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Public Comment  
Sullivan County Legislature  
Monthly Full Board  
Thursday, August 18, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.

Good morning.

I am Martha Scoppa from Liberty.  
I am also a member of the Senior Legislative Action Committee (SLAC).

I attended the Recessed Public Hearing on Redistricting this morning at 8:30 a.m. I came prepared with a Public Comment to read at this podium.

The Hearing was called to order and there was a roll call. There was no Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Dougherty made a motion to adjourn, and the Hearing was closed. At first, I didn't understand what had happened. I thought I had heard wrong. Adjourn? Close a Public Hearing without having Public Comment?

The reason the Public Hearing for Redistricting was recessed from last week was because there were suggestions and questions from Legislators that had not been answered. This morning Chairman Doherty and Legislator George Conklin, who seconded the motion to adjourn, both chose to eliminate the opportunity for further discussion on redistricting.

It was shocking behavior. It was an insult to me and others who attended the Hearing with the assumption that there would be Public Comment.

Here is what I would have said at 8:30 this morning. It may be moot.

I am concerned about the timing of the Legislature's vote on redistricting. It is a very important vote, and the County will live with the outcome for ten years. The timing of a decision could have been smoother. When the three proposed maps were received last month, there should have been a Public Hearing right away. And, I think, the maps should have been displayed in the lobby for the public to see. Not everyone has Internet or the ability to print in color. We learned last week that there are concerns about deadlines and the enormous amount of work to be done by the Board of Elections and



Real Property Tax Services once a decision has been made. The vote should not be rushed.

I don't understand why Main Street Communications will not be present to speak about the three map-based proposals. Whatever the wording of their contract, it is obvious that there are many questions that need answers, as evidenced last Thursday during the first Public Hearing. The presentation by the County Manager and the Director of Real Property Tax Services was helpful, but also lacking. There were enough questions from Legislators and the public to extend the Public Hearing until today. It makes good sense to request input from the company that created the maps.

It is important that each and every Sullivan County Legislator understands the maps before voting.

Thank you.

