

Minutes
Public Facilities Committee
September 19, 2022, 4:00 p.m., Legislative Chambers
~~Livestreamed on Facebook~~

(Livestream unavailable due to Construction in Legislative Chambers)

Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Hemmer, Scudder, Parker, Gould

Members Absent: Davis

Others: Lee, Tampio, Chagnon, DeAngelo, Card, Rogers, Zafuto, Engstrom, (Dennison via phone)

Chairman Hemmer called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (08/15/22)

MOVED by Legislator Scudder, SECONDED by Legislator Parker to approve the minutes.

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

Karen Engstrom, Mayville. I'd like to give an update on the Utility Scale Solar in this region. On August 23rd, the first State hearing for Utility Scale Solar was held in Ripley and it was attended by great many first responders, 2 fire chiefs and a mayor of an adjoining town in Pennsylvania. This is a very large project. This is the first of many hearings that you'll witness in this County as Solar comes after us. Cattaraugus County is ahead of us and they have sounded the alarm in a number of ways through their agricultural committee which states protection needs to be done against solar farms because of the loss of agricultural land. They've also instituted a moratorium on Utility Scale Solar because of the environmental damage. The quotes from them are in here. They said "we were misled by the developers". They are taking agricultural land and wooded areas. They are not employing local people. I offer you the video of this hearing which I'll send to you in your emails so that you can see the citizens. Our local newspaper did not report this so it will be sent to you and it will be called Ripley vs. Big Solar. These solar producers in this Region, not the one in Ripley, but others have stated that they only get 10-14% capacity factor claimed of what they are claiming. So in Ripley's case, they are claiming 40,000 homes. If you do the math it's 4,000 homes. They are destroying 3,000 acres of land to do that. There's a pretty good opposition there but of course there's a lot of money at stake. The money is never always forth coming as Cattaraugus has found. There is also a law suit underway in the State Supreme Court siting the office renewable energy siting (*inaudible*). Well that's what the hearing was held by, they held a hearing, the office of renewable energy sighting held this first hearing in Chautauqua County. They're the defendant in a lawsuit in which the State (*inaudible*) by the persons who are filing the lawsuit "*(inaudible)* violated its enabling statue and the State Environmental Review Act SEQR by neglecting one half of its statutory mandate and

environmental protection”. The New York independent system operator warns that the technology does not exist to meet the scoping plans projected under renewables. So there’s no way to move this electricity under current conditions. Upgrade of the grid is essential. The challenges that exist cannot be met by existing technology that’s *(inaudible)*. States policy of solar and wind replacing dependable energy is reckless and it’s an assault. It will become *(inaudible)* damaging to our country side. Cattaraugus County, I’ve seen the IDA Director there and he has put in a moratorium. They’re also auditing all renewable. Forbes magazine’s states that 351 communities have rejected solar and wind due to the environmental and economic harmed projects it has cause. For your information, there’s a wonderful accounting of electricity. This is Cassadaga wind. Not too long here in its 3rd ownership by a German Company. The production – Cassadaga wind is 15% of that and it’s listed right here on their tally sheet. 15% of what they originally thought to produce. This area you know, you may look at Texas and say there is some possibility of having viable sola but Europe has failed. The *(inaudible)* is clear in Europe area and it’s – here we are Wall Street Journal today. I got my fuel bill and it was up 25%. This is electricity climbs. This is a situation that I continue to – oh and the lawsuit is in there. You have a copy of *(inaudible)* cover and the original statement. It’s lengthy, I’m not going to print it but you can find it. It’s statewide. So I do continue to propose some solutions and one that’s so easy to do is to mimic Niagara County. Take their law. They put forward a law that says you must recycle the panels because in their estimation and I quote Niagara County’s unanimously passed law “this legislature finds that a convenient, safe and environmentally sound system for the recycling of *(inaudible)* minimization of hazardless waste and recovery of commercially valuable materials must be established”. That’s very important environmentally to our communities because throwing these into landfills, they are toxic waste and they do maintain some little bit of electrical charge. There’s compounding factors involved in the runoff from the contents of them. They are toxic and we are seeing many reports around the country of unknown sources of *(inaudible)* the very thing that Mayville found difficult to locate. It’s a threat to our ground waters especially in the size of this many projects that are coming at us so once again I saw there is an example and there are 4 or 5 other steps that could be taken just to show that we do care about our communities. I know each community has a problem when they are faced with landowners who need the money but protecting our environment is still an important aspect. Does anybody have any questions? I put that film into the emails that I have at my disposal for you. Thank you for taking the time.

Chairman Hemmer: Thank you for all of that information, it was excellent. I appreciate it.

Proposed Resolution – Authorize the Conveyance of an Easement and Right of Way to
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation and Verizon New York,
Inc. – *Presented by Kathy Tampio, Administrative Coordinator for North
Chautauqua County Water District*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Adjust D.5112 Capital Improvement Account-Funded Roads – *Presented
By Drew Rogers, Deputy Director of Department of Public Facilities*

Unanimously Carried

Other –

Proposed Resolution – Adjust Capital Project Accounts – Road Machinery – *Presented by Drew Rogers, Deputy Director of Department of Public Facilities and Kathleen Dennison, Budget Director*

Unanimously Carried

Discussion – Fuel Cost Updates - *Sam Zafuto, Fiscal Supervisor for Department of Public Facilities and Kathleen Dennison, Budget Director*

MOVED by Legislator Gould, SECONDED by Legislator Parker to adjourn.

Unanimously Carried (4:26 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia Lee, Clerk of the Legislature/Kristi R. Zink, Deputy Clerk