

Hein Convenes New Charter Revision Commission



Kathy Welsh

KINGSTON – Ulster County Executive Mike Hein announces that in accordance with the Ulster County Charter, he has convened a new Charter Revision Commission, tasking them with providing a fair method of redistricting that will be used to draw legislative election lines when the results of the 2020 census are published.

Pursuant to Ulster County Charter §C-10L (Commission on Reapportionment/Redistricting), “....the Ulster County Charter Revision Commission shall be reconvened, as provided for in §C-5 of the Ulster County Charter.... for the purposes of providing a method of reapportionment of the 23 Ulster County legislative districts pursuant to §C-10 of the Ulster County Charter.”

The Commission consists of eleven members, five appointed by the County Executive, three appointed by Legislator Kenneth J. Ronk Jr., Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature, and three appointed by Legislator Hector S. Rodriguez, Minority Leader of the Ulster County Legislature. The first meeting of the Charter Revision Commission was convened on Nov. 9, 2017.

“It is vital to ensure that the method and process for redistricting will be fair and independent when the 2020 census is published,” said County Executive Mike Hein. “As stated in the Charter, ‘The Charter seeks toassure fair elections for County offices and accountability of the County’s government to its people.’ It is essential to help ensure that when the time comes for redistricting, every Ulster County voter has a voice that counts and gerrymandering does not occur. I want to thank the Charter Revision Commission for accepting the appointment and dedicating their time to accomplish this important ‘good government’ task.”

“I take great pride in the fact that Ulster is one of the only counties in New York State with independent redistricting,” Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Chairman, Ulster County

Legislature. “The Charter Commission was faced with a herculean task in reforming Ulster County government. My hope is that the newly appointed Charter Revision Commission will continue that good work by ensuring that Legislators cannot draw their own district lines. It is paramount in our system of representative democracy that the power to elect rests with the voters. Representatives should not be able to pick their voters. Voters should pick their representatives. ”

“The Charter Revision Commission has the important job of clarifying the method in which redistricting will take place,” said Hector S. Rodriguez, Minority Leader, Ulster County Legislature. “It is imperative that Ulster County create an equitable redistricting. I appreciate the commitment of the members of the Commission to make sure this is accomplished prior to the 2020 census.”

The members of the Charter Revision Commission are as follows: Rod Futerfas, Esq., Dare Thompson, Thomas Kadgen, Albert Cook, Fred Mayo, Butch Dener, John Quigley, Laurel Sweeney, Gary Bischoff, Dr. Gerald Benjamin, and Donald Gregorius.

- November 17, 2017
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