

STEUBEN COUNTY NATURAL GAS TASK FORCE STEERING COMMITTEE

Friday, August 20, 2010

1:30 p.m.

*Steuben County Office Building
Legislative Committee Conference Room
Bath, New York*

****MINUTES****

Committee: Patrick F. Donnelly, Chair
Mark R. Alger
Amy Dlugos
Joseph J. Hauryski
Kathryn Muller
Karl Anderson, Esq.
John Tunney

Advisory Members: Jennifer Fais
Al Wahlig
Russell Miller
James Grace
Mark Schlechter

Sub-Committee Members: Chief Sal Trentanelli, Public Safety
Elaine Swiler, Roads & Infrastructure
Dan Hamilton, Roads & Infrastructure
Marvin Rethmel, Housing

Others: Vince Slomsky, YNN

Absent: Dave Erwin

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Donnelly called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2010 MEETING MADE BY MR. HAURYSKI. SECONDED BY MR. ALGER. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 7-0.

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing

1. **Submission of Written Comments by Public** – Mr. Alger commented that he thinks the written comments concept is a good way to handle the comment period. We need to pick a timeframe of several days for written comments to be submitted to the Clerk of the Legislature’s Office. There is a precedent for doing this. There are many state rules and regulations that allow for written public comment.

Mr. Schlechter stated that he can understand the concern about having lots of people coming in and the time that would take, however, he feels that public comment is important and having people being able to come in and speak is more effective. It allows them to talk about what issues they feel should be focused on.

Ms. Swiler stated we have to publish whatever we are doing and have background information so that people know how to comment. She stated that she thinks written comments would certainly be satisfactory.

Mr. Hauryski commented that he is in favor of having written public comments.

MOTION: ALLOWING FOR WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE’S OFFICE DURING A TIMEFRAME TO BE DETERMINED AT A LATER DATE MADE BY MR. HAURYSKI. SECONDED BY MR. ANDERSON FOR DISCUSSION.

Mr. Tunney stated that Mr. Schlechter commented that it is more effective for people to be able to speak and he is curious as to why he thinks that. Mr. Schlechter replied a number of people feel more comfortable speaking rather than writing their thoughts.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 7-0.

Mr. Donnelly stated that we need to discuss the timeframe to accept and review comments by members of the public. We will need to get a notice together and publish it in the media.

Mr. Anderson stated that one of the items we need to do is set the meeting schedules for the sub-committees. Perhaps the sub-committees should meet before we hold a public comment period. Mr. Donnelly commented that would give the sub-committees an opportunity to review their charge list. Mr. Anderson stated certainly public comments will be made anyway, no matter the timeframe, but it would be helpful for the sub-committees to meet first. There is no hurry to get public comments until the sub-committees are established and then they would be able to review the comments.

Mr. Alger commented that was the expectation to distribute the list of topics to the sub-committees and go from there. Your point is well taken.

After considerable discussion, it was decided that the sub-committees will schedule their first meetings for the end of September. The Steering Committee will meet on October 8, 2010 and a public comment period would be scheduled for mid-October.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Report from Southern Tier Central Regional Planning & Development - Mr. Donnelly asked Ms. Fais if she had anything to report. Ms. Fais stated that Chemung County recently heard a presentation by Bill Kappel who is with the United State Geological Service (USGS). He gives wonderful presentations and has a very good understanding of geology and how things work. She stated that she is trying to get copies of the presentation and we will try to consolidate it as much as we can. During the presentation, Mr. Kappel addressed the Dimmick, PA question and explained what had happened and that it was fixed and they are repairing it.

Mr. Donnelly asked did Mr. Kappel believe that gas drilling will be probable in Steuben County? Ms. Fais replied yes. Mr. Miller commented that he also has some of that information available as well. Mr. Donnelly stated that he would like to know where drilling is likeliest. How far into the County does the Marcellus Shale go? Mr. Miller replied that the shale formation that his company is connected to is 50 – 100 feet thick. There are areas in Pennsylvania that are 150 – 200 feet thick. It would serve you well to look at the map. Mr. Donnelly asked how far into the County does the shale come? Mr. Miller replied the Marcellus Shale goes through the entire county and North to State Route 20 (Avon). It also covers the area from Lake Erie east to Route 87 from Albany to New York City. He commented that the price of the commodity, natural gas, will determine to what lengths companies will go to get it. Below the Marcellus Shale there is Utica Shale, which is deep. If companies were to access the Utica Shale it would not call for new wells as they would just redrill and go to a deeper depth.

Ms. Fais will contact Bill Kappel to find out what his schedule is like and see if he would be available for a presentation.

B. Report on Tour of Bradford County, Pennsylvania - Mr. Hauryski stated that Commissioner Spagnoletti, Bryce Foster and Dan Hamilton recently went to Bradford County, Pennsylvania and met with their public works commissioner and toured their roads. Mr. Hauryski stated that Dan Hamilton is the President of the Steuben County Town Highway Association and asked him to comment on this trip.

Mr. Hamilton stated that if you haven't been to Bradford County, PA, he suggests that everyone go. We went to Troy, PA and that area looks nothing like Towanda, PA. In Towanda they are tearing things up. They had over 200 miles of road that went from blacktop to dirt. Each well site takes approximately 5,000 trucks per well from start to finish and some sites have 6 wells. These wells are running 24/7. When they start a site, the first well is done in 28 days. When you look

at the map where they already drilled and then look at the potential, they have already started along the Tennessee Pipeline and that runs through Steuben County.

Mr. Miller commented there are other issues that play into that. If the pipeline doesn't expand, the companies will go somewhere else. There are a lot of other variables that play into where a well will go. Mr. Miller passed around a map showing the wells that Corning Natural Gas is committed to in Pennsylvania. You want to have your ducks in a row with regard to your road use agreements.

Mr. Schlechter asked why are the Troy and Towanda sites so different? Mr. Hamilton replied he is not sure. This is the first full year of gas drilling in Towanda. They have just started the process in Troy. They are having a difficult time finding contractors to redo the roads. This will only get worse. If this is any indication of what will occur here, our roads will not handle it.

Mr. Hauryski asked Mrs. Dlugos if anyone accessed the webinar link she had sent around? Mrs. Dlugos replied yes. Penn State also has a website and you can watch any of their webinars at any time. The next webinar will be held in mid-September. Mr. Hauryski asked when you watched it, did you find any new information? Mrs. Dlugos replied that there was a lot of stuff that we have talked about before, but it could be useful to some people.

Mr. Miller commented that it will be of interest for people to go to Troy as well as to visit sites in the north portion of Tioga County. He commented that he also can arrange to show you what the sites look like after the fact and take you to sites that have been reclaimed and show you how the roads look when everything is done.

Mr. Hamilton commented that in Troy, they did a nice job of rebuilding the roads.

V. NEXT MEETING

The committee agreed to hold their next meeting on Friday, October 8, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers. Mr. William Kappel from the US Geological Survey will be giving a presentation relative to the gas drilling process.

VI. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Setting the Time Period to Receive Written Public Comment
2. Presentation by Bill Kappel – USGS

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. ALGER. SECONDED BY MR. HAURYSKI. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Amanda L. Chapman
Senior Stenographer
Steuben County Legislature