

10-12-23 NY COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT BOARD MEETING

PRESENT ON ZOOM; Linda Bond, Sue Kelly, Michelle Allen, Robert Godlewski, Janet Vito, K. Czarone, Marylou, Axel Ebermann, Annmarie Reeb, Lawrence Vito, Pat Irving, Ken Guarino, Maria Tisby, Christine, Stuart Allen, Alberta Roman, Paul Wolf.

NY COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENTBOARD MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AR 6:34 PM BY PRESIDENT PAUL WOLF.

MEETING MINUTES FROM SEPT. 14, 2023; Approval of meeting minutes of 9-14-23 on motion made by Axel Ebermann and seconded by Maria Tisby.

TREASURER'S REPORT; Janet Vito report 91 total paid members from 31 counties with balance of \$5,238.56 as of 9/30/23. Motion made to approve Treasurer's report made by Marylou and seconded by Alberta.

CALENDAR; For informational purposes only for 2023.

OPEN MEETING LAW COMMITTEE; Michelle Committee Chair report

- A. Discussed contacting towns we identified in our recent report that do not allow public comments at their meetings to encourage them to do so. Annmarie will create data base of Town Clerks, Town Supervisors, and Town Boards and send emails. More volunteers needed.
- B. Executive Session training on 10-19-23 at 5:30 pm led by Paul Wolf. Most requested information is on this subject. Paul sent email out to 300 reporters.
- C. Discussed doing a training regarding hybrid meetings in January. Per Michelle this clarification is needed after covid.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LAW COMMITTEE; Report by Maria Committee Chair along with Annmarie.



- A. From 70 FOIL requests made, 59 have responded, 6 denied and 5 pending , not appealed. We will move forward instead of waiting, with summary to be given after this weekend for final report.
- B. Held Article 78 training on September 21st at 12:, via zoom, with attorney Mike Higgins as the presenter (44 people registered). Marylou has an audio recording although no video available. A 14 page step guide is available for this process done independently instead of with Attorney.
- C. Discussion of possible FOIL training sessions for 2024 will follow.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE; Axel Committee Chair report.

- A. Our open government guide booklet has been posted on our website.
- B. New Coalition website (need Board photos, bios, calendar management). Discussion of working with and coloring map for posting on website and developing more resources for people on our website.
- C. The Committee is working on a lobbying plan (lobbying day during Sunshine week) for getting our legislative bills passed in Albany. A tour of the Capitol should be scheduled for our members.
- D. Albany in person meeting Saturday Nov. 18, 1 pm to 6:30 pm at Hampton Inn Hotel.
- E. Committee discussed whether the Coalition should file an Article 78 lawsuit against the City of Buffalo regarding their violation of the City Charter in how they went about passing pay raises for city elected officials. Ten members were present when a motion to recommend that the Board support such a lawsuit was made. The motion failed with 5 votes in favor, 1 against and 4 abstained. It is focused on City Charter, and not in line with our mission. Paul sent a draft letter to Board. Motion by Michelle that we not



pursue this action with second by Alberta. This is a really important issue to support and not be the main bringer of lawsuit. There are 10 Board Members present. Motion to not do law suit passed 7 to 3.

LETTER TO NY COMMITTEE ON OPEN GOVERNMENT; This letter sent as an update to our legislative proposals, which we are encouraging the Committee to include in their annual report.

LETTER TO GOV.HOCHUL REGARDING LLC TRANSPARENCY LEGISLATION; We signed on to this letter at the request of reinvent Albany along with other agencies.

NATIONAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COALITION CONFERENCE REPORT; Paul did not attend, and Michelle did attend and related the importance of content where we can get from posted a link in chat.

NEW BUSINESS; Sue mentioned Paul's interview in Investigative Post.

Motion to adjourn made by Maria and seconded by Larry . Motion carried.

