

**DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Gouldman, Legislators Birmingham & Ellner

Monday

6:00pm

March 24, 2025

This meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Gouldman who requested Legislator Birmingham to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Birmingham, Legislator Ellner, and Chairman Gouldman were present.

Item #4 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A022/ Tourism/ I Love New York Funds

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to move Item #4 up on the Agenda; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

Director of Tourism Tara Keegan stated 2025 had the largest application process for I Love New York. She stated matching funds with I Love New York is the most important and largest financial portion of the budget. She stated the County has received \$18,384 less from I Love New York than anticipated. She requested to move the County's portion of that shortage, \$9,192, into the Tourism advertising line. She stated this will have no fiscal impact on the County. She stated all counties in New York State received less funding by I Love New York this year, however many counties do not rely on the I Love New York funding because they have a greater advertising budget than Putnam County. She stated the loss of I Love New York funding could negatively impact the County, which is the reason for the transfer request.

Chairman Gouldman stated Tourism is doing a great job.

Legislator Ellner requested clarification on which line the funds are being transferred from.

Director Keegan stated the funds would be moved from the County's match in the I Love New York line which would then be moved to Tourism's advertising line.

Legislator Sayegh requested clarification on how much funding is missing from the State.

Director Keegan stated the total amount of funds the County was shorted was \$18,384.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if this transfer would even out the budget for the year.

Director Keegan stated they would still be short on the budget, but without this transfer issues may arise.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there will be issues with advertising without the transfer.

Director Keegan stated they are not short on the advertising funds. She clarified they are short on the I Love New York funds and the transfer is being used to match the amount that is in the State's system.

Legislator Montgomery requested further clarification.

Part-time Tourism Employee Tracey Walsh stated that I Love New York has always asked for \$60,000 in this line as a placeholder. She stated when they received the check it was \$18,384 short. She clarified the purpose of the transfer is to ensure that there is an equal match on both the State's and County's contributions.

Legislator Montgomery stated she is not content with these funds going to advertising. She stated she would like to see the tourism funds help support the impact of tourism on the community.

Director Keegan stated she is intending on some of the advertising going towards ensuring the public is aware of Breakneck Ridge closing and the trails that are available to the public.

Legislator Montgomery stated her appreciation for Director Keegan's hopes to keep the public updated, however, she stated it is the State's responsibility considering it is a New York State Park.

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A022; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

Item #3 - Discussion/ Increase in Energy Bills/ NYSEG

NYSEG Municipal and Community Relations Program Manager Dylan Miyoshi stated he is here this evening to address the increase in energy bills this winter. He explained on a NYSEG bill, there are delivery charges and supply charges. He stated the delivery charges goes towards factors such as the cost of staff, poles, and is negotiated every three (3) to four (4) years. He stated this is the area NYSEG obtains a profit from. He stated the supply charges are derived from the power generators. He stated the supply cost is what has contributed to the increase in the NYSEG bills. He stated NYSEG does not profit from the supply cost. He explained the factors that contributed to the increase in supply cost such as low winter temperature, actual or estimate meter reading, and energy supply cost. He stated the average of the monthly temperatures was about 15% colder compared to the previous winter. He stated there was also a spike in the price of natural gas. He stated there was a 4.5% increase in demand this winter which required NYSEG to purchase more resources from the supplier which was another factor that led to the rise in NYSEG bills. He stated a significant aspect in the supply area is the smart meters. He clarified the differences between the different types of settings on the meters and explained that customers remained on the same setting they had before the installation of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters. He stated New York State allows NYSEG to

“hedge” the straight meter. He explained how the process of hedging allows NYSEG to predict the supplies they need for the upcoming winter and purchase them in advance at a lower price. He stated hedging helps stabilize the cost for residents who have straight meters. He stated that unlike the straight meters New York State does not allow NYSEG to hedge on the day-night meters.

NYSEG Regional Manager Municipal and Community Relations Tom Garrity explained the differences between the straight meter and the day-night meter. He stated the straight meter has a lower fluctuation in prices compared to the day-night meter. He stated he met with 500-600 customers over the past few weeks and about 80-90% of the customers who had an issue with their bill had day-night meters. He stated another way customers can pay a bill or have questions about their bill answered is by going to the Brewster office since there is a walk in service available at this location.

Mr. Miyoshi explained the differences between the rates of the SC1 and SC8 meters. He stated customers with the SC8 meter were being charged 14 cents for a day rate and 11 cents for the off-peak rate while the SC1 customer was being charged 8 cents. He stated if the customers had the same bill, it would result in the SC1 customer saving a total of \$175.

Mr. Garrity explained the difference between the peak and off-peak electricity rate. He stated NYSEG has no control over the day-night meter rates.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if a customer would see a change in their bill if they switched the type of meter they have.

Mr. Garrity stated there is less variability in the SC1 meter, however, things are changing due to the increase in people purchasing electric vehicles. He explained if you have a day-night meter with an electric vehicle you are most likely getting the off-peak rate since that is typically a more common time to charge the electric vehicle. He stated how the day-night meter had lower rates before the winter season and at times the day-night meter rate was cheaper than the straight meter rate. He stated although the day-night meter rates spiked during this past winter this did not occur last year. He explained this is because there was not a spike in the supply cost during that winter.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if there is an additional cost to switch meters.

Mr. Garrity stated there is no cost, however, the customer must remain on the meter for 12 months.

Chairman Gouldman requested the address of the NYSEG location in Brewster.

Mr. Miyoshi stated it is 35 Milan Road in Brewster, and it is right near the Putnam County Health Department.

Legislator Ellner stated many of his constituents utilize oil or natural gas to heat their homes and the rates for this method of producing heat has spiked. He questioned the number of times NYSEG went to the Public Service Commission in the past 24 months and had their delivery charges increased.

Mr. Garrity stated they go to the Public Service Commission once every three (3) years. He stated they typically file for a 1-year increase. He explained every May there is an increase on the delivery rate.

Legislator Ellner questioned how much the rates have increased because the majority of the electrical bill is the delivery rate. He stated he is not satisfied with the continued rate increases on delivery charges.

Mr. Garrity stated NYSEG will be filing for another rate increase.

Legislator Ellner questioned how much the delivery rate charges have increased over the past few years.

Mr. Miyoshi stated the rate typically increases approximately less than a penny to a penny.

Legislator Ellner requested clarification on the other charges on the bill if the rate increase is only about a penny. He questioned if the delivery charge will decrease if the usage of electricity decreases.

Mr. Garrity stated the delivery rate will not decrease but the total bill will be reduced if the usage of electricity decreases.

Legislator Ellner questioned if the delivery charge was the only variable charge because there are other charges on the electrical bill.

Mr. Garrity stated some of the other charges are taxes and are explained on the back of the bill.

Legislator Ellner stated the charges are variable and are all based on electricity usage.

Mr. Garrity confirmed the charges on the bills are connected to the electricity usage. He stated mistakes can occur on the bill, but they have to see the individual bill in order to resolve the issue. He stated there is a way customers are able to monitor their energy usage with the smart meter by going into their account and utilizing the “energy manager” resource. He stated this allows the customer to view how much energy they are using by hour and trends in their energy usage. He stated the Brewster division has the highest percentage of day-night meters.

Legislator Crowley requested for clarification on the supply charge on a straight meter.

Mr. Garrity stated on the straight meter the supply charge was 10.9 cents but varies.

Legislator Crowley questioned how much the charge will vary.

Mr. Garrity stated over the past few months it has varied from about 8.2 cents up to just under 12 cents.

Legislator Crowley questioned how much the delivery rate will increase in 2025.

Mr. Garrity stated the delivery rate will increase by about 8% making it about 8 cents.

Legislator Crowley questioned the supply rate and what they expect that price to be.

Mr. Garrity stated they are unable to say what the supply rate is because it is dependent on the market and can change at any time.

Legislator Crowley questioned how often NYSEG purchases supplies.

Mr. Garrity stated NYSEG purchases supplies every day.

Legislator Crowley stated it is a struggle for people to pay their bills and there should be more forgiveness with the energy bills for constituents. She also questioned the number of arborists they have assessing the trees.

Mr. Garrity stated they have arborists in each division, and they also have contractors that work with them.

Mr. Miyoshi stated they recently changed contractors.

Legislator Crowley stated the clean up of old poles is also an issue.

Mr. Garrity stated poles not being properly taken care of is an issue. He stated with the trees and branches they ask the homeowner if they would like to keep them for firewood, but during storms they do not clean up the debris.

Legislator Russo requested clarification on whether the residents should make sure the numbers on their meter match the number on their bill since she has heard of instances where the number on the customer's meter and the number on the bill did not match.

Mr. Miyoshi stated he has not heard of this issue, but the customer is entitled to look at their meter if they would like to.

Mr. Garrity stated he also has not heard of this problem but will reach out to the smart meter team to see if it has occurred.

Legislator Russo stated this past winter has been one of the worst. She stated that NYSEG is not very helpful when it comes to people who are unable to pay and questioned if they have the ability to be more flexible.

Mr. Garrity stated they can take this feedback to their senior leadership.

Hilary, Putnam Resident, questioned how a customer can tell what type of meter they are currently using.

Mr. Garrity stated it is stated on the top of the customer's bill.

Hilary, Putnam Resident, stated that she is away every winter for 2 to 3 months. She questioned why she had a higher consumption for these months when she is not at her house even though she only has her heat set to 61 degrees.

Mr. Garrity stated it is because this winter was colder than the previous therefore it took more electricity to heat her house to that temperature.

Item #5 - Other Business - None

Item #6 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:46 Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn;
Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Aubrey Dall, PILOT Intern.