

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
Held Via Audio Webinar
Pursuant To Temporary Emergency Orders

Members: Chairman Gouldman, Legislators Montgomery & Sayegh

Tuesday

August 11, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 P.M. by Chairman Gouldman who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Montgomery, Legislator Sayegh and Chairman Gouldman were present.

Item #3 - Approval/Resolution Opposing Executive Order #202.52 Requiring Business Licensed by the State Liquor Authority to Serve an Alcoholic Beverage Only if Such Alcoholic Beverage is Accompanied by a Food Item/Cattaraugus County Resolution

Chairman Gouldman stated because he has personal interest in this topic, he will be recusing himself from the conversation and vote. He stated he has asked Legislator Sayegh to handle this item.

Legislator Sayegh stated this resolution was forwarded by Cattaraugus County and was brought forward for consideration by Legislator Addonizio.

Legislator Addonizio stated many people are concerned about this matter. She questioned what constitutes a food item or meal. She stated Governor Cuomo's Executive Order requires a meal to accompany any alcoholic beverage. She stated it would be in the best interest of Putnam County to also oppose this Executive Order.

Legislator Sayegh stated Putnam County businesses have suffered enough and she does not believe it is right for government to require this when there is an opportunity to be open and follow the guidelines to keep people safe.

Legislator Montgomery clarified that this Executive Order is only in place during the COVID pandemic.

Legislator Sayegh stated that is her understanding.

Legislator Montgomery stated this is to protect the public during the pandemic. She stated she understands that businesses are frustrated but there have been other Executive Orders that have helped businesses, such as allowing alcohol to be sold with takeout. She stated it is a give and take. She stated the main purpose of this is to direct people to sit at tables, not at the bar. She stated she has spoken with restaurant owners about this and they are split on being in favor or against. She stated she is against sending this resolution to the State. She stated there are more important things to worry about.

Legislator Jonke stated this is a perfect example of government overreach. He stated the restaurant owners he has spoken to are tired of the overreach, especially when businesses are already struggling to survive. He stated he is in favor of this resolution.

Legislator Nacerino stated she does not believe that the Executive Order specifies that people must sit at a table, so theoretically, people could still sit at the bars. She stated she believes that the Governor has said that an appetizer is not acceptable, it must be an entrée. She stated this is a burden on restaurant owners. She stated Putnam County is cognizant of precautions and the numbers reflect that. She stated she would support this resolution.

Legislator Sullivan stated the State indicated today that the infection rate is currently .8 which is the lowest it has been since the pandemic started.

Legislator Sayegh stated when Governor Cuomo started the pause back in March, he stated it was in order to get control of the spread of COVID-19 and not overrun the hospitals. She stated there is now control over the spread with the lowest rate since it began. She stated the State is deciding for the people and taking away freedoms. She stated there are many questions regarding this Executive Order. She stated she is in favor of sending this resolution to the State.

Legislator Albano stated he would also be in favor of this. He stated we should make life easier for the businesses that are already suffering.

Legislator Sullivan stated we should do anything we can to help the restaurants to stay in business and pay their bills. He stated this should not be a political statement, it is simply to keep people working.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how this is political. She stated she is happy with the Executive Orders because they are to keep people safe and the infection rate low.

Legislator Sayegh made a motion to move the resolution to the Full Legislative meeting. There was no second.

Item #4 - FYI/Unemployment Report – Duly Noted

Item #5 - Other Business - None

Item #6 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 6:33 P.M., Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.