



Onondaga County Legislature

HASSINA K. ADAMS
Clerk

NICOLE WATTS
Chairwoman

SPENCER BERG
Deputy Clerk

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES – JULY 21, 2026 GREGG ERIKSEN, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Garland, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Eriksen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Meaker

ALSO PRESENT: Chairwoman Watts, Ms. Denton, Mr. Ryan

Chair Eriksen called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

Chair Eriksen advised the audience that a regular committee meeting with a short agenda would be held before the public hearing, and that the next order of business was a discussion of a proposed ADA committee from Chairwoman Watts.

1. COUNTY LEGISLATURE: Nicole Watts, Chairwoman

a. DISCUSSION: Proposed ADA Committee, County-Wide Accessibility Standards and Oversight

- Clerk spoke a couple of months ago regarding ADA requirements changing at the state level: the reporting of minutes, accessibility of presentations, and so forth, to ensure that everyone in Onondaga County has access
 - Through that conversation, exploring ways to ensure the Legislature is hearing from the community regarding accessibility, not only at the Legislature but across the entire community
- One of the outside boards and commissions, inactive since 1999, called the Council for the Disabled; looking to reactivate that committee under a new name informed by the nomenclature used today, given a whole lot of significant work done in that realm over the last 20-plus years
 - Really important for that entity to be able to weigh in on accessibility across the county; accessibility not a health and human services issue alone or one particular issue, an issue for everyone
- Asking whether anything from the environmental protection standpoint should be borne in mind as the committee is formed; inviting members, following the meeting, to suggest anyone who should sit on the committee for that representative voice

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Kelly: Forgive me, I forget how many years ago it was, but I believe this Sunday is actually the anniversary of the ADA being signed into law, so I think that's good timing for us to take a look at accessibility throughout the county
 - A lot of facilities fall under the purview of the Environmental Protection Committee, and obviously that overlaps with Facilities
 - I just wanted to recognize the anniversary
- Ms. Watts: If you have any particular names or suggestions that come up, you can send them to myself and Legislator Block as we work on this. We are planning to re-initiate the committee at a forthcoming session and to appoint people to it the following month

- Mr. Kelly: Do we plan to follow the former makeup of the previous group? Do we have a structure of what we're looking for? It's something that would interest me personally as a legislator, with the work I do as a physical therapist, but I have also worked with a lot of really stellar therapists over the years that I think would be exciting to get involved as well
- Ms. Watts: We are not going to exactly follow the structure, because there has been quite a bit of change over the last 20-plus years in that sector; that's part of what we're looking for. Happy to include you in those conversations, and anyone else you think would be helpful to contribute

2. DISCUSSION: Review of Onondaga County Water Authority Board

- Two OCWA board appointments coming up, as discussed at the last meeting; on the topic of outside boards and commissions, one individual, willing to be considered for the position, to be considered at Ways and Means, Madeline Nyblade
 - Excited about her potential participation; watch at Ways and Means, and send any additional individuals to the Chairwoman

Mr. Kelly raised a question regarding public hearing scheduling policy:

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Kelly: This is still an adjustment so far this year in terms of public hearings and exactly how those come about and what that process looks like. If I remember, the health public hearing as well as the economic development planning committee's were both voted on in committee.
 - Will that be the policy going forward, or has there been a change? I just want to know how it's going to be handled
- Ms. Watts: The resolution actually made it possible for the committee chairs to call for those meetings without the vote of a committee, so they were discussed but they were not voted on; that is how the resolution reads. You could ask your committee chair to please do that in the future, and he can consider it, but the resolution says the chairs are automatically able to call for two before the end of the year
- Mr. Kelly: Just looking for clarification

C. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Garland, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to adjourn the meeting; Ayes 4 (Garland, Thompson, Kelly, Eriksen). MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



HASSINA ADAMS, Clerk
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