

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

(Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Addonizio & Gouldman)

Monday

6:00P.M.

September 25, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who requested Legislator Gouldman lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Addonizio, Legislator Gouldman, and Chairwoman Scuccimarra were present.

Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – August 9, 2017

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the committee would be addressing item #5 first.

Item #5 - Discussion/Geothermal Drilling/Putnam County Plumbing & Mechanical Trades Board Member Henry Boyd

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated this item came from a discussion at the July 18, 2017 Rules, Enactments & Intergovernmental Relations Committee. She stated Plumbing & Mechanical Trades Board Member Henry Boyd is concerned with the pollution that comes from geothermal drilling.

Mr. Boyd stated the Town of Kent has a geothermal system at the police department, library, and town hall. He explained the process of geothermal drilling. He stated the fluid used is poly glycol, and is not a pollutant. He stated geothermal is an efficient way to heat or cool a building. He stated there is also a direct injection system which is done differently than the normal technique. He stated copper lines are used and are full of Freon. He stated the vibration and the pressure the lines are under causes them to leak. He stated at the temperatures in the ground, the Freon disperses into the ground and pollutes the water table. He stated it is very hard to remove. He stated if it was above ground it would just dissipate into the air. He stated Freon is the most efficient coolant. He stated there are new substances used that are not as pollutant and not as efficient, which lead to there being more copper pipes.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned what Mr. Boyd is proposing.

Mr. Boyd stated Rockland County only allows liquid to go through the pipes along with only allowing plastic pipes for geothermal systems. He stated that is what the Plumbing Board and he would like to be in place.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if there was concern over pollutants as the drilling happens.

Mr. Boyd stated no because everything coming out of the ground during the drilling process is natural.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra clarified that the main concern is the Freon.

Legislator Addonizio questioned which system is at the Kent Town Hall.

Mr. Boyd stated it has plastic pipes with poly glycol in it. He stated this system is not used very often.

Legislator Addonizio questioned what ramifications the geothermal system would have on the proposed playground near Town Hall.

Mr. Boyd stated the drilling holes should be on the other side while the geothermal wells will be in front of the door.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if he knew for sure that it is not near the playground.

Mr. Boyd stated no, he has not seen the plans.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if changing the plumbing law would be sufficient.

Mr. Boyd stated just changing the plumbing law should be sufficient.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if Mr. Boyd has kept Deputy County Attorney Gloria Tressler apprised of the desired change to the plumbing law.

Mr. Boyd stated Deputy County Attorney Tressler was there when the law was being updated. He stated he has not spoken with her since he decided to come back to the Legislature with his desired change.

Legislator Nacerino stated she believes that it is necessary for Mr. Boyd to talk to Deputy County Attorney Tressler. She stated it is not in the Legislature's purview to make these changes.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the Legislature can make recommendations. She requested Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo's opinion.

Counsel Firriolo stated if there is going to be a proposal for a revision, the Law Department would draft it. He stated that draft would provide a firm basis for discussion.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she would contact the Law Department to start that discussion. Mr. Boyd showed the committee a picture of what a geothermal system looks like.

Legislator Sullivan questioned if the systems that the Town of Kent uses account for the all the heat and air conditioning.

Mr. Boyd stated if it was designed right, it does. He stated he did the drilling, but not the system. He stated geothermal air conditioning system can cool a building for approximately 1/3 of the usual cost.

Eric Gross, reporter, questioned if the installation of a geothermal system is more expensive.

Mr. Boyd stated it is approximately eight (8) times more expensive but it pays for itself in about 10 years.

Legislator Gouldman questioned what the estimated cost would be for a 2,500 square foot home.

Mr. Boyd stated it would be about \$25,000 for the drilling and another \$10,000 for the geothermal unit.

Item #4 - Update/Decal for Businesses who Hire People with Disabilities/Chairwoman Scuccimarra

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated this came from an idea brought forward at the Legislative Forum for People with Disabilities.

Marian Heinzinger stated she has a 28 year old son, Kevin, who has Downs Syndrome. She stated the State requires schools to implement a transition plan for people with disabilities, so that they will graduate high school at age 21. She stated they are unprepared for the adult world. She stated Kevin started working with a job coach who placed him in a job at Spins Bowl. She stated they have embraced Kevin, and he has roles and responsibilities. She stated when she tells people that Kevin is working there, they decide to go to Spins Bowl. She stated it does not matter what a business' reason is for hiring people with disabilities, as long as they are getting opportunities. She stated for example if there was one pizza place that hired people with disabilities, people may start going there more often. She stated people should be recognized for hiring people with disabilities and thinking outside the box.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra noted that Kevin's job is very important to him. She stated it is wonderful to talk to people with disabilities who have jobs as they are very dedicated to their jobs. She stated there are some videos online of interviews with people who have hired people with disabilities and they have nothing but wonderful things to say about them. She stated after the Legislative Forum, she contacted her friend Jennifer Giachinta who is a graphic designer, and she designed the logo for the stickers. She stated the stickers can go on the windows of all the businesses who hire people with disabilities. She stated this will allow people to look for the logo when looking for places to go.

Ms. Heinzinger stated she believes businesses that employ a certain number of people should be tasked with trying to figure out how to hire people with disabilities.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated bringing more notoriety to places that hire people with disabilities will hopefully encourage more places to hire.

Legislator Sullivan questions if Ms. Heinzinger was familiar with the organization Careers for People with Disabilities (Careers). He stated they have an annual event where people with disabilities are placed into employers in Putnam County. He stated they do a great job.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated they may have a list of places that hire people with disabilities that could assist with getting the stickers to the right places.

Legislative Counsel Firriolo stated he has done a lot of work with Careers through the Knights of Columbus. He stated it is a great organization.

Ms. Heinzinger stated Community Based Services manages Kevin's day program and during the day they get different job experience through going to non-profits. She stated it is similar to what Careers does and that she has heard great things about Careers.

Legislator Gouldman questioned how businesses who hire people with disabilities get a decal.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated they can contact her.

Amy Sayegh, resident, questioned if Chairwoman Scuccimarra would consider working with any of the Chambers of Commerce.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated yes, the more people involved, the better.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is a great initiative. She stated she has worked with many challenged children over the years who were phased out of school at age 21. She stated jobs are so important for their self-worth and their self-confidence. She stated it is also important to their families. She stated it speaks volumes of the employers who embrace the special needs community.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated all the more reason they should be acknowledged. She stated sometimes people may not know that a place hires people with disabilities.

Legislator Nacerino stated this raises awareness.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she wanted to thank Grey Printing, in Cold Spring with helping her with the stickers.

Item #6 - Discussion/Plastic Bag Concerns

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated New York City was planning to ban plastic bags, but it was vetoed by Governor Cuomo. She stated Governor Cuomo said he would set up a task force to discuss the issue. She stated NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) also would like

input on the plastic bag concerns. She stated she would like to discuss it and maybe in the future send something to NYSAC about the Legislature's thoughts.

Legislator Nacerino stated she believes the Legislature agrees that plastic bags are harmful to the environment. She stated she does not think people should be charged for using plastic bags.

Legislator Albano stated there should be a commercial raising public awareness because most people think that plastic bags are recycled with everything else. He stated he would like to see a 25 cent deposit to incentivize people to bring their bags back to the store. He stated the bags are more convenient than cans or bottles to bring back.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated in Canada it is 10 cents per plastic bag.

Legislator Albano noted the charge he is talking about would be refunded after the bags are brought back.

Legislator Gouldman stated when this was previously discussed he was opposed to making any changes because it would have only affected Putnam County. He stated if it done on a regional or State level it makes more sense. He stated only banning the bags in the County could hurt local businesses.

Legislator Sullivan stated he is very concerned about plastic in general. He stated he would like to have someone come in and educate the Legislature on what happens with local trash. He stated it is important to know if recycled items make it to the right palces.

Legislator Albano stated this is why public awareness is important.

Legislator Sullivan stated while he is concerned with the plastic bags, he does not want to charge residents. He stated he agrees with Legislator Gouldman that if they were only banned in the County, it could hurt businesses. He stated he would be in favor of a Statewide ban.

Legislator Addonizio stated she agrees that it is not a good idea to charge people. She noted that the reason why plastic bags became so popular is because paper bags were endangering the trees. She stated canvas bags are really the only alternative.

Legislator Nacerino noted that canvas bags harbor bacteria and germs.

Legislator Albano stated he personally likes the bags and would not ban them. He stated if people paid the refundable fee then they would bring them back.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if the bags could be brought back if they were ripped.

Legislator Albano stated yes because they would be recycled. He stated raising awareness is important.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated last year the Health Department had an initiative to help educate people on plastic bag concerns and the importance of recycling them. She stated a lot of big stores are taking the plastic bags. She stated they have to have a receptacle.

Legislator Gouldman stated the Legislature needs to be cognizant of their proposal because if they say to go back to paper bags, five (5) or 10 years down the road, people could be upset over the amount of trees being cut down. He stated we have to understand the past to be able to make the right decision for the future or history will be repeated.

Legislator Albano stated this shows that banning plastic bags will not work. He stated raising awareness and recycling is the answer.

Legislator Castellano suggested stores should offer a discount to people who bring reusable bags.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated ShopRite already does that.

Legislator Nacerino stated it seems that everyone agrees that this is something the Legislature needs to take a stand on. She stated even the State Legislature cannot agree on what to do. She stated there is no definitive next step. She stated initially advertising and awareness can be used to condition for people to recycle their bags. She stated raising awareness is a step in the right direction.

Item #7 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment 17A051/Cover Increased Costs/Preschool 3 to 5 Program/Health Department

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to move Budgetary Amendment 17A051 to the Audit & Administration Meeting; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #8 - FYI/Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day/October 7, 2017 – Duly Noted

Item #9 - FYI/ProAct Report – Duly Noted

Item #10 - Other Business

a. FYI/Update/Opioid Lawsuit/NYS Counties Suing Pharmaceutical Companies/Chairwoman Scuccimarra

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the opioid epidemic is the public health crisis of our lifetime. She stated the question is if Putnam County should join the Counties participating in the lawsuit against the pharmaceutical companies. She stated there have been discussions between the Legislature, Law Department, and County Executive. She stated as of now there are nine (9) counties across New York State who have joined the lawsuit. She stated she just wants everyone to know that the County is considering joining, though it has not happened yet. She stated there was a lot of false advertising by the pharmaceutical companies and it is costing the lives of many residents. She stated there are many entities responsible but this would send a message to the pharmaceutical companies. She stated they have known for years that opioids were addictive and subject to abuse.

Legislator Sullivan stated he believes the County is leaning towards joining the lawsuit.

Legislator Albano stated he does not understand why the sale of opioids to people under a certain age has not been banned.

Legislator Nacerino stated she would support moving forward with the lawsuit. She stated it would send a strong statement and it is not for monetary gain.

Item #11 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:46 P.M. Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.