

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM #318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Gouldman & Sayegh

Tuesday

6:30PM

June 12, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 P.M. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who requested that Legislator Albano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Gouldman was absent, while Legislator Sayegh and Chairwoman Scuccimarra were present. Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated Legislator Albano would sit in Legislator Gouldman's place.

Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – May 8, 2018

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Item #4 - Discussion/Algonquin Pipeline/ Request for Legislation/Air Quality & Air Emission Regulations/Resident Paula Clair

Legislator Albano made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Resident Paula Clair stated Putnam County has a "D" rating for air quality, while Westchester County has an "F" rating from the American Lung Association. She stated New York City (NYC) DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) issued air quality health advisories on 4 (four) days in May 2018. She stated she provided the Legislature with a report on the health effects of natural gas compression stations in New York State, along with a brochure with information from doctors about these health effects. She stated the DEC is developing new regulations on oil and gas air emissions. She stated the current plan is to implement a modest level of a protection, even though more protective technology is available. She stated this is why she is asking the Legislature to request stronger regulations to capture emissions and mitigate their effect on public health. She stated gas pipeline compression stations, such as the one in the Town of Southeast, increase ground level ozone and fine particles in the air. She stated the Southeast compressor station is one of the most polluting stations in New York.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned why it is ranked so high.

Ms. Clair stated it is a large and powerful station. She stated the station emits tons of fine particles, volatile organic compounds, and nitrogen oxide which contribute to creating ground level ozone. She listed health effects of ground level ozone such as cardiovascular and lung damage, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), worsening of asthma and emphysema. She stated children are at greater risk of these effects. She stated, per the DEC, particle pollution has been linked to eye, ear, and throat irritation, along with trouble breathing, lung cancer, and

health issues in newborns. She stated these stations release methane, which is a greenhouse gas and contributes to global warming. She stated increased emissions occur during blowdowns. She stated blowdowns are when highly concentrated gas is vented from the system. She stated a recent blowdown from the Southeast station required children in nearby schools to stay inside. She stated it is important to public health for gas emissions to be captured and contained. She introduced Jerry Ravnitzky, resident, to speak more about the health effects of air pollution.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated the first signs of exposure to the toxins are persistent coughing, headaches, skin conditions, and stomach aches, etc. He stated these can develop into more serious conditions such as heart and respiratory problems. He stated children can develop asthma. He stated children and the elderly are most affected. He stated children also can develop cognitive and learning disorders. He stated the toxins cause permanent damage and there is no safe level of these toxins. He stated the gas that comes into New York tends to have a high concentration of radon. He distributed articles about the health effects.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Suzannah Glidden, resident, stated all of these reasons are why these individuals are asking Governor Cuomo and the DEC to implement stronger regulations. She stated the DEC only requires the industry to comply with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) which do not account for spikes in emissions for nearby residents. She stated the State does not measure the emissions, they are self-reported by the industry. She listed the measures that are requested in the proposed resolution. She stated residents and engineers have been asking for the installation of air monitoring equipment.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned why this is not already in place.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated it costs money that the companies do not want to spend.

Ms. Glidden continued to read aspects of the proposed resolution. She stated it recommends the installation and use of the Lowest Achievable Emissions Rate (LAER) at all new and existing gas infrastructure facilities. She stated currently the DEC is basing their regulation on the lowest of three (3) possible technologies, known as RACT (Reasonable Available Control Technology), rather than BACT (Best Available Control Technology) or LAER. She stated the Town of Southeast, Town of North Salem, Town of Somers, Town of Cortlandt, and Town of Lewisboro have passed this supportive resolution.

Legislator Albano thanked the residents for the information. He stated he is in favor of passing this resolution.

Legislator Jonke stated the Southeast station is in his district. He stated the Committee should invite the station's utility company to a meeting to give their side. He questioned if there have been any direct complaints regarding health issues that are linked to the Southeast station.

Ms. Glidden stated she is being affected by the station's emissions.

Legislator Jonke questioned how far Ms. Glidden lives from the station.

Ms. Glidden stated she is 2.5 miles away. She stated she was in the hospital for two (2) weeks due to complications with emphysema. She stated there was a blowdown at the station a week before. She stated there is an Environmental Health Project report that is a very comprehensive seven (7) year study of compressor stations.

Legislator Jonke stated he is asking about the Southeast station specifically.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated most people do not associate the health issues with the emissions.

Ms. Glidden introduced Ellen Weininger, Educational Outreach Director at Grassroots Environmental Education. She stated there is a brochure in the handout with information from doctors that Director Weininger can speak about.

Ellen Weininger, Educational Outreach Director at Grassroots Educational Education, stated there was a 300 page report by the Environmental Health Project and it analyzed emissions from compressor stations and found at least 70 different types of chemical emissions. She stated the chemicals are associated with health effects. She stated there is specific information about the Southeast compressor station in the report.

Legislator Jonke questioned if the information regarding the Southeast station could be forwarded to the Legislature.

Director Weininger stated she would send it.

Legislator Albano stated monitoring the emissions should be a standard.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if there is a way of treating the air that is emitted from the stations.

Ms. Glidden stated it is in the informational packet that was provided.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if it is currently being treated.

Ms. Glidden stated only slightly.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if there is a radius around the station that is affected.

Director Weininger stated there is a 6 mile radius, though different weather conditions could widen the range.

Ms. Glidden stated there is a school 2.5 miles from the station.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated the emissions affect the whole environment.

Legislator Castellano stated the company at the station had changed. Ms. Glidden stated Enbridge now owns the station. She stated the station still has the Spectra name attached.

Legislator Castellano questioned when the change took place.

Ms. Glidden stated in 2017.

Legislator Castellano stated he would be interested in touring the station again.

Legislator Albano stated he would like to go back, but it is the things that people do not see that is the problem.

Legislator Castellano stated he would like to hear the energy company's side of the equation.

Legislator Jonke agreed with Legislator Castellano.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated the company is meeting all of the current requirements, but they are the minimum amount of requirements.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra clarified that this is just about extra precautions.

Ms. Glidden stated New York State has the weakest regulations.

Legislator Castellano clarified that the State sets the regulations. He stated he supports passing this, but wants to hear the energy company's side.

Legislator Jonke agreed with Legislator Castellano. He stated he lives very close to the Southeast station. He stated this legislation is very complex and while he is in favor of it at face value, this is a chance for the Legislature to have the energy company come in and answer questions.

Legislator Albano stated time is of the essence. He stated the Legislature should have its voice heard regarding these concerns.

Mr. Ravnitzky stated the DEC is currently revising their regulations.

Legislator Albano stated this resolution is just a request for the DEC to consider. He stated this is very important and should be passed.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the energy company can still be invited to the next Health Committee meeting.

Legislator Albano stated he would still like to hear more from the energy company.

Director Weininger stated she would provide the Southeast station's portion of the Environmental Health Project's report, the self-reported data from the Southeast station for 2016, and a summary of blowdowns.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to approve the supporting resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. By poll vote: 2 Ayes 1 Nay: Legislator Sayegh.

Legislator Sayegh stated she would like to hear from the energy company so she can have all the facts. She stated she believes wholeheartedly in air quality protection.

Item #5 - Discussion/Putnam County Sanitary Code/Potentially Requiring Water Districts to Provide Generators

Legislator Sayegh stated the Sanitary Code Article 13 currently requires water companies to have a generator hookup but not a generator. She stated she would like to explore adding this requirement to the Sanitary Code, considering the recent storms.

Director of Consumer Affairs Michael Budzinski stated Article 13 started before 2007. He stated the first version of Article 13 required public water supplies to provide automatic transfer switches and generators. He stated at the time, the Legislature and Board of Health discussed it but decided against the requirement due to negative feedback from constituents. He stated it was decided that a manual transfer switch would be the requirement.

Public Health Sanitarian Vincent Perrin stated larger facilities and most municipalities took the next step and installed automatic transfer switches.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if this would be expensive. She stated the generators cannot be small.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated most would need at least a trailer mounted size of generator. He stated the actual size of the generators would vary vastly. He stated the same size district in different places could have very different power needs.

Legislator Albano stated this is due to the differing size of the water pumps.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated exactly.

Legislator Sayegh stated there are approximately 60 water facilities without a generator.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated 50-60 would be a safe number, including very small systems that have between 5 (five) and 15 connections. He stated these small systems are not required to have hookups due to State regulations.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if requiring a generator falls under the purview of the Legislature.

Director Budzinski stated yes the Sanitary Code can be changed.

Legislator Albano stated if there is a big expense, the requirement could go in effect in the future, such as four (4) years from now, to give time.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated constituents could be asked if they want the generator requirement.

Legislator Sayegh stated the water facility operator would be the one purchasing the generator.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated cost would be a consideration.

Legislator Jonke stated a number of units can be chosen as a minimum for the requirement, so small districts are not burdened with the cost.

Director Budzinski stated the minimum was originally 15 connections.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated that minimum is the EPA standard.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if the sanitary code is changed, would the county be able to receive grants.

Director Budzinski stated that would be up to each individual water district.

Legislator Addonizio stated they could apply for grants.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated it is very difficult to receive money for projects that are not State or Federally mandated.

Lynne Eckardt, Town of Southeast Councilwoman, stated she disagrees with the Legislature mandating down to the municipalities. She stated she would leave it up to the municipalities to decide.

Legislator Sayegh stated the County monitors the water systems and water quality.

Director Budzinski stated yes, along with the State Health Department.

Legislator Sayegh questioned how the municipalities would be involved.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated not all water districts are owned by municipalities, some are privately owned.

Legislator Sayegh stated she brought this matter forward because there is a water district in her legislative district that is privately owned, and while the residents have stated that they would pay for a generator, the owner is unwilling to provide one. She stated the district was without water for eight (8) days after the recent storm.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated more research needs to be done on this issue.

Legislator Albano suggested having the residents within a water district vote on whether or not to purchase a generator.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated Town of Southeast and Town of Carmel have the most municipally owned water supplies.

Legislator Albano questioned if the generators would cost in the \$10,000 - \$20,000 range.

Public Health Sanitarian Perrin stated some districts could need generators that are more expensive.

Legislator Sayegh questions who inspects the generator hookups.

Director Budzinski stated plans were submitted, approved and then inspected after installation.

Legislator Sayegh stated so the county has an idea of the generators each district would need.

Director Budzinski stated if this change moves forward, it would be have to go to the State Health Department.

Item #6 - Discussion/ThinkDIFFERENTLY Resolution

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated this initiative is about bringing attention to people with disabilities and having government do what they can to make their lives easier. She added that this also includes the elderly. She listed some initiatives that Dutchess County has in place, such as specialty movie screenings with lower volume and the lights still on. She stated she intends to bring something every month to raise awareness.

Legislator Jonke stated this is a great program and Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro does a great job promoting it.

Legislator Sayegh stated it makes you look at things in a different way.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra suggested having a page on the County website with a list of providers and more information.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated this is a model resolution. He stated the motion should be to draft a resolution following this model.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to draft the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Item #7 - Discussion/Proposed Synthetic Drug Law

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated with the work that the County is doing to combat opioid abuse, more people will turn to synthetic drugs. She thanked Deputy County Attorney Gloria Tressler for the work she has done with the potential law. She stated at least 11 other counties have passed a synthetic drug law. She questioned how other counties are passing laws with only their Health Department monitoring the issue.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Deputy County Attorney Gloria Tressler stated she has been working with Assistant District Attorney Breanne Smith on researching the potential law. She stated if the law is going to make a difference, there has to be a way to bring the cases through the prosecution process. She stated as of now there is no lab to rely on to timely process samples. She stated District Attorney Robert Tandy agreed that this is an issue. She stated there are different versions of synthetic drug laws. She stated she is in contact with Westchester County about why certain things were included in their law.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she believes Westchester left their law open ended so more synthetics could be added in the future. She stated she believes the Westchester law is focused on keeping the synthetic drugs out of stores.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated Westchester has both their Health Department and Department of Public Safety enforcing their law. She stated possession is also prohibited. She stated it is a misdemeanor offense and a civil offense. She noted the delay in testing the synthetic drugs. She stated on average it takes two (2) to three (3) months. She stated her and ADA Smith have been in contact with State Legislators regarding State funding.

Commissioner of Social Services Michael Piazza stated tracing the chemical composition also contributes to the delay in testing. He stated he could inquire about a State lab that may be able to do the testing quicker.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated she is unsure what the County is allowed to do regarding testing at other facilities. She stated it has been suggested to use shared services with other municipalities. She stated another issue is having an exact list of what substances are banned.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she believes anything that can be done, should be done.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated a law can be drafted. She questioned what the Legislature sees as reasonable penalties for the law. She questioned if the County Department of Health would be the enforcement agency.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the Health Department already checks in stores for other substances, so this would just be another item for them to look for.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler noted that Westchester County has their own testing lab. She suggested the County impose a record keeping system for substances like synthetics, similar to what is in place for Pseudoephedrine where people have to sign for it and show their driver's license. She stated this would hold people accountable.

Legislator Sayegh stated nothing is in place to protect kids from buying these synthetic drugs. She stated any action taken is a good first step.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated as more municipalities pass synthetic drug laws, the State may take action.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she does not want to wait for the State, she would like Putnam County to take the lead.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated draft legislation could be ready for the Health Committee Meeting in July.

Legislator Albano stated passing a law against synthetic drugs would show that this is not a substance the County wants sold.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated it has been discussed that having a law may deter people from buying and selling synthetic drugs.

Item #8 - Approval/Appointment/One Army in the War on Addiction Task Force/Sandra Iberger, CEO, St. Christopher's Inn

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she has met with Sandra Iberger, CEO of St. Christopher's Inn a few times and will be a great addition to the One Army in the War on Task Force.

Commissioner Piazza stated St. Christopher's Inn has a large treatment program which is a very unique and innovative program.

Legislator Albano made a motion to approve Appointment/One Army in the War on Addiction Task Force/Sandra Iberger; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Item #9 - Verbal Update/One Army in the War on Addiction Task Force/Chairwoman Scuccimarra

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the One Army in the War on Addiction Task Force has been discussing the possible synthetic drug law. She stated Task Force members have a revised zoning ordinance that they will be taking to their respective towns. She stated the Task Force continues to discuss the tobacco purchase age.

Item #10 - FYI/Westchester Tobacco 21 Law

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated Westchester County has passed their law raising the age of purchasing tobacco to 21, joining many other counties, including Rockland County. She stated Executive Director of the Prevention Council Kristin McConnell has been researching the status of the tobacco purchase age matter in other counties in the area.

Executive Director McConnell stated Dutchess County's law, which would be the weakest law in the country, did not pass and is back in their committee process, Orange County passed their law raising the tobacco purchase age to 21 in 2017 unanimously, Rockland County passed its law in March 2018, Sullivan County passed its law in 2017, and Ulster County passed its law in May 2018. She stated she could provide this list to Chairwoman Scuccimarra.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Executive Director McConnell stated there are 17 counties and five (5) municipalities, plus New York City who have raised the age to 21. She stated the 19 and 20 year olds who purchase tobacco represent 2% of tobacco sales. She stated tobacco companies often provide cash incentives to businesses who sell tobacco. She stated of all people with substance use disorders that are in treatment, 84% smoke cigarettes.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if any municipalities have a military exemption.

Executive Director McConnell stated to her knowledge Dutchess County's bill was the only one that included it.

Legislator Addonizio stated some people feel it is unfair that you could potentially serve in the military but cannot purchase tobacco products if the age is raised to 21.

Legislator Castellano questioned why the Dutchess County bill failed to pass.

Executive Director McConnell stated because of the military exemption that was included.

Legislator Castellano questioned why the Dutchess County bill was considered the weakest.

Executive Director McConnell stated that information came from the American Lung and Heart Associations.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated she does not understand the need to keep discussing this matter. She stated it could help stop younger kids from starting to smoke.

Legislator Sayegh stated in regards to the military exemption, at a previous meeting it was mentioned that the military does not want their troops smoking. She stated just because someone is in the military should not mean that we should not want them to be healthy.

Executive Director McConnell stated military bases that are in areas that have raised the age to 21 abide by those local laws even though they do not have to, as they are federal land.

Bernard Malloy, Resident, stated when this law was being discussed in Westchester County there were small retailers that contacted the Westchester Government in favor of raising the age, so that they could legally deny sales to young people who they thought should not be smoking.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated there will be a representative from the New York State Association of Convenience Stores at next month's Committee meeting.

Legislator Albano stated he would support raising the age to 21.

Legislator Castellano questioned if any states have raised the age to 21.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she is unaware of any.

Legislator Castellano stated he would like for New York State to raise the age to 21.

Legislator Albano and Chairwoman Scuccimarra agreed with Legislator Castellano.

Item #11 - Other Business – None.

Item #12 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 8:07pm, Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.