

Conflict of Interested Debated on Kodiak Assembly

Monday, 08 October 2012

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

At Thursday night's Kodiak Island Borough Assembly meeting considerable time was devoted to a pair of items regarding potential conflicts of interest in general, and about Assemblywoman Chris Lynch's contract with the borough in particular.

Just days before the recent municipal election, an accusation of conflict was brought up at an assembly work session, but it did not impede Lynch's re-election last Tuesday.

The issue at hand is that Lynch, through her company Kodiak Construction Services, provides engineering consultation to borough projects, such as the land fill expansion, while serving as a member of the assembly. Her colleague, Mel Stephens, sought to have an ordinance introduced that would eliminate assemblymembers or the Mayor from working for the borough

:

-- (Conflict 1 33 sec "I think we want to get away from … ordinance attempts to do.")

Assemblyman Tuck Bonney suggested a more deliberate approach to the issue:

-- (Conflict 2 27 sec "I think it's a lot of knee-jerk … the right way to do it.")

The motion failed 4-to-3, with Stephens, Louise Stutes and Jerrol Friend voting for it.

Later in the meeting, Stephens sought to have Lynch's contract with the borough and subsequent payments be suspended until the assembly can approve the contract. He said he believes the contracts violate state law:

-- (Conflict 3 34 sec "Mr. Mayor, I bring this motion … termination or rescission.")

Lynch declared a conflict of interest over this motion, and left the dais (day-us) to sit in the audience while it was debated. With just six members left, the assembly voted Stephens's motion down, 4-to-2.

At the end of the meeting, Lynch, who had been silent on two items, spoke during assembly comments:

-- (Conflicts 4 42 sec "I would like to assure the community … community. Thank you.")

The issue will likely come back to be hammered out before the assembly during a work session. The next one will be on Thursday evening.

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