

Legislative & Research Committee Minutes
September 29, 2021 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairwoman Raymond; Committee Members Preston Allen, Mike Smith, Mo Wright; Supervisor John Lant. Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Audra Hedden, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Mike Hartnett, County Attorney; Craig Hayner, County Clerk

Chairwoman Raymond called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Wright, the minutes of the February 24, 2021 and March 8, 2021 meetings were approved unanimously.

Selection of Legislative Priorities for the 2021-2022 State Budget.

Mrs. Raymond said that a copy of the approved Saratoga County Legislative Program and a copy of the Board of Directors Resolutions from NYSAC were distributed with the agenda. Mrs. Raymond said that the Saratoga County representatives had requested that they receive the list earlier so that they can work on it and incorporate into their budget process. It was decided that the 2021 Saratoga County Legislative program be re-worded by the County Administrators office to apply to 2022. Mr. Wright suggested adding an item requesting State stimulus funding be used toward broadband infrastructure, at the very least update mapping.

Mrs. Raymond listed the four NYSAC items;

1. Calling on the Governor to Increase and Fully Fund County Law 18B - Assigned Counsel rates
2. Enhanced Medicaid Assistance Percentage Reconciliations
3. Allocating Unrestricted Resources to Local Health Departments to Fortify Provision of Core Public Health Services
4. Resolution Calling on the Governor and the Legislature to Suspend Any Further State Diversion of Local Sales Tax for Distressed Health Facilities and Work to Immediately Sunset the Law

Mr. Bulger confirmed with Mrs. Raymond that the complete revised list would be forwarded to Law & Finance. Mrs. Raymond stated for the November Law & Finance meeting.

Mr. Wright suggested that an item regarding 911 funding should also be added to the list. Requesting funding to upgrade 911 systems. Mr. Wright said that the public should be informed that the surcharge on their bill for 911 is being put into the general fund by the State, and the County only receiving a small percentage of the funding. The committee agreed to add this item. Mr. Hartnett said that in working with Mr. Naughton extensively on solar projects and PILOT projects, one item he would offer is the legislation on local control over these projects. Mrs. Raymond said that NYSAC and NYCOM are on this item and suggested that their past resolutions be researched. There were approximately 80 Resolutions from NYSAC and there may have been an item on solar. Mrs. Raymond said that she has no objection with the County Administrator adding items to the list also. Mr. Bulger confirmed that the list would be sent out to Committee members for feedback. Mr. Hartnett suggested that a special meeting of the Legislative Committee be held to approve the list once finalized, and then forward to Law & Finance.

Request from the City of Saratoga Springs regarding 2am Bar Closing

Mrs. Raymond said that the County has received a Resolution from the City of Saratoga Springs regarding 2am bar closing time. The City is asking that the County support their request to have all the bars in Saratoga County close at 2am. Mrs. Raymond suggested that the committee take a thorough look at this. To her knowledge, this request has come to the County twice in the past and has been turned down both times. Mrs. Raymond said that she would like the Committee to get additional information in this, what the County has done in the past, and where the legislation has come from. Mrs. Raymond said that maybe the committee could recommend some changes in legislation that make it much more a Home Rule item. At this point public establishments are barely surviving and losing an extra hour of business would be the difference between life and death for a business. Mrs. Raymond requested that County Attorney's office research the request and report back to the committee.

On a motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Wright, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board