of our County Clerk, I do want to officially appoint Eileen Bennett to the subcommittee that's working on records management, as some of the IT solutions that we're going to have will require her input and again, the Clerk had requested that and I think it's a good idea to have her added to the Records Management Committee. You know, as far as the next steps of this, I mean, I think after we see Albany County, and get a good feel for what they do and how they do it. You know, as we move in toward the new year, next year, I know that this is a priority for not just this committee, but the entire County to start moving into records management. I know that there is a, you know, some process of doing a local law, establishing the program, and those kinds of things that I think we're going to probably have to get into next year, early in the year so we can start to actually build some policy around it, and decide how we want to actually, you know, do the program at that point. I think there are some things that are already happening already in terms of, you know, proposals to move the Historian under the Clerk and things like that they're in our budget, but there's more to it than that, you know, we do have to have a have a kind of a more comprehensive direction as to how we want to go after that point. So basically, that's my thoughts on what we would do next in this process. I don't know if anybody else has any other input. Clerk Hayner, if you if you would like, you can have the floor.

Craig Hayner

Yeah, I would just the only thing I would add to that, as you're heading into this is making sure that in the budget for next year, there are resources to get started, you know, we've already identified some things that we can do down to buildings down here, you know, things from shelving to, you know, some low hanging fruit that could be very helpful to some of those departments down in that area. So I know, Supervisor Raymond had mentioned about putting some money in a line, contingency, you know, finances for that, I think it's important to make sure that there is some money to get started so that you're not waiting to the, you know, to 2023 to start moving on some of these projects, low hanging fruit.

Tara Gaston

I would, I would agree with that. I think even if nothing else, we need to have something set aside so that if we need to hire a consultant or whatever, we want to make sure that that's available, and we're not having to shuffle around. So

Steve Bulger

Yes I believe we have \$100,000 in the budget for this. And if that has to be adjusted, you know, throughout the year, at least, we've got that line set up and Supervisors can take action, but we are planning for that. That's in addition to the money for the new scanning systems, high speed scanning systems that, I think we're getting to those machines.

Craig Hayner

That's correct.

Steve Bulger

And that's also included in the budget, tentative budget at this point.

Craig Hayner

Thank you.

Matt Veitch

All right. Any other discussion?

Tara Gaston

I would just like thank you, and that was a part of it, but I think that that conversation making that clear was also important for the public who may want to comment on the budget and have no idea what that is. So I do thank the staff for making sure that was included already.

Tara Gaston

And one model local law that's out there is Ulster County which we had visited already, that you can actually access right online. So if you want to take a look at that, just to see what theirs says, I haven't really gotten into the deep dive on that law, but I know that it's out there, and it basically established their records management program and kind of who's in charge and lays the base the basic outline of how it goes.

Craig Hayner

Yeah, and New York State Archives website has basically that information too.

Matt Veitch

Cool.

Craig Hayner

You know, so yeah, Ulster is one idea, Albany County will have another idea, they're all somewhat similar but the basics that you need are on the New York State Archives website. So that's a great resource to go to.

Tara Gaston

All right. Yeah. Well, I mean, that would be something we would task our staff with early next year so we can have that as you know, one of the first local laws we do for the year, we may even be able to propose it in December, if we, if we move for that. I know, there's a lot that goes on at the end of the year, here, with getting ready for next year and all the different things, so I don't want to add too much to anybody's plate, but you know, something at least start to look at where we're a couple of months out here so we can maybe get that process going a little bit now, at least the early stage.

Craig Hayner

You know, I think one of the things that you're going to see in Albany County next week, it's definitely going to contrast to what Ulster does and if you were to look at something like Tompkins County, that's even another, I'm not saying that we need to take a trip there, but their attitude towards records management is much different, very, very aggressive and, you know, some of these programs started a long time ago, like Ulster, Albany County, not quite as long, and I think, you know, knowing that technology has moved the way it has, we have an opportunity to really do this right, and learn from what others have done and you know, what they do well, and maybe what we think, is not necessary as well.

Matt Veitch

Cool. Yeah. I mean, again, one of the benefits to, to waiting to now, you know, is that, you know, a lot of this, you know, the wheel has been turned in other counties already and they can give us a lot of advice about what to do so I think, to some extent, this is almost an opportune time to do it. You know, we're moving towards technology, we've talked about that all year and even last year, you know, that we want to be more technologically advanced as a county want to do more of that kind of stuff so I think this is a great time to get going. So

Craig Hayner

Absolutely.

Matt Veitch

Anybody else on the committee have any comments or questions? All right, hearing none, I'll move on. Thank you very much, Clerk Hayner, I appreciate that. So the next thing is the county appointments. And basically, one of the things that's we have in our Rules of the Board and the duties of this committee is to review the County Appointments and to take a look at what's out there, with the different appointments that we have the different Boards and Committees that we appoint, and you know, look at those, look at available openings and look at what is coming up for next year, actually trying to look at the, find the language in the rules so I can read it. Basically one of our jobs is to review and ensure that the county appointment book contains the most relevant and appropriate statutory committees and individual appointments. So I know that the Clerk of the Board and the County Attorney have been looking at this. I know that, based on some of what we've seen, there's some different, I guess, I would say, different sets and lists of what is actually appointed and what committees we have. So I know that they're working on trying to resolve that and make it into one comprehensive list. And then also take a look at you know what, what appointments are up for reappointment or changes for

next year. And, you know, I think the this committee won't necessarily recommend actual people, that is the purview of the Chair of the Board to do that, but I think what we would want to do is at least advise the Chairman as to what is available and open for them to make an appointment for next year. And what committees are out there. So I'll go ahead and open it up. So Supervisor Gaston.

Tara Gaston

Always. Um, while I agree that this committee shouldn't recommend necessarily anybody for any particular appointment, I would like to make a recommendation to the Chair slash Board as a whole, that we have, as many other municipalities within the County have, is an open application process. I don't know whether that's possible for this year, or for next year's appointments, whether that can be done at speed. But I think it would be great if we could put the list of appointments up and out and individuals in the community who are interested in them could then provide their application. And yes, where the Chair is appointing them, the Chair would appoint them, but um, I think that might be an interesting way to get more insight from different parts of the County, as opposed to, you know, whoever we happen to know well on that spot.

Tara Gaston

Right. Right. Yeah. I mean, I think that's a good idea. I mean, I, you know, one of the challenges we do face sometimes is who, you know, who wants to do something in terms of they don't know what's out there. I mean, I think that's part of it, too. I think you're right. I mean, we don't really post that or list that anywhere I don't think. We may have it up on our website, but it may be somewhere not very accessible and, you know, again, all that's done in public meetings and they're public appointments so I mean, you know, everybody should know what we have out there. I think if somebody has an interest in a certain field or a certain type of, you know, category of what we do, then those things should be should be open and available. I know that, you know, based on looking at some of our appointments, that there are, I guess I'll say, incomplete sets of appointments, where if in a certain category you have, you know, the County officials are there, right but we also need to appoint somebody with a specific, from the public that's specifically related to that, I'll say, committee, and we don't really have a lot of those filled. So the application process, or at least, maybe an open forum, not a forum, but a form for somebody to just put their name in to say, I'm interested in something. I mean,

Tara Gaston

Right.

Matt Veitch

It doesn't necessarily have to be a particular committee, but just so we know who's out there.

Tara Gaston

I also think that would allow us to build a bench better, because I know over the past year, even or two years, we've had people have to step down, or unfortunately, pass away, and that would allow the Chair, a group of individuals who we know are already interested, as opposed to at the very last minute going, Oh, my gosh, how are we going to fill the statutorily required

Matt Veitch

Right

Tara Gaston

committee? Um, County Attorney, do you see any particular issues with that? Or? Or how about this, instead of putting you on the spot to make you answer that right now, if you could find out if there if there's any particular concerns that there might be, if we have something that would allow the public to just express interest?

Michael Hartnett

I don't think there would necessarily be any legal prohibition against it, it would be a matter of operationally how you would implement it. Where does the information go? Who collates it? Who goes through it? Who? Yeah, where is it collected? Where is it kept? What is done with that information? Is any of it confidential? I mean, there's a lot of things that might come with that. But I don't think there's necessarily a per se legal prohibition on saying, here's the positions, apply here, so to speak. And we do it with employment opportunities so I think it could

Tara Gaston

We did it for the women in government program.

Michael Hartnett

It's a matter of I think it's more of an operational consideration, potentially than a legal one, if that's something that there's an appetite to do.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, I mean, I guess I see your point and it would be who I mean, not to not to make a solution before we have a problem is that, you know, really, the Clerk of the Board is probably the one who would be most appropriate to keep that because it's coming out of the Chairman's appointments, right.

Tara Gaston

Well, yeah, I was thinking that or even if there's a concern about what information, obviously, it depends on how what the format is, but if there's a concern about information that's on there, I know that the women in government program went through HR, right, because they are also familiar with what information needs to be kept where not that I'm throwing anybody, I'm not trying to throw any, but I'm just saying, I think there are options to be able to solve that. But

Tara Gaston

I mean, again, I think it's a good idea, it's worth exploring. I mean, I don't think we have, we have no real policy surrounding the appointments, and how we handle them. You know, like, in terms of that part of the operational part, and we've, we have had discussions about that, you know, like, if you're if you're rolling off of a committee, how do we notify you that you're rolling off a committee and your appointment is up? How do we notify people when somebody new is re is appointed to the position that they had, and maybe they don't know about it? We've had a few of those instances occur this year where, you know, somebody was reappointed, that did not didn't want to be reappointed. But because we don't have any kind of process around it they were not notified that they were going to be

reappointed. Right. So there was there was a, you know, kind of a, we have this, it's kind of this thing that we do, but we don't really have a lot of good structure and process around it, as the Attorney mentioned, it's something that's just kind of been, it's really that a lot of it's the Chairman's prerogative, and because we, up until recently, or maybe, you know, we'll see, it's been kind of a, that changed every year, you got a new Chairman, and, remains to be seen what happens next year, but at the end of the day, that created kind of a lack of structure around it, because every Chairman did it differently. And the staff didn't have anything behind it to allow for any kind of like, you know, underlying process that made it more efficient.

Tara Gaston

Yeah. I also think it would help, I know the Chairman, you know, at the beginning of the year, indicated a desire, you know, to kind of have more diversity and more open and more voices, and I think this would kind of, not codify it because obviously the Chair could pick whoever, but would open that up a little bit more. I mean, if it's okay, or I'm happy to work, but I'd be happy to look more into that and talk maybe to some of the municipalities that already do it and see what their processes are.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, I mean, I know that the City does for boards and committees like their zoning board, planning board, they have like kind of an open application out there. You can put your name in if you're interested kind of thing.

Tara Gaston

So I'll take that on, if that's okay, and provide some information to the committee. And then.

Tara Gaston

Sure and I know independently, the Clerk and the Attorney and the staff are working on that, so you know, in conjunction with myself, you and the staff, we can probably come up with something pretty good.

Tara Gaston

Okay. I just meant on the application process. But

Matt Veitch

Yeah, yeah.

Tara Gaston

I'm happy to any. All right. Thank you.

Matt Veitch

All right. Anybody have any other discussion on this? All right. Moving on. The last thing is just a quick committee responsibilities and the end of your activities. So again, our committee is defined in the Rules of the Board, which is, again, to make review, review and make additions, modifications and deletions to the Rules of the Board of Supervisors, so I know that the staff has looked at that there, I know, they're gonna have a few suggestions for our next meeting, to prepare the Rules of the Board for

the first meeting in January. Unlike in prior years, the Board, I'll just take a step back, before this year, the Board of Supervisors always approved their Rules of the Board at the first meeting of the year, each year, and they did it on what they would call a motion and a second, and a voice vote of the Board for the Rules of the Board, well, I don't believe if I recall correctly, that it was a roll call. But this year, we did it a little differently in January, we actually did it per resolution, I think it was the first resolution of the year this year, that we pass the rules of the Board of Supervisors. So by resolution, the Rules are now continuing into January and forever on and as long as we amend them or repeal or rescind that resolution. So at the end of the day, we don't actually have to vote on the Rules of the Board of Supervisors that the first meeting of the year next year, because it's a continuing resolution that we already have. That so we wouldn't if, unless we want to do those changes in the first meeting of the year and revote on the rules but we could do it in December, and move it toward the next to the next year. So it changes the process a little bit and really this committee is charged with looking at the rules, seeing what worked this year, what didn't work, make suggestions for next year. So basically, I know that there's been a few things brought up this year, and we can talk about them in our next meeting, but just think about it as committee members, what you would see as things that worked well and maybe didn't work well in our rules and we can talk about that at our next meeting. The only other thing that we really had this year that we did not get done that we talked about earlier in the year was rewriting the ethics law and there is a subcommittee established for that it's Supervisor Connolly, myself and Supervisor Grasso, I am hoping that the three of us can get together sometime in the next week or two to talk about that. I started working on it, but I ran out of time and energy and so I didn't actually get too far with it but I'd like to kind of, you know, show what I have done so far, talk with the County Attorney about it and try to get that done maybe by the end of the year as well. I don't know if I've got anything else in particular that we were going to work on. There's a couple of local laws out there that we have kind of looked at, one is designating County newspapers, we have an old local law out there from the 90s, I think is 91, that may or may not be applicable anymore so we're talking about that. So that may come up on the next agenda. And it's timely because we do that every single January organizational meeting, we have to designate County newspapers, and we want to make sure we're doing it correctly. And I'm not sure if there's anything else out there that we have. But there's I mean, there's several things that this committee continuing into next year will work on, we've scratched the surface. I mean, it's only October and there's a lot more to do, especially with thinking back to the beginning of the year. So that that's all I have does anybody have anything else? Any other comments? Or questions? Alright, with no comments or questions, I will ask, is there any other business to come before the committee today? Supervisor Gaston.

Tara Gaston

I move to adjourn.

Matt Veitch

Moves to adjourn. Is there a second?

Kevin Tollisen

Second.

Matt Veitch

All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Matt Veitch

We're adjourned. Thank you very much. Have a great day, everybody.