

Minutes of a meeting of the Term Limit Advisory Committee held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 in the Legislative Conference Room, 5th Floor, Hazlett Building, Elmira, New York.

Members present: L. Thomas Sweet (Chairman), Joseph Brennan, Michael Smith, Peggy Woodard.

The Chairman of the Committee, L. Thomas Sweet, called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m.

Mr. Sweet informed the committee members that Mr. Burin has resigned from the Term Limit Advisory Committee (the "Committee").

Mr. Sweet opened the floor to comments/discussion from committee members.

Mr. Smith commented that term limits already exist in that an election is held every four years for County Executive and all (fifteen) County Legislators. He does not believe term limits are necessary because anyone is free to run for elected positions. Mr. Smith also feels that term limits take away the rights of citizens to choose who they want to represent them.

Mr. Brennan stated that he is glad the Committee has been reconvened. He felt that the recommendation that came out of the Committee in December was rushed and that there is more work to be done and more information/research to gather from counties where term limits have been imposed.

Mrs. Woodard stated that she does not feel the process was rushed at all. She noted that quite a bit of research (on term limits) was done before the Committee was formed. Mrs. Woodard stated that due process, and the Rules of the Legislature were followed by the Committee and the Chairman of the Legislature. The Committee held a vote on the recommendation that was presented to the Chairman. The Chairman received the Committee's recommendation which was brought before the Multi-Services Committee in the form of a Local Law, however the recommendation did not make it of Committee for lack of a second. Mrs. Woodard would like clarification from the Legislative Attorney as to whether or not the issue of term limits can be reintroduced.

Mr. Sweet stated that in speaking with a number of his constituents, most are not in favor of term limits because they feel it would limit their choice as to who they can vote for. He noted that term limits are unconstitutional for Federal Representatives. He feels that term limits infringe upon the liberties afforded to citizens by the U.S. Constitution. Mr. Sweet noted that seven new Chemung County Legislators were elected in 2018, four who beat incumbents, proving that it is not impossible to have turnover in county government (without imposing term limits).

Mr. Smith suggested that the Committee arrange a meeting with members of the Legislature, administration and department heads from Schuyler and Steuben counties to discuss the impact that term limits have had in their respective counties. He will contact the Clerk of the Legislature in Clinton County for insight and information regarding the impacts of term limits in that county. Mr. Sweet noted that Schuyler, Steuben and Clinton counties do not have the same form of government as Chemung County. Schuyler and Clinton counties have an appointed County Administrator and Steuben County has an appointed County Manager.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.