

HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Held In The
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512
Members: Chairman Oliverio, Legislators LoBue and Scuccimarra

Thursday

April 10, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 6:27 P.M. by Chairman Oliverio who requested Legislator Scuccimarra lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators LoBue and Scuccimarra, and Chairman Oliverio were present.

Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – March 11, 2014

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve the minutes; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

Item #4 - Discussion/Algonquin Pipeline Expansion

Member of Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion (SAPE), Paula Clair presented a resolution and presented data on emissions of volatile organic compounds and reported these substances have been found to cause cancer. She stated there are 15.8 tons emitted from our compressors from the Southeast Train Station. She stated the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion has equipment with unaccounted releases of the volatile organic compounds.

Chairman Oliverio stated he would like further health assessments conducted. He stated he believes there should be a moratorium on the expansion to understand all aspects of the expansion.

Legislator Albano stated he received an email about intervening the expansion but, it was too late to file.

Member of SAPE, Susan Van Dolsen stated you can file past the date. She stated Spectra Energy Corporation must file a report every year and the report stated there are risks such as health risks. She stated the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion does not have insurance to cover the potential risks.

Legislator Wright stated the capabilities of this matter are beyond the Putnam County Legislature. He stated the Legislature does not have professional advice. He stated the Legislature could be subjected to litigation if the Legislature intervenes.

Chairman Oliverio stated he disagrees with Legislator Wright. He stated the Legislature does not know the full scale of danger that is potentially presented. He stated he would like to move forward with the statement that Putnam County cares. He stated the biggest sins are committed when the Government steps aside and let businesses make the decisions.

Legislator Nacerino stated she agreed with Chairman Oliverio. She stated it is our responsibility to do due diligence and to know the facts.

Legislator Albano stated he wants more explanations.

Legislator Gross stated Spectra Energy Corporation gave a courtesy presentation to Southeast. He stated he agrees with Legislator Wright in how it is out of our hands.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated a calamity of errors could occur without further investigation.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve a moratorium on the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion; Seconded by Legislature LoBue. All in Favor.

Item #5 - Discussion/ Epidemic of Heroin Use Rising In Putnam County

a. Correspondence/Senator Ball Homeland Security & Drug Crisis Roundtable/FYI

Chairman Oliverio stated there has been major publicity regarding the Heroin Crisis. He stated Heroin is overwhelming our youth. He stated Heroin affects those in the age range of 16 to 28 and some in the early 30's. He stated he believes it is important for the County Residents to understand what the Legislature is doing in response to the ongoing situation.

Social Services Commissioner Piazza stated New York State is focusing on the Heroin Crisis. He stated the Attorney General has announced that law enforcement can pay for Narcan training. He stated Oasis, Substance Abuse Services are looking for innovative opportunities to address the Heroin Epidemic. He stated St. Christopher's Inn has stated a respite facility would be a safer place to withdraw.

Chairman Oliverio questioned if an individual stays at St. Christopher's Inn would it be covered by insurance.

Commissioner Piazza stated a stay at St. Christopher's Inn would not be covered by insurance.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated other than jail there is not many places to detox.

Commissioner Piazza stated Legislature Scuccimarra is correct. He stated there is a lot of focus on intervention like Narcan, but it is not prevention.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if families are permitted to obtain Narcan?

Social Services Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated yes, Putnam Community Services and a group called Voices of Community Activists & Leaders (VOCAL) in Brooklyn are currently training the general public. He stated there have been a total of over 80 people who have been trained to use Narcan. He stated there will be more training sessions. He stated for instance,

April 18, 2014 at Arms Acres there will be training. He stated moving forward, police departments and first responders will need to be certified in the use of Narcan.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if the County has reached out to all of the police, like Cold Spring Police Department?

Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated the Putnam County's Department of Social Services has begun a dialogue with police departments but training has not occurred in the police departments as of yet.

Captain Velotti of the Sheriff's Department stated Director of IT/GIS, Tom Lannon went upstate to get certified to train the deputies at the Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Oliverio stated this has to be a community effort.

Putnam County Community, Care Coalition Coordinator Elaine Santos stated she has been handing out Lock Boxes to residents to put their medications in to prevent children from having open access to the medications in the home.

Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated the medications are being taken from people's homes so people need to lock medications, especially the narcotic medications.

Coordinator Santos stated Heroin stems from abusing prescription medicines and people can prevent that from happening by locking up the medicine. She stated it is the first step in prevention.

Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated there is a Medication Take Back Day April 26th from 9 to 12; it is a safe way to dispose unused or expired medicines.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she would like to advertise the event to have a better turnout than those in the past.

Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated from a medical standpoint, Medication Take Back Day has enabled us to receive 3,500 pounds (80,000 units) of narcotics that were unused.

Legislator Albano questioned if the Legislature could pass a law to prevent individuals with only minor pain, from being prescribed narcotics.

Deputy Commissioner Demarzo stated the State has a computer system which slows down people from "doctor shopping".

Commissioner of Health Dr. Allen Beals stated the medical community is aware of the problem. He stated the Heroin Epidemic starts with abusing prescription drugs, which is why Medication Take Back Day is so crucial.

Chairman Oliverio stated there are quite a few initiatives regarding the Heroin Epidemic. He stated for example, on April 24, 2014 Senator Ball is hosting a Homeland Security and Drug Crisis Roundtable at 6pm at the Paladin Center.

Legislator Albano stated he sees part of the problem as people are getting prescribed narcotics in quantities larger than needed.

Legislator LoBue stated a problem is that insurance companies are running a business so, the more medication being prescribed the more money they are making. She stated education is important. She stated the documentary "Chasing It" presents an eye opening reality of the strength of the addiction. She stated the first time a person takes Heroin they are hooked. From that point forward it creates challenges in many ways; one being the treatment of addiction because treatment is not covered under insurance.

Chairman Oliverio stated the film Legislator LoBue mentioned is produced by a group called Peers Influence Peers. He stated the premier will be May 2nd at 7pm at the Putnam Valley High School. He also stated the documentary uses real people and not actors.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated education is important and she stated she believes our County Departments are doing a wonderful job putting the word out there. She stated the Putnam County Drug Treatment Court does an awesome job, along with the new App "Putnam County Cares". She stated there is a collaborative effort on the part of the County, which she believes is a great reflection of how Putnam County Cares.

Commissioner Piazza stated at the past Department Head meeting the drug crisis was discussed. He stated there was a total of ten (10) fatal overdoses in 2013 and only one (1) person was under thirty (30) years old; everyone else was above the age of thirty (30). He stated of the first two (2) fatal overdoses in 2014, the first fatal overdose was due to alcohol. He stated Child Protective Services Case Workers requested special training. He stated our substance abuse and alcohol providers in Putnam County are working on a presentation. He stated the presentation was picked up by the New York Public Welfare and asked if the Putnam County substance abuse and alcohol providers could present it at the Saratoga Summer Conference for the State of New York.

Legislator Wright questioned if there are any requirements to receive Naracan training, he thinks it would be important to not require a person to identify their situation or reason to be trained.

Commissioner Piazza stated people are not required to provide that information.

Legislator Wright stated 60 to 80% of cases had a direct connection to alcohol abuse.

Item #6 - Discussion/Tobacco Ban

Chairman Oliverio stated he would like to forward the matter to the Full Legislature Meeting. He stated it would be a ban on tobacco only in pharmacies. He stated for example CVS has adopted this policy.

Commissioner Dr. Beals stated he wanted to remind the Legislature that Legislation can regulate certain food. He stated people are required to poses a license to sell alcohol. He also stated to receive drugs you need to receive a prescription from a doctor. He stated it is not unusual for Legislation to place a regulation such as these examples. He stated it is important to acknowledge the devastating effects of tobacco on our public health. He stated there has been over half a million deaths in the United States related to tobacco. He stated 15% of our health care costs are due to tobacco related costs. Putnam County has one (1) of the leading incidents of lung cancer in New York State. He further stated tobacco does not belong in a venue that is supposed to enhance health.

Chairman Oliverio stated the Putnam County Legislature was the first County in New York State to eliminate smoking indoors. He stated after several months New York State followed in banning smoking indoors. He stated he wants to be the first to ban selling cigarettes in pharmacies. He stated he believes New York State will eventually move this ban forward just like the smoking indoors ban.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated the vendors attempt to attract the younger population. She stated cigarette advertisements have bright colors and characters. She stated the Legislature has to recognize that nicotine is a drug and people are addicted to smoking.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Legislature has had many conversations on this topic. She stated there have been many discussions on whether there would be too much government. She stated government does play a role such as what type of food can be served in our school systems. She stated there are no bake sales, no soda machines available in public schools and there are limitations on the food portions. She then stated San Francisco, California is the first to ban tobacco in pharmacies in 2008 and others have followed suit. She stated she would like the Legislators to think outside the box and be proactive to promote safety.

Chairman Oliverio stated he believes the main purpose of government is to protect the health and safety of our people.

Legislator Gross stated he understands tobacco is unsafe. He stated there is a Free Trade issue and there is a First Amendment issue. He stated there are plenty of other items in pharmacies that are not healthy for people. He then stated obesity is also a serious problem. He stated the Legislature is going after the wrong target. He stated delis and gas stations are the businesses where the sale of cigarettes to minors is mostly occurring.

Chairman Oliverio stated the difference is delis and gas stations do not sell prescription drugs.

Legislator Gross stated he understands it is “stylish” to be first but he wants to be first for the right reasons. He questioned where do we draw the line?

Chairman Oliverio stated the Legislature would be sending a message to our children that tobacco is dangerous to your health. He then affirmed the Legislature is not banning tobacco all together, just limiting its availability.

Legislator Wright stated he can remember when pharmacies use to be a standalone entity. He stated society lives in such a diverse and multi-product society. He stated he believes the Legislature would be punishing good and reputable businesses with nationwide product reach. He stated the Legislature is focusing on the wrong target. He stated he does not like the slippery slope concept. He then questioned why is alcohol sold in a grocery store.

Chairman Oliverio stated a business needs a license to sell alcohol and cigarettes you currently do not.

Legislator LoBue stated she is conflicted. She stated she believes the Legislature is hitting the wrong target. She stated if this was a broader ban the Legislature would have the effect that they would like. She stated CVS Pharmacy has changed their model and is self-policing themselves.

Legislator Albano stated putting the ban into place is not going to reduce the amount of smokers. He stated the tobacco ban is a “feel good legislation”.

Legislator Nacerino stated if a person Googles tobacco they can see an abundance of information on the ban that the Legislature is trying to conduct. She proceeded to read research in support of her opinion. She stated as a County we should consider from an ethical, philosophical and wellness approach whether the Legislature is going to support this ban.

Constituent Pat expressed her take about the harmful effects of Aspartame.

Reality Check Coordinator Diane Moore stated children are exposed at a young age to cigarettes. She then stated people have control over the images our children see and by doing so children will be less likely to take part in smoking. She stated society would then be pushing for a social norm change.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve the Tobacco Ban; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in Favor.

Item #7 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment (14A022)/Health Dept. /“Run for Your Life” Event

Commissioner Dr. Beals stated the Health Department is sponsoring the increase of healthy activity by hosting the “Run for Your Life” Event. He said an accounting adjustment is needed to be made.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment (14A022)/Health Dept. /“Run for Your Life”; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

Item #8 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment (14A023)/Health Dept./Flu Vaccine

Commissioner Dr. Beals stated there are two (2) types of flus; type A and type B. He stated they created a quadrivalent vaccine for the flu but only budgeted for a trivalent vaccine.

Legislature Nacerino questioned if there are any stronger side effects?

Commissioner Dr. Beals stated there are no stronger side effects.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion approve Budgetary Amendment (14A023)/Health Dept./Flu Vaccine; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in Favor.

Item #9 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment (14A024)/Health Dept./Outside Worksite Wellness

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment (14A024)/Health Dept./Outside Worksite Wellness; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

Item #10 – Correspondence

a. Putnam County Ranks 4th in NYS for Health Outcomes/ FYI

Commissioner Dr. Beals stated Putnam County came in 4th out of 62 counties in New York State. He stated Putnam County loses points from binge drinking and tobacco smoking.

b. Street Names for Illegal Drugs/ Department of Social Services/FYI

Duly Noted.

c. “Run 4 Recovery” and “Drug Crisis in Our Backyard” 5K Run-Walk/FYI

Duly Noted.

d. Update/PROACT/FYI

Duly Noted.

Item #11 - Other Business

a. Approval/ Victim and Witness Assistance Grant Program / CAC /Commissioner Piazza

Commissioner Piazza stated the Social Services Department has received a notification from Recovery To Practice (RTP) and they asked us to send an application in by May 12, 2014. He stated this year the Social Services Department will be asking for more money but not from the County. It will be effective in October 1, 2014 and then go back to the Legislators for approval.

Legislator LoBue made a motion to approve Victim and Witness Assistance Grant Program / CAC /Commissioner Piazza; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

Item #12 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:43 p.m. Legislature LoBue made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Chairman Oliverio. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.