

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Brought To You By The Rockland County Legislature

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Legislative Actions: Meeting Of Nov. 1, 2016

The 17-member Rockland County Legislature holds two full board meetings each month where it votes on a variety of issues that affect the daily lives of 235,000-plus local residents. This is a bi-weekly recap of some of the highlights of each meeting.

## Highlights In This Update:



**BOOSTING  
PUBLIC SAFETY**



**HELPING AT-RISK  
YOUTH & FAMILIES**



**WORKING TO  
REDUCE SODIUM**

PLUS: CARING FOR COUNTY WATERWAYS ~ FUNDING JOBS FOR COUNTY YOUTH  
~ SUPPORTING FIRE SAFETY AT GAS STATIONS ~

**CARING FOR WATERWAYS** Legislators continue to look out for the wellbeing of county waterways, **voting 16-0 Tuesday to hire** a contractor to stabilize the banks of the **Minisceongo Creek**, where a washout potentially threatens nearby homes. OCS Industries Inc. of Middletown will make repairs along a stretch near Route 9W, close to the state Motor Vehicles Office, in West Haverstraw. The overall project cost is about \$1.3 million. The **county Drainage Agency** is overseeing the effort.

**JOBES FOR YOUTH** The Rockland County Legislature acted Tuesday to ensure that more than 50 youth participating in a county jobs program continue to earn their modest paychecks through the end of the year. In a **bipartisan 16-0 vote**, **Legislators backed the transfer** of \$45,996 from contingency to ensure that youths participating in the **Rockland County Youth Employment Program** will be funded through 2016. More than 50 participants are currently placed at job sites around Rockland, many of them municipal offices and nonprofit social services organizations, where they are engaged in positive, productive activities. Participants can earn up to \$9 per hour. So many youths signed up to participate, the program ran out of funding, said **resolution sponsor Legislator Jay Hood Jr. (D-Haverstraw)**. He suggested that funding for the program be increased in 2017 to avoid shortfalls in the future.

## BOOSTING PUBLIC SAFETY

**Legislators voted 16-0 on two measures that boost public safety.** They approved an agreement coordinated through the **Sheriff's Department** that allows the **village of Spring Valley** to receive a 2016 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance grant in the amount of \$13,065. It will be used for a village police Safe Streets Program and a Youth & Police Initiative program. Legislators also approved an agreement coordinated through the **Rockland County District Attorney's Office** that provides \$18,447.29 in forfeiture funds to the **village of Suffern** to cover overtime costs for a village police officer assigned to the D.A.'s **Regional Investigative Resource Center**.

### ~ Fast Facts ~

#### What is the Regional Investigative Resource Center?

- Collaborative effort that includes local, state & federal law enforcement agencies
- Main focus is organized criminal activity impacting Rockland
- Housed in confidential facility
- Uses latest technology and investigation tools to identify trends, crime patterns, suspects

## HOLISTIC HELP FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES

Legislators know it's important to act quickly it comes to at-risk children and their families, **voting 16-0 Tuesday to accept** a \$3.92 million U.S. Department of Health and Human Services grant that will fund a holistic approach in hopes of achieving positive outcomes. The grant was awarded via the **county Department of Mental Health in partnership with the county Departments of Social Services and Probation, the Rockland County District Attorney's Office and Rockland BOCES, which hosts the Partnership for Safe Youth Center**. The partners will work to expand mental health and recovery support services for seriously emotionally disturbed youth, ages 5 to 21, and their families. The goal is to support health and mental health, increase high school graduations, reduce hospitalizations, lower foster care placements and reduce the number of youth involved with the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Between 13 percent and 20 percent of youth experience emotional challenges, says county Mental Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Leitzes. The county is required to contribute a local share of \$1.94 million to receive the \$3.92 million.

## SUPPORTING GAS STATION FIRE SAFETY MEASURES

The most recent statistics from the National Fire Protection Association show there were 4,280 documented gas station fires in 2008 that resulted in 25 civilian deaths and \$28 million in damages. Yet, the state has eliminated the fire code requirement that fueling stations install and maintain automatic fire suppression systems. **County Legislators voted 16-0 to support** state Assembly and Senate bills A6793-A and S4971-A which would require such safety measures. The systems, installed either in the canopies above pumps or on top of the pumps, automatically detect fires and/or explosions and release chemicals to suppress them within seconds of an incident.



**DON'T FORGET!**



**Tuesday, Nov. 8 is Election Day**

Visit the Rockland County Board of Elections website for information about where to vote. Polls in Rockland are open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Click here:

<http://rocklandgov.com/departments/board-of-elections/>



## NEW EFFORTS TO REDUCE SODIUM

Consuming too much sodium can lead to serious health effects,

including high blood pressure - a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, the two leading causes of death in New York state, responsible for about 50,000 deaths annually, according to the state Health Department.

**Legislators voted 16-0 to accept a \$356,275 grant** that will help address the problem by reducing sodium consumption at early childhood centers, and universities and colleges. Just four counties – Rockland, Erie, Niagara and Onondaga – are receiving funding. The local effort will include modifying menus to lower sodium, changing products in vending machines and changing procurement policies to ensure that lower sodium products are purchased from the get-go, according to the county Health Department. One hope is to develop children’s palates before they are fully mature so they are accustomed to lower sodium foods. Another is to assist college students in making their own decisions regarding food choices as they start on their path to adulthood.

### The Facts On Salt

- **The body uses sodium to control blood pressure and blood volume**
- **Sodium helps muscles and nerves work properly**
- **Too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, the two leading causes of death in New York state**
- **Recommended sodium amount for adults & children age 14 and up is 2,300 milligrams per day**
- **Average American consumes more than 3,400 milligrams per day**
- **In 2013, 32 percent of New York adults reported having high blood pressure; the number is 40 percent when it comes to African-American adults**
- **Most of the sodium comes from processed and packaged foods purchased in grocery stores, & foods eaten at restaurants and other venues outside the home.**

Source: NYS Health Dept.



## PUBLIC BUDGET HEARINGS SET

**Legislators voted 16-0 to set two public hearings for**

**Nov. 15.** The first, at 7:05 p.m., will be on the 2017 Rockland County Budget. The second, at 7:10 p.m., will be on a local law that would allow for the override of the tax levy limit for 2017. Both will take place in the Legislature’s Chambers, in the Allison-Parris County Office Building, 11 New Hempstead Road in New City. A vote on the budget is expected at the 7 p.m. Dec. 6 full Legislature meeting.

Rockland County Legislature

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