

HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Held In The
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512

Members: Chairwoman Scucimarra, Legislators Gross and LoBue

Tuesday

July 14, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Chairwoman Scucimarra who requested Legislator LoBue lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator LoBue and Chairwoman Scucimarra were present. Legislator Gross was absent.

Item #3 – Approval of Minutes – June 9, 2015

Legislator LoBue made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; Seconded by Chairwoman Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #4 – Discussion/Rockland County/Proposed Resolution on Indian Point Emergency Notification

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated this is a proposed resolution from Rockland County urging the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission and New York State to require Indian Point to implement an emergency notification system within a ten (10) mile radius of the power plant. She stated she is concerned about passing this resolution as Resolution #73 of 2013 was vetoed by the County Executive because the Legislature did not invite all parties to discuss this matter. She stated she proposes to send a letter to Indian Point owner Entergy to come to a Health Committee meeting and address the concerns mentioned in the proposed Rockland County resolution. She questioned if this would be feasible.

Legislative Counsel Clem Van Ross stated yes.

Acting Commissioner of the Bureau of Emergency Services Anthony Sutton stated he spoke to a colleague from Rockland County regarding this matter. He stated he believes this proposed resolution stems from the lack of notification that occurred in the May 2015 Transformer Explosion at Indian Point. He stated there was concern of the oil making its way to the discharge canal into the Hudson River. He stated his first impression of the proposed Rockland County resolution is that it is always good to have the ability to communicate; however he believes this proposed resolution is a little irrelevant. He stated Entergy has already made available the system Code Red to the four (4) counties around Indian Point. He stated Code Red has the ability to call out to the community through landlines. He stated the best way to reach out to the public is through a subscription system such as NY Alert.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if Acting Commissioner Sutton can explain the NY Alert System. Acting Commissioner Sutton stated NY Alert is a very robust and comprehensive system. He stated it was created by an employee who ran the New York State IT Department. He stated this System has the

ability to text and make calls to cell phones and landlines. He stated in his previous employment there was a discussion in considering the use of cell bursting which provides the ability to select a single cell tower and alert every cell phone that was in contact with that specific cell tower.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the cell bursting system is similar to an Amber Alert.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated Amber Alert is sent to the public with the use of a notification system like it.

Chairwoman Succimarra questioned if Enhanced 911 is a similar notification system.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated Enhanced 911 enables the ability to text back to a dispatch center. He facilitated the discussion further with an example of when Enhanced 911 was used. He restated his belief that the resolution before the Committee tonight is redundant. He believes that Entergy will state a similar opinion to his in which, there is already an extended notification system in place. He stated under FEMA Regulations there needs to be a backup system in place of a siren notification also known as Route Alerting to inform the public.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if Acting Commissioner Sutton can clarify as to what he believes is redundant.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated the resolution being discussed tonight is redundant in the call for a notification system that is already in place. He stated notifying the public of oil into the Hudson River is challenging because the immediate impact is the boaters out on the Hudson River. He stated it appears the Rockland County Legislature is attempting to include unrelated occurrences to Indian Point. He stated in terms of the concerns of fuel rods, 1/3 of the fuel rods are replaced in the reactor to get the maximum amount of fuel. Then, the fuel is transported under water through a canal into a holding tank. The holding tank is filled with water and the rods are generally 12 feet below the water.

Legislator Albano stated it was his understanding that the fuel could be recycled.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated the fuel from lower level reactors can be recycled. He stated routinely fuel is transported around the Country. He stated at his previous place of employment he was notified when fuel shipments were being transported in the area even if there was no threat to the public. He stated if there is a potential threat to the public, agencies such as the Department of Energy has to be notified who have strict regulations pertaining to the shipment of hazardous shipments.

Legislator LoBue stated she previously voted “no” on Resolution #47 of 2013 because she was concerned of a potential effort in shutting down Indian Point. She stated when Resolution #47 was discussed again after the County Executive vetoed it; she changed her opinion because she believes there can never be enough safeguards when dealing with the community’s safety. She stated she believes more research needs to be conducted in regards to this matter before voting on it. She stated she is concerned with having a panic epidemic for a minute situation. She questioned if there is a map for the evacuation plan.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated there is an evacuation plan created. He stated in the 1970's the evacuation plan was supposed to be for a three (3) to five (5) miles but it was doubled to a ten (10) mile radius as a precaution. He stated if there was a release of radiation, the County would monitor the people and vehicles that were potentially contaminated. He stated the natural wind direction is north; however when wind speed is 30mph or higher the wind direction will go south down the Hudson River.

Constituent Nancy Verhoff questioned how realistic the evacuation plan is.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated there is a tremendous amount of effort done periodically by transportation experts to create a comprehensive and feasible evacuation plan. He stated there is also a "shadow effect" evacuation that needs to be considered when creating an evacuation plan. He stated as an example, if about 10,000 people are told to evacuate, realistically approximately 13,000 to 15,000 people will evacuate out of fear. He stated the nuclear industry is the one of the most regulated and monitored industries. He stated looking at the power plants from his engineering background he believes there are many redundant systems designed for these power plants.

Legislator Wright questioned who conducts the air modeling in the event of a radiation release.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated each of the counties have air monitoring teams. He stated these teams are deployed when there is a declaration of alert. He stated there are four (4) classifications of an emergency at a nuclear power plant; notice of an unusual event, alert, site area emergency and a general emergency. He stated a site area emergency means there is a potential release of radiation but, it will not impact the public past the "perimeter." He stated general emergency means there is a release of radiation and there is likelihood it will impact the public and they need to be evacuated. He stated the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy all suggest that the most effective plan is to shelter in place that encloses any avenues for outside air to get in. He stated the biggest issues with a power plant are the age of the power plant and human error. He stated past accidents of nuclear power plants such as, 3 Mile Island and Ternopol, have been precipitated or worsened by human intervention.

Legislator Wright questioned again who conducts the air modeling when a general emergency of a nuclear power plant occurs. He questioned who is in charge of monitoring the wind direction when a release of radiation occurs.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated the County uses the National Weather Service monitors the wind directions. He stated within 12 hours of an emergency being declared the federal authorities will take over monitoring the air; however the County will have an air monitoring team to verify the federal air monitoring team. He stated in February 2000 there was a small release of radiation from Indian Point. He stated this occurrence assisted in modifying several factors such as; when there is an alert from another municipality everyone sets out an alert and if a field monitoring team goes on site an alert is made.

Legislator Wright questioned if the County has pole mounted monitors.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated no, but the County does have the capability to send the field teams out and do background sampling. He stated the evacuation program is designed to eliminate exposure to radiation. He stated for the field team in the County takes approximately an hour to set up.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the field team is constructed of.

Acting Commissioner Sutton stated the field team is constructed of trained individuals who are generally Putnam REACT members, safety radio assistants who know how to read meters. He stated in the past he has done consulting for nuclear power point emergency plans, so he welcomes any questions on this matter.

Chairwoman Scucimarra questioned if Legislative Counsel Van Ross spoke with a Legislator or a representative from the Rockland County Legislature.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated he did briefly.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she wonders if the Rockland County Legislature is aware of Code Red.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated the discussion before the Committee tonight is if the Committee would support the Rockland County's resolution on the Indian Point Emergency Notification System.

Item #5 – Discussion/Algonquin Incremental Market (AIM) Project/Letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regional Administrator

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated there still are many concerns of the Algonquin Pipeline Project. She stated this matter has been discussed in the past and the Legislature has been supportive of environmental reviews and potential increase in regulations. She stated she is supportive of sending a letter to the EPA.

Legislator LoBue stated this would be the second letter that the Legislature would send in regards to this matter. She stated the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") has already approved the Algonquin Pipeline Project.

Legislator Albano stated he has attended some of the public hearings pertaining to the concerns of the Project. He stated several individuals that attended stated that they believe that their minor health issues were worsened by the compressors for the Project. He stated he would not dismiss the concerns of the residents and he believes it is important to hear their concerns.

Chairwoman Succimarra stated the request before the Committee is to reject the air permits for the Southeast Compressor Station and the Stony Point Compressor Station. She stated she supports research being done on the effects that Compressor Stations have on the air quality.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is also supportive of sending a letter to request for more studies to be done on the impact of air quality.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated the request before the Committee is to send a letter to the EPA to reject DEC's approval of the air permits.

Legislator LoBue stated it is important to note that Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC") has approved the air permits.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated FERC and the DEC have already approved the air permits; however the EPA has the authority to approve, reject or modify the air permits issued by the DEC.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Legislature needs to do its due diligence to ensure the health and safety of our residents.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the Legislature will send a letter to the EPA requesting that they reject the air permits for the Project.

Item #6 – Approval/Revised Budgetary Amendment (15A047)/Department of Social Services/Safe Harbour Programming

Deputy Commissioner of Social Services Joseph DeMarzo stated the grant before the Committee tonight is a \$75,000 grant for the Office of Family & Children Services to help create a liaison with the court system. He stated it will allow the opportunity for the County to educate the community on human trafficking. He stated there will be no cost to the County for this grant.

Legislator LoBue made a motion to approve the Budgetary Amendment 15A047; Seconded by Chairwoman Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Legislator Wright questioned if the "personal services- child safety coordinator" references on the first page of the backup provided to the Legislature is a new position for the Social Services Department. He questioned if this position would only be for the life of the grant that the County received.

Deputy Commissioner DeMarzo stated this is a new temporary position for the life of the grant.

Legislator Wright questioned if this grant is just one (1) year funded.

Deputy Commissioner DeMarzo stated yes, it is one (1) year funded; however it may be renewable each year.

Legislator Wright stated in the past when the County receives funding through a grant for a position there tends to be requests before the Legislature to approve a budgetary request for money to fund the position after the life of the grant.

Legislator Nacerino stated there is approximately only six (6) more months left of 2015 so, if there is a request in the future to continue the position after the life of the grant, it would be needed to be discussed during the budget process.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if the grant would carry over to 2016 because the grant is starting half way through the year.

Deputy Commissioner DeMarzo stated he will have to confirm with Commissioner of Social Services Michael Piazza; however in most cases the grant will be carried over into the following year. He stated to his knowledge this position is not being budgeted for the 2016 year budget.

Legislator Wright questioned if the Personnel Department has created a job description for this new position.

Deputy Commissioner DeMarzo stated no. He stated the job description would be based on the information that was submitted with the budgetary request that is in the agenda backup.

Legislator Wright questioned if Personnel Director Paul Eldridge is creating a job description based on the provided information.

Deputy Commissioner DeMarzo stated he believes Director Eldridge would create a job description contingent upon the approval of the grant. He stated from his experience in the County is that if a grant starts in August the County will send back the unused funds. He stated the State Calendar Year is different in that it carries over to March of the following year. He stated when a person is selected for the position they will be informed that this position is funded through the State and it is a temporary part-time position.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she would like to move this matter forward to be discussed at the July Audit & Administration Committee meeting; however this Committee requests information on the job description of the new position and the timeframe of the grant be provided to the Legislature before the Audit & Administration Committee.

Legislator LoBue stated this matter should be discussed further in the August Personnel Committee meeting to ensure the Legislature will receive the information needed.

Legislative Counsel van Ross stated this matter was approved by the Committee therefore it will go before the Audit & Administration Committee.

Item #7 – FYI/Health Department Press Release/Food Safety Concerns Rise During Summer Months- Duly Noted

Item #8 – FYI/Health Department Summer Newsletter/Tick-Borne Illnesses Appearing Earlier in Season- Duly Noted

Item #9 – Other Business- None

Item #10– Adjournment

There being no further business, at 6:49 p.m. Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Lobue. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.