

COUNTY OF CLINTON)
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STATE OF NEW YORK)

December 17, 2020

Stenographer's minutes of the Regular Session of the Clinton County Legislature held Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 5:15 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers, 137 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, New York.

PRESENT: Rob Timmons, Deputy Chairperson, Area 7
Simon Conroy, Area 4 (arrived at 5:23 p.m.)
Calvin Castine, Area 1
Robert Hall, Area 10
Wendell Hughes, Area 8
Francis Peryea, Area 2
Richard Potiker, Area 5
Patty Waldron, Area 6
Christopher Rosenquest, Area 9

EXCUSED: Mark Henry, Chairperson, Area 3

ALSO PRESENT: Michael E. Zurlo, County Administrator
Kim M. Kinblom, Deputy County Administrator
Jacqueline Kelleher, County Attorney
John Kanoza, Director of Public Health

Deputy Chairperson Timmons called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Michael Zurlo, the County Administrator, conducted roll call. Legislator Henry asked to be excused.

Legislator Rosenquest motioned to accept the minutes of the November 24, 2020 Regular Session, seconded by Legislator Hall. Carried (9-0-1).

Deputy Chairperson Timmons asked if anyone wished to address the Legislature.

Geoffrey Barker, a resident of Plattsburgh, New York asked to address the Legislature regarding the 2021 Plattsburgh International Airport Budget. A copy of his comments are attached hereto and have been made part of the minutes.

There being no one else that wished to address the Legislature, Deputy Chairperson Timmons moved on to Committee Reports.

Buildings and Grounds Committee - Legislator Peryea

Legislator Peryea reported the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, December 14th was cancelled.

Children and Family Services Committee - Legislator Potiker

Legislator Potiker reported the Children and Family Services Committee has not met since the last Regular Session.

The Committee was polled on Resolutions #769 and #770 on the agenda.

Economic Development and County Operations Committee – Legislator Rosenquest

The Economic Development and County Operations Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 8th was cancelled.

The Committee was polled on Resolutions #771 through #776, as well as, Waive Rule 13.2 Resolution #819.

Finance Committee – Legislator Timmons

Legislator Timmons stated the Finance Committee met on Monday, November 30th to discuss the Clinton County Budget and conducted a Public Hearing on December 9th.

He noted there was a slight Budget change from the tentative Budget.

Resolutions #757 through #760 will adopt the 2021 County Budget.

The Committee was also polled on Resolution #777 on the agenda.

Health Committee – Legislator Waldron

Legislator Waldron stated the Health Committee has not met since the last Regular Session.

John Kanoza, the Director of Public Health, was present to provide a brief update. He reported as of Tuesday, December 15th, there were twelve new active cases bringing the County to a total of 769 positive cases since the Pandemic started in March. There are currently 132 active cases in the County. The New York State website indicates there have been 70,400 COVID-19 tests conducted in Clinton County. Mr. Kanoza stated the current rolling positive rate is at 3.4 percent.

SUNY Plattsburgh is also finishing up pool testing for remaining students and staff members. Mr. Kanoza also discussed the recent suspension of inmate visitation at Clinton Correctional Facility and Bare Hill Correctional. Clinton Correctional has 39 active cases.

There were 975 vaccinations delivered to CVPH yesterday to be distributed to the North Country. The Clinton County Nursing Home will be receiving three visits from CVS Pharmacy to administer the vaccine to staff and residents by the end of December.

Mr. Kanoza reported he is asking the local schools to remain closed until January 10th or 11th to try and avoid the spread of the virus entering the school system.

Mr. Zurlo spoke on behalf of the County Legislature and commended Mr. Kanoza's team on the excellent job they are doing.

The Committee was polled on Resolutions #778 through #784 on the agenda.

Human Services Committee - Legislator Conroy

Legislator Conroy reported the Human Services Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 2nd was cancelled.

Legislator Conroy recently met with Wendie Bishop, the Clinton County Nursing Home Administrator, and discussed the warm visitation shelters being put into action.

The Committee was polled on Resolutions #785 and #786 on the agenda.

Personnel Committee – Kim Kinblom on behalf of Legislator Henry

Kim Kinblom, the Deputy County Administrator, reported the Personnel Committee met on Monday, December 7th.

Resolutions #787 through #800 have been placed on the agenda as a result of the Committee's recommendation.

Plattsburgh International Airport Committee - Legislator Hall

Legislator Hall reported the Plattsburgh International Airport Committee has not met since the last Regular Session.

The next Plattsburgh International Airport Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22nd at 4:00 p.m.

Public Safety Committee - Legislator Castine

Legislator Castine reported the Public Safety Committee met on Monday, December 7th.

Andrew Wylie, the District Attorney, discussed the status of the Traffic Diversion Program.

Sheriff David Favro shared a response to concerns brought forth by Dannemora Town Supervisor Bill Chase.

Resolutions #801 through #808 have been placed on the agenda as a result of the Committee's recommendation.

Transportation Committee - Legislator Hughes

Legislator Hughes reported the Transportation Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, December 14th was cancelled.

Resolutions #809 and #810 have been placed on the agenda as a result of the Committee's recommendation.

LIAISON REPORTS

Cooperative Extension – Legislator Timmons

Legislator Timmons reported they were very pleased that their budget was only cut by ten percent and not the twenty percent decrease that was anticipated.

Soil and Water – Legislators Peryea and Timmons

Legislator Timmons reported the Soil and Water Board has a meeting on December 17th at 1:00 p.m.

STAFF REPORTS

County Attorney – Jacqueline Kelleher, Esq.

Ms. Kelleher asked to enter into Executive Session to provide a brief update regarding a matter of litigation.

County Administrator – Michael Zurlo

Mr. Zurlo provided an update from the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), stating the Federal Government failed to act for direct State and Local Aid. He stated the \$900 billion package will include zero for State and Local aid. Mr. Zurlo also stated sales tax continues to decrease.

Mr. Zurlo also provided an update on the County Budget. The levy is currently at \$29,771,890 stating this is \$2,195 less compared to the tentative budget that was proposed at the Public Hearing. This is due to receiving the final rates from the New York State Insurance Program, a few budgeting errors, and the final account of employee's health insurance. He also stated the Budget contains \$380,000 in the Worker's Compensation Reserve, instead of \$600,000. This can be used in years to come if needed.

There being no further business, Deputy Chairperson Timmons moved on to resolutions. The following resolutions were approved unless otherwise noted.

Resolutions #757 through #761 were approved.

Resolution #762 titled, "Approving Reappointment to the Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation Board" was moved by Legislator Peryea and seconded by Legislator Timmons.

Discussion: Legislator Timmons stated Samuel Dyer is doing a great job and they are lucky to have him on the Board. Carried (9-0-1).

Resolutions #763 through #766 were approved.

Resolution #767 titled, "Authorizing Distribution of Mortgage Tax for the period April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020" was moved by Legislator Peryea and seconded by Legislator Hall.

Discussion: Mr. Zurlo stated the Mortgage Tax is almost \$100,000 more than 2019. Carried (9-0-1).

Resolution #768 titled, "Authorizing a FlexTech Program Application and Participation Agreement with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)" was moved by Legislator Peryea and seconded by Legislator Hall.

Discussion: Mr. Zurlo stated this is an energy audit of Clinton County Facilities. This does not commit the County to any projects, but the application has to be submitted by the end of this year in order to be eligible for reimbursement. Carried (9-0-1).

Resolutions #769 through #774 were approved.

Resolution #775 titled, "Authorizing Memoranda of Understanding with Various Project Sponsors under a local Waterfront Revitalization Program Grant" was moved by Legislator Rosenquest and seconded by Legislator Waldron.

Discussion: Mr. Zurlo reviewed the projects that are taking place in the various municipalities. Carried (9-0-1).

Resolutions #776 through #778 were approved.

Resolution #779 titled, "Authorizing Contract with Planned Parenthood of the North Country NY, Inc." was moved by Legislator Waldron and seconded by Legislator Hughes. Carried (8-1-1) (Legislator Castine was recorded in the negative).

Resolutions #780 through #819 were approved.

Legislator Rosenquest motioned to Waive Rule 13.2, seconded by Legislator Peryea. Carried (9-0-1).

Legislator Waldron motioned to enter into Executive Session at 6:16 p.m. to discuss an update regarding a potential litigation matter, seconded by Legislator Rosenquest. Carried (9-0-1).

Legislator Rosenquest motioned to exit Executive Session at 6:28 p.m., seconded by Legislator Hughes. Carried (9-0-1).

Legislator Rosenquest stated this was his last meeting and gave a sincere thank you to fellow Legislators. He said it has been a privilege to serve the past five years and wished everyone the best.

There being no further business to come before the Legislature, Legislator Potiker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 p.m., seconded by Legislator Waldron. Carried (9-0-1).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Erin M. Light".

Erin M. Light
Senior Typist

:EL

Good evening. My name is Geoffrey Barker from Plattsburgh NY.

I am taking this time to address the Legislature on some budgeting facts for consideration. As most of you may recall my background is 10 years of air force flying and 28 years of flying for a major international carrier. Therefore I feel fully qualified to express my concerns with the Plattsburgh Airport budget.

I did attend an Airport Committee meeting back in February 2018. I was then dismayed to hear that with no firm increase in airline traffic a bus loop system was being established to run between the domestic terminal to a customs facility and then a hotel that had yet to be built, what I thought was a lucrative contract for Republic Parking, and numerous other aggressive expenditures. Sounded like a use-it-or-lose-it decision making process.

The 2021 Clinton County Budget indicates that the airport budget has an increase of \$344k over 2020. A review of the budget indicates that this increase should be taken in light of the General Fund actually having to pay \$3.2 million to support 2021 airport operations requirements. For comparison, in 2012 it was only \$1.4 million, in 2019 \$2.2 million and in 2020 \$2.9 million. Notwithstanding all the buildups and "improvements" undertaken to provide revenue income, the taxpayer apparently has an increasing cost burden. I believe that this fact is regardless of the Corona Virus and loss of Canadian customers. I can recall that when the county was favoring SkyWest over PenAir service, that an airport official stated that "at the end of the day this is a business" which should be compared with the continuous need to use our General Fund tax money.

Also, note that the passenger terminal expansion which I believe had an initial county cost of \$54.9 million, which was to be paid down by enplanement ticket fees and parking fees, has a 2021 balance due of \$33.6 million. This is a continuing drain on monies that could be used for other programs and needs in Clinton County. Perhaps the balance due could be refinanced with today's more favorable finance rates.

The budget is extremely detailed but many cited items are coded so a layperson is unable to grasp all details. Perhaps you can add a "Definitions" page that would help those of us interested in knowing exactly how our money is being spent. For example, the costs versus revenue for the Air Cargo Handling Facility, the General Aviation Federal Inspection Facility,

the Passenger Terminal Customs Facility, the Tailwinds Restaurant, the Republic Parking contract, hangar leases, and others.

Referencing Department Of Transportation data, the airport is doing fairly well with SkyWest tax subsidized Essential Air Service and ultralow cost niche air carriers. But we must remember that the Plattsburgh International Airport has to also compete with other area airports for air cargo and passengers. This includes Burlington, Montreal, Albany, and Saranac Lake. Additionally the airport is at the end of a spoke in the airline hub-and-spoke marketplace. The reality is that about the only viable international carrier that could provide successful service here would be an ultra low cost Trans Atlantic carrier providing service between Paris, France and Plattsburgh. This could perhaps capture some Montreal area customers as well as give us North Country residents a European gateway. In the alternative, the hubs at Dulles and Fort Lauderdale, for example, are international gateways that we are unable to compete with for southern foreign destinations.

Hopefully, these facts give insight to airline market realities with respect to how our tax monies are being spent in this one area of responsibility.

Geoffrey B. Barker