

COUNTY OF CLINTON)
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STATE OF NEW YORK)

June 25, 2020

Stenographer's minutes of the Regular Session of the Clinton County Legislature held Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 5:15 p.m. via teleconference, Clinton County, New York.

PRESENT: Mark Henry, Chairperson, Area 3
Simon Conroy, Area 4
Calvin Castine, Area 1
Robert Hall, Area 10
Patrick McGill, Area 8
Francis Peryea, Area 2
Richard Potiker, Area 5
Christopher Rosenquest, Area 9
Rob Timmons, Area 7
Patty Waldron, Area 6

ALSO PRESENT: Michael E. Zurlo, County Administrator
Kim M. Kinblom, Deputy County Administrator
Jacqueline Kelleher, Esq., County Attorney

The meeting was held remotely via teleconference in accordance with Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the public has the opportunity to attend the meeting via an audio link.

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

Following the pledge of allegiance to the flag, County Administrator Michael Zurlo conducted roll call.

Chairperson Henry welcomed Congresswoman Elise Stefanik to the meeting. Congresswoman Stefanik thanked Clinton County for its tremendous work throughout the COVID-19 crisis. She reported she was pleased to urge Governor Andrew Cuomo to release the \$2 billion in Federal Medicaid Assistance Program (FMAP) funding.

Congresswoman Stefanik stated she is grateful to all the hospitals in the district. She reported she has worked diligently in helping to secure an additional \$13 million in funding for the Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH). She believes an additional COVID-19 Relief Bill will be approved in July as terms are currently being negotiated. She has also been actively promoting the SMART Act Bill, which would designate \$500 billion in State and local funding.

Congresswoman Stefanik stated she is the Chairperson of the Northern Border Caucus, and addressed the impact of the United States/Canadian Border closure on the North Country's tourism, seasonal homeowners and economy. She stated the Northern Border Caucus has been advocating for clarity and swiftness in the re-opening of the United States/Canadian Border.

Chairperson Henry thanked Congresswoman Stefanik for her efforts to have the FMAP funds released. He also inquired on the possibility of a gradual re-opening of the border. Congresswoman Stefanik stated she has been advocating for the gradual re-opening of the border but reported the administration has been diligently working with its Canadian counterparts to come to a mutual agreement.

Mr. Zurlo thanked Congresswoman Stefanik for attending the meeting and updated her that, to date, the State of New York has not released FMAP funding to county governments. He also stated he was aware of the possible fourth stimulus package and of her work with the National Association of Counties and the New York State Association of Counties. He expressed the County is very supportive of the SMART Act. Mr. Zurlo provided Clinton County's fiscal position to Congresswoman Stefanik; and stated the loss of sales tax, coupled with the pending loss of twenty percent State aid and loss of departmental income, the County is looking at a \$15-\$18 million shortfall.

Legislator Timmons inquired on behalf of his constituents who had not yet received their stimulus checks. Congresswoman Stefanik urged him to advise his constituents to call her Plattsburgh Office at (518) 561-2324 for assistance.

Legislator Rosenquest motioned to accept the minutes of the Wednesday, June 10, 2020 Regular Session, seconded by Legislator McGill. Carried (10-0-0).

The meeting format did not include public comment. Members of the public were asked to express their concerns/comments by emailing: legislature@clintoncountygov.com.

Chairperson Henry moved on to Committee reports. He stated due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all Committee meetings have been cancelled until further notice unless Chairpersons opt for an in-person meeting in compliance with mass gathering protocols. However, starting in July, committee meetings will begin to be scheduled in the Legislative Chambers, and proper safety protocols will be in place.

Buildings and Grounds Committee - Legislator Peryea

Legislator Peryea reported the next Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 13th at 4:30 p.m.

Children and Family Services Committee - Legislator Potiker

Legislator Potiker reported John Redden, the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, reported the Youth Bureau is working with municipalities/towns and the Clinton County Health Department on a four-week baseball/softball season starting July 7th. He stated it will be a challenge with all the State guidelines; however, the towns are very excited the County is able to run a program this year.

Legislator Potiker stated Mr. Redden also reported the State has yet to release federal funds for the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program. Employment and Training staff have developed the program and are ready to start once the funds are received. Normally, the Program employs 80-90 low-income, at-risk youth for six weeks during the summer.

The next Children and Family Services Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 7th at 5:15 p.m.

Chairperson Henry stated he received notification that the New York Yankees and the New York Mets will be donating 1,000 face masks to Clinton County for youth sports.

Economic Development and County Operations Committee - Legislator Rosenquest

Legislator Rosenquest reported Anastasia Pratt, the County Historian, reported she has finished a draft of a repertoire of Clinton County's WWII veterans and will be scheduling interviews with senior citizens in the area to do oral histories.

Greg Campbell, the Commissioner of the Board of Elections, stated the office conducted and concluded Early Voting. To date, the office issued approximately 4,000 ballots for the Presidential Primary and have received approximately 1,800 ballots back. 1,300 ballots have been issued for the Mayoral Primary in the City and roughly 800 ballots have been received back.

Martine Gonyo, the Real Property Director, reported all Grievance Days are over and notices are being sent by the Board of Assessment Review to property owners. The office is now in the process of preparing final rolls for July 1, 2020 and is now open to the public in compliance with the COVID-19 safety recommendations.

Glen Cutter, the Planning Department Director, stated the office is now open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Giselle Hamms, the Deputy County Clerk, reported the Clinton County Clerk's office is now open for business from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Economic Development and County Operations Committee was polled on Resolutions #379 and #380.

The next Economic Development and County Operations Committee is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 14th at 5:00 p.m.

Finance Committee - Legislator Timmons

Legislator Timmons reported Kimberly Davis, the County Treasurer, reported the Payroll Clerk, Jerry Deyo, has retired. His last day in the office was Wednesday, June 24th.

The County is still very anxious to receive word on a federal stimulus package that would provide direct aid to State and local governments. Absent such aid, it will not be possible to close the estimated revenue shortfall of over \$15-\$18 million without drastic cuts to County services and personnel.

The Finance Committee was polled on Resolution #381.

The next Finance Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 1st has been cancelled, however, sales tax information will be provided as soon as it is available.

Health Committee - Legislator Waldron

Legislator Waldron reported the Health Committee was polled on Resolution #382.

The next Health Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 7th at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Zurlo reported John Kanoza, the Director of Public Health, and the Clinton County Department of Public Health have been diligently working on the planning and implementation of the COVID-19 response. He noted there have been two additional cases (a total of 109 cases) and currently have two active cases. Mr. Zurlo stated over 10,500 tests have been administered in Clinton County.

Human Services Committee - Legislator Conroy

Legislator Conroy stated Wendie Bishop, the Nursing Home Administrator, reported the nursing home is now providing staff COVID-19 testing on-site in accordance with Executive Orders 202.30 and 202.40. The Nursing Home is still not allowing visitation, and access to the nursing home is limited to staff and necessary vendors (oxygen delivery). Staff are required to be screened prior to entering and residents are screened daily.

Darleen Collins, the Director of the Office for the Aging, reported throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the Senior Outreach Program has been funded through Joint Council for Economic Opportunity (JCEO), has been active assisting individuals meet critical needs. The Outreach Workers are assisting clients via telephone as much as possible, but have been making home visits to address critical needs regarding access to food, medication and heat.

While the office has the Home Delivered Meals program through the Senior Citizens Council, JCEO has been assisting with access to food for older adults sheltering in place as recommended. JCEO has been delivering food boxes provided by AdkAction on a weekly basis. These boxes are designed for individuals, and JCEO is delivering 50 boxes per week. To meet the needs of larger sized households, JCEO continues to deliver food from the food pantries. JCEO has also made arrangements with Yando's to shop for clients, with the client conducting the payment process via telephone.

JCEO has also been assisting with access to medication, and has been able to work with Kinney's to pick up prescriptions when needed. There have been many clients who have lost access to informal supports during this time, and Senior Outreach has filled the gap.

Steve Bowman, the Director of the Veterans Service Agency, stated the Veterans Service Agency is open to the public. However, the office is seeing clients by appointment only, and are trying to limit the number of people in the office at any given time to follow social distancing protocols.

The Human Services Committee was polled on Resolution #383.

The next Human Services Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 1st at 5:15 p.m.

Personnel Committee - Legislator Henry

Chairperson Henry reported the next Personnel Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 6th at 4 p.m. The Personnel Department continues to evaluate personnel action submissions. Depending on the number of items, the Committee may be polled.

Plattsburgh International Airport Committee - Legislator Hall

Legislator Hall reported flights are on track but off a bit. He expressed his concerns on flights returning from Florida and the 14-day quarantining period travel restriction enacted by Governor Andrew Cuomo and the tracking of those individuals. Mr. Zurlo stated the Plattsburgh International Airport will not be monitoring those individuals returning from Florida. Rather, the County is waiting for guidance from the State.

The Plattsburgh International Airport Committee was polled on Resolution #384.

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

Public Safety Committee - Legislator Castine

Legislator Castine reported Dave Marcoux, the Probation Director, stated the Probation Department remains open daily with the lobby hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. They have now resumed 100 percent of daily operations with office contacts and field work. He also noted Courts are slowly opening back up, with a great deal of business rolling in from City and County Courts at this time.

Jamie Martineau, Public Defender, stated the office is open for business and is at full staff and are allowing clients into the office but trying to limit face-to-face meetings as much as possible.

Sheriff David Favro stated the Jail population has remained stable although he is concerned when activity resumes to "normal." Staff is able to take sufficient time off to refresh and prepare for the reopening challenge. The Department's marine efforts are up and running with minimal cost, understanding the potential reduction from the State. Overtime in both jail and patrol are well under budget.

The Public Safety Committee was polled on Resolutions #385 through #388.

The next Public Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 6th at 6:00 p.m.

Transportation Committee - Legislator McGill

Legislator McGill reported the Transportation Committee has not met recently. He stated the

Clinton County Public Transit system is contemplating reopening. The Planning Department will be providing updates and options at its July 13, 2020 Transportation Committee meeting.

The next Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 13th at 5:15 p.m.

LIAISON REPORTS

Chamber of Commerce – Legislator Rosenquest

Legislator Rosenquest reported conversations via emails have been occurring in regards to occupancy tax and further discussions are needed.

Clinton Community College - Legislator Rosenquest

Legislator Rosenquest reported he attended a zoom meeting with State University of New York Central, and there are still operational questions on the college reopening or remaining online for fall classes.

Cooperative Extension – Rob Timmons

Legislator Timmons reported he will be emailing a flyer to the Legislators.

Intercounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks – Legislator Waldron

Legislator Waldron reported the Intercounty Legislative Committee of the Adirondacks will meet Thursday, June 25th at 10:30 a.m.

Soil and Water Conservation – Legislator Timmons

Legislator Timmons reported they have been busy with farm assessments. The hydro seeder has been repaired, and the two interns will be helping with culvert assessments.

STAFF REPORTS

County Attorney – Jacqueline Kelleher, Esq.

Ms. Kelleher did not have a report.

County Administrator – Michael Zurlo

Mr. Zurlo did not have a report.

Chairperson’s Report – Mark Henry

Chairperson Henry stated Phase Four is expected to begin on Friday, June 26th. He also reported on Governor Andrew Cuomo’s 14-day quarantine travel restriction with more guidelines expected to follow.

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

Resolutions #379, titled, "Authorizing Site Agreement with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority."

Discussion: Mr. Zurlo stated this does not obligate the County for any project; any prospective project would need all necessary approvals from the County and the Town of Plattsburgh. This resolution simply provides New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) with access to the property. Carried (10-0-0).

Resolutions #380 through #390 were approved.

There being no further business to come before the Legislature, Legislator Rosenquest motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:59 p.m., seconded by Legislator Castine. Carried (10-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,



Toni Moffat
Executive Secretary to the County Administrator