

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION
MINUTES: March 6, 2006

LEGISLATION

MEMBERS:

Chair: Young; Legislators: Stewart-Cousins, Oros, Burrows, Myers, Bronz

IN ATTENDANCE:

CEO: B. Randolph, A. Neuman, K. Ryan; **CA:** E. Cipollo, B. McGrath; **CP:** E. Price, J. Gaccione; **IT:** N. Jacknis, S. Fernqvist; **BOL:** B. Bochow, S. Bass; **GUESTS:** R. MacLaughlin

With a quorum present, the Committee on Legislation was called to order at 1:39 p.m.

MINUTES:

(Stewart-Cousins, Oros) move the minutes of January 23, 2006, February 13, 2006, and February 21, 2006. Motion passed 5-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

"WI-FI" LEGISLATION: SECURE NETWORKS

Information Technology Commissioner Norm Jacknis and Andrew Neuman, County Executive's Office, presented the local law that would require all commercial businesses in Westchester offering public internet services to have a secure network to protect the public from identity theft.

Mr. Neuman explained that this has become a very serious privacy issue, and that local businesses have been very receptive to the legislation. The legislation aims to: 1.) ensure that commercial businesses that collect personal information about their customers, who use a wireless network, maintain a secure network, and 2.) warn and educate the public on how to protect the information on their laptops while they sit at "internet café's" and/or other businesses. Commissioner Jacknis indicated that this could be as simple as turning on a firewall that is already integrated into the Windows operating system.

The law would require businesses to post a sign notifying their customers that they are accessing a secure network, but warn them that their information could be in danger from hackers unless the proper precautions (firewalls, etc.) are used.

Legislator Stewart-Cousins suggested that in **Sec. 863.1201**, in defining a "commercial business" that part (d) of paragraph 2 "has annual revenues in excess of \$10,000" be removed. She also suggested that the sign have some reasonable size requirement in the legislation.

Scott Fernqvist, IT, then gave a brief demonstration of how easily one can access open wire-less networks by using a laptop in the conference room to pick up signals.

Consumer Protection will be enforcing the law. In the instance of a hearing because of any dispute over a fine, Jay Howard is the Hearing Officer appointed by the County to handle such proceedings.

Chairman Young stated that he would like to sign the legislation out for public hearing purposes after the suggested changes have been made and all concerns from all members of the committee. The item would be approached further at the next meeting on Monday, March 13, 2006 at 1:30 PM.

(Burrows, Stewart-Cousins) move to adjourn The Committee on Legislation. Motion passed 6-0. Committee on Legislation adjourned at 2:20 p.m.