

# Public Hearing 5/18/2021

## **Theodore Kusnierz**

Let's call this public hearing to order, and ask that the Deputy Clerk please read the notice of the public hearing.

## **Therese Connolly**

Notice of public hearing. Take notice that the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on May 18 2021 at 3:30pm in the meeting room of the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors at 40 McMaster street Ballston Spa in New York, 12020 on a local law identified as introductory number 3, print number 1 of 2021 adopting a pilot youth deer hunting program. Take further notice that at this hearing, all persons wishing to speak will be heard. Written communications may be emailed to public comment at Saratogacountyny.gov or by mail addressed to the Clerk of the Board, Saratoga County Board of Supervisors 40 McMaster Street Ballston Spa in New York, 12020, which public comment must be received by May 18 2021 at 3:25pm. Copies of this proposed local law are available in the office of the Clerk of the Board and online at [www.saratogacountyny.gov](http://www.saratogacountyny.gov).

## **Theodore Kusnierz**

Thank you very much Therese. And at this time, I would call the first individual who has signed up to speak on the pilot youth deer hunting program. And that would be Matt Ross, from Saratoga Springs. Under the rules adopted by the Board you'll have three minutes to speak,

## **Matt Ross**

Thank you. As an avid Deer Hunter, deer biologist with the National Deer Association, and a resident of Saratoga County, I'm here to express my personal and our company's interest in the County's opt in election for the recently passed youth deer hunting pilot program. Recently, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the budget for the fiscal year 21-22 into law. Included in this legislation is a deer hunting pilot program that would allow a licensed hunter who's 12 or 13 years old, to hunt deer if certain conditions are met, such as under the supervision of a parent, guardian or mentor. Currently, New York has the most restrictive hunting age requirements in the country. And this initiative would provide a push in the right direction. Most states allow hundreds at least 12 years old to hunt big game. Engaging youth in big game hunting at a young age and with appropriate supervision goes a long way in developing lifelong hunters and conservationists. Further, there is no data anywhere to suggest that doing so is unsafe. Last year participation in hunter safety training increased by 175% in the state. So clearly there's an interest from New Yorkers to go field hunting, and the state is now looking to expand hunting opportunities in 2021 and beyond for our youth. Analyses estimate that these hunting expansion provisions to younger people could provide an additional \$2 million in annual revenue from increased hunting license sales. Again, as an avid hunter in your County, I urge you to opt in to the youth deer hunting pilot program. New York's youths are missing out on hunting opportunities and outdoor experiences that youths in other states get to experience. Youth hunting opportunities, especially with the appropriate provisions are safe and enjoyable for all. Again, my name is Matt Ross. I'm a licensed

forester, certified wildlife biologist, and I'm the Director of Conservation for the National Deer Association. But I'm a local resident. So thank you.

**Theodore Kusnierz**

Thank you very much, Mr. Ross, for your comments. Do we have any other individuals that have expressed interest and signed up that wish to be heard in person?

**Therese Connolly**

No, we do not.

**Theodore Kusnierz**

Hearing none. I believe that we do have some written communications that we've received. Would you like to read those?

**Therese Connolly**

Yes. From Ronald Rybicki from Ballston Spa in New York. An email. As the current president of the Saratoga County Council of Fish and Game clubs, we are in full support of this resolution. We represent the sportsmen and women of this County in all aspects of hunting, fishing, trapping, and the hunting safety programs for our youth. Our young hunters are the most the most safety hunting kids anywhere. The yearly hunting accident report from the DEC proves it. Please send this to all of the County Town Supervisors. Thank you.

**Theodore Kusnierz**

Thank you for that. Any other written correspondence or communications?

**Therese Connolly**

We have a letter from the Cooperative Extension Saratoga County in favor of the local law.

**Theodore Kusnierz**

And is that the extent of written communications?

**Therese Connolly**

That's it.

**Theodore Kusnierz**

No one else has expressed interest in speaking publicly. So with that, I will close the public hearing. Thank you. Thanks.