

Legislation

BOL Meeting Minutes - Published Draft



Committee Chair: Colin Smith

800 Michaelian Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601
www.westchesterlegislators.com

Monday, February 3, 2025

1:00 PM

Committee Room

CALL TO ORDER

Please note: Meetings of the Board of Legislators and its committees are held at the Michaelian Office Building, 148 Martine Avenue, White Plains, New York, 10601, and remotely via the WebEx video conferencing system. Legislators may participate in person or via Webex. Members of the public may attend meetings in person at any of its locations, or view it online on the Westchester County Legislature's website: <https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com/> This website also provides links to materials for all matters to be discussed at a given meeting.

Legislator Colin Smith will be participating remotely from 1132 Main Street, Suite 1, Peekskill, NY 10566.

With a quorum, Legislator Cunzio called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

Others in Attendance: BOL: Legislators: Erika Pierce and Nancy Barr, Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson (Remote); Committee Coordinator: Jill Axelrod; Lisa Hochman (Remote); DES: Susan Spear, Douglas Stiller, Chris Johnson; Law Dept.: Justin Adin and Alida Marcos; Budget Dept.: Christina Rampata; Guest: Chief Andrew Sandor

Present: Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura

Remote: Legislator Smith

MINUTES APPROVAL

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. [2025-21](#) **PH-Battery Energy Storage Systems**

Guests: Law Dept.: Assistant Chief Deputy County Attorney Justin Adin and Assistant County Attorney Alida Marcos; DES: Commissioner Susan Spear, Douglas Stiller, Chief, DES Special Operations, and Chris Johnson, Deputy Chief, DES Special Operations; New Rochelle Fire Chief Andrew J. Sandor, Chair, Westchester County Fire Advisory Board

Commissioner Spear explained that this legislation is similar to state legislation regarding hazardous materials, which requires that fire departments and the County be notified of hazardous materials on a site. She noted that the definitions in the state law do not include

materials from battery energy storage systems. She said that if these facilities catch fire, it can get very hot very quickly and even become explosive. These fires also emit hazardous gases, so it is essential that firefighters, EMS and other first responders know what is on site when they arrive at an incident for everyone's safety.

Legislator Barr asked if the County will be sending something to communities to advise on where battery energy storage system facilities should and should not be placed. Mr. Johnson said that is a decision by the municipality and the state, and depends upon the size of the facility.

On motion of Legislator Nolan, seconded by Legislator Woodson-Samuels, the above item was signed by committee and referred to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Legislator Smith, Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura

2. [2025-22](#) **LOCAL LAW-Battery Energy Storage Systems**

Guests: Law Dept.: Assistant Chief Deputy County Attorney Justin Adin and Assistant County Attorney Alida Marcos; DES: Susan Spear, Commissioner, Douglas Stiller, Chief, DES Special Operations, and Chris Johnson, Deputy Chief, DES Special Operations; New Rochelle Fire Chief Andrew J. Sandor, Chair, Westchester County Fire Advisory Board

See discussion of Item # 1 above.

On motion of Legislator Nolan, seconded by Legislator Woodson-Samuels, the above item was signed by committee and referred to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Legislator Smith, Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura

3. [2025-23](#) **PH-Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and Volunteer Ambulance Services Members**

Guests: Law Dept.: Assistant Chief Deputy County Attorney Justin Adin; Budget Dept.: Deputy Director Christina Rampata

Mr. Adin explained that the current County law provides a property tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance services members that serve in the same municipality where they live. He said that the State amended its law to allow local jurisdictions to expand the tax exemption where the property owner serves in a neighboring municipality, so this legislation will provide that a property owner who lives in the County and volunteers anywhere within the County can get the exemption.

Chairman Gashi asked whether the exemption applies to other volunteer entities such as volunteer sheriffs. Mr. Adin said that the state controls what exemptions the County can allow,

and they would need to pass legislation to expand those who qualify beyond volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance services members.

Legislator Nolan questioned why the FIS states that there will be no fiscal impact from this legislation. Ms. Rampata said that the County still collects the same amount of taxes, it just gets distributed differently among the property owners in the municipality.

Legislator Pierce said that she is grateful for the expansion provided by this legislation because it will help improve recruitment and retention of the volunteer fire and ambulance services.

On motion of Legislator Nolan, seconded by Legislator Woodson-Samuels, the above item was signed by committee and referred to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Legislator Smith, Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura

4. [2025-24](#) **LOCAL LAW-Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and Volunteer Ambulance Services Members**

Guests: Law Dept.: Assistant Chief Deputy County Attorney Justin Adin; Budget Dept.: Deputy Director Christina Rampata
See discussion of Item # 3 above.

On motion of Legislator Nolan, seconded by Legislator Woodson-Samuels, the above item was signed by committee and referred to Board of Legislators. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Legislator Smith, Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura

II. OTHER BUSINESS

III. RECEIVE & FILE

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Legislator Woodson-Samuels, seconded by Legislator Nolan, the Committee adjourned at 1:38 p.m. by the following vote:

Aye: Legislator Smith, Legislator Boykin, Legislator Nolan, Legislator Woodson-Samuels, Legislator Cunzio and Legislator Gashi

Absent: Legislator Tubiolo, Legislator Ulaj and Legislator Imamura