

Minutes

Human Services Committee

**June 15, 2022, 5:00 pm, Legislative Chambers**

**Livestreamed on Facebook**

Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Pavlock, Proctor, Torres, Rankin

Member Absent: Whitford

Others: Lee, Chagnon, Crow, McCoy, Lis, Schuyler, Hernandez, Tampio, Engstrom

***Complete video of meeting can be viewed on the County's Facebook Page***

Chairman Pavlock called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (4/20/22)

MOVED by Legislator Rankin, SECONDED by Legislator Torres

*Unanimously Carried*

Privilege of the Floor

Karen Engstrom, Mayville, New York. Our state government is now mimicking California and Texas with its energy policies but they do not have the same kind of winters that we have here. We're concerned because we're seeing 350 and counting communities across the United States who have refused the so-called renewables- solar and wind because they have a very negative environmental and economic impact on the communities. Our state makes determinations, but we would like to submit that it's possible for local options to be taken. Ohio, for one, has allowed all of its communities to make its own decisions on whether to let *(inaudible)* to put up solar and wind. Yesterday's Wall Street Journal alerts us to the fact that the censorship has continued and is increasing. This is part two of all the censorship that's coming. There is no debate allowed. They are going to force feed green and going to not allow the truth, according to this. *(Inaudible)* on how the grid is becoming increasingly unreliable and what the impacts are and the resources and where they come from. Any debate on lithium ion batteries and – there are limitations and the technical aspects of this continuing program are going to be condemned as misinformation. That's why I'm here today because I feel we can bring you information. The policies that we see are affecting most of all the poor. As the prices go up for all of our heat and our gasoline, it's the poor that have the most impact. The grid in our state could be upgraded. It would increase the energy output and availability by 30%. That's more than any of the solar and wind in Western New York could ever produce. So, if you fix the wires you don't lose the electricity. That's a very simple solution and we would have much more power. If we produced power here we don't – because we have Niagara Falls and they continue to provide and they curtailed me, unfortunately, to make it appear that we're short of energy and when we are really need, we pull our energy from Pennsylvania where they generate it with coal

and it's the dirtiest coal of all. So, it's like Mr. Borrello said the other night, it's like my wife says I'm on a diet and I have to eat lettuce and I have to eat this salad, but when I go back into my office there is a candy bar in my drawer. Well, the situation is that if you eat that candy bar you're not telling the truth. The truth is the pollution that's coming from the creation of these things is immense. It's tremendous. The number of elements that are drawn from the earth (*inaudible*) the footprint is far greater for creating renewable energy than it ever was (*inaudible*) that is reliable, accessible, and we have hundreds of years' worth of it in this country. It's just premature and according to the document that I put on the back here- the International Energy Agency states that the energy materials and methods to do this do not exist, so it's unrealistic and at the same time it's also inhumane because it raises the prices unnecessarily for those (*inaudible*.) Cattaraugus County voted unanimously- their IDA voted to put a moratorium on solar because they say we were misled. We do not have any local input, we don't have any local workers, we do not feel they have been truthful to us and we've also proven that they've taken good farmland and clearcutting forests to put up large solar (*inaudible*) which have very little end result in terms of energy. So, what we're asking is that you consider local options. Niagara County did it. Here's their statement. The Niagara County Legislature finds that a convenient, safe, and environmentally sound system for recycling with (*inaudible*) minimization of the hazardous waste, because it does, it becomes a toxic waste dump if it's left- and the recovery of the commercially viable materials must be established. So, they passed that law and that's one option. The resolution calls for a law for the recycling of these rare earth metals that have such a tremendous impact on another part of the world, but like the candy bar, it's not physical, it's hidden and they don't tell us about it. Another possibility is to require solar components that be made in the United States. The Post-Journal has recommended this- no PILOT resolution. When you did that for wind 8 counties in Western New York followed your example, followed your leadership and put forward a no PILOT resolution saying why should this county give them a tax break when the state and federal government are giving- in the case of solar they get 250 times more subsidies than nuclear. So, the balance is clear. You have to use common sense and say what is to the best of the benefit of the residents in my region and try to slow this down. There's a transition to be done, it's going way too fast, it's not realistic and we hope that it can slow down. Every town has a solar (*inaudible*) and every resident has the right to a property value guarantee. They should be encouraged to write that into the solar laws and it could even be a resolution here. And finally, we could require an accounting of the electricity produced. Do you know how much electricity's produced by those Germans up there or by those solar (*inaudible*) in Fredonia? There should be an accounting to- the people that ok these things, you should know what it's actually producing. In other words, the energy returned over the energy invested must be assessed. We have an assessment that above the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel we've put more energy in- mining, transporting, constructing solar and wind than you'll ever get in return. I'm not talking about money because there's money changing hands all over the place. There are subsidies, there are Wall Street scams going on left and right, but it is true that 350 U.S. communities have rejected this and there are options in spite of the very arbitrary direction that our state is going and (*inaudible*) are changing. So, the more effort and the more pushback the better. Cattaraugus County is doing it, and I'm sorry I think it relates to your committee and I really don't find any other outlet for this. My great grandfather was the first person that put the electric company in Jamestown. He was the mayor who initiated and guarded it from the attack by the two utility- they were large corporations and they were going to take over the electrical system and he made sure it was a public system so the people benefited. It's been there all this time and it's still an example- the oldest public utility. That's what we should do with NRG, of course. Turn it back into gas. All the power we'd ever need and provided.

Legislator Proctor: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a couple questions? The rare minerals- most of those- is it true that most of those are mined in China and (*inaudible*)?

Ms. Engstrom: Almost entirely, yes. Does that put us at risk for security?

Legislator Proctor: The other thing is recycling that Niagara County passed. There are recycling facilities in the country?

Ms. Engstrom: There is one. It's far, far away and it's true it's a method of slowing it down because when there's a demand there will be an answer and there will be a technology that responds to it.

Legislator Proctor: Is there one being built in Rochester?

Ms. Engstrom: I don't know that. Right now we see that they're all being dumped. All the lithium batteries are being dumped. Those are hazardous waste and those are a waste of a tremendous amount of resources. The other thing is it's really important that we be not subject to what a county that could be our adversary could control. Especially in our sector here where energy is essential for survival. If you live in California you would survive, but when it gets cold here it's very serious. I don't have many answers, I just know if we delay it we'll find better solutions and this is not a good solution for our region.

Chairman Pavlock: Thank you. Anyone else to speak to the privilege of the floor?

---

Proposed Resolution – Amend 2022 Budget Appropriations to Include Office of Mental Health (OMH) School Based Mental Health Grant Allocation – *Presented by Carmelo Hernandez, Director of Community Mental Hygiene*

*Unanimously Carried*

Proposed Resolution – Amend 2022 Adopted Budget for Mental Hygiene Department Due to Leasehold Improvements – *Presented by Carmelo Hernandez, Director of Community Mental Hygiene*

*Unanimously Carried*

Proposed Resolution – Amend Chautauqua County Health & Human Services 2022 Adopted Budget for National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) Vector Control Collaborative Mentorship Program Funding – *Presented by Christine Schuyler, Director of Health and Human Services and Valerie Lis, Director of Administrative Services for Health and Human Services*

Proposed Resolution – To Accept New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) State Indoor Radon Grants Program Funding – *Presented by Christine*

*Schuyler, Director of Health and Human Services  
and Valerie Lis, Director of Administrative Services for Health and  
Human Services*

*Unanimously Carried*

Other –

Proposed Resolution – Amend 2022 Budget Appropriations to Include Additional IGT  
Matching Funds – Presented by Kitty Crow, Finance Director and  
Carmelo Hernandez, Director of Community Mental Hygiene

*Unanimously Carried*

Proposed Resolution – To Amend 2022 Budget for Implement the Community Contracts/  
PH Emergency Response Planning & Preparation Project within  
the Chautauqua County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)  
Spending Plan – Presented by Pierre Chagnon, Chairman of the  
Legislature

*Unanimously Carried*

Discussion – Update on Deputy Public Health Director - Presented by Christine  
Schuyler, Director of Health and Human Services

MOVED by Legislator Rankin, SECONDED by Legislator Torres to adjourn.

*Unanimously Carried (5:47 p.m.)*

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,  
Olivia Lee, Clerk of the Legislature