PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Monday, June 8, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Kenneth Hughes, Chairperson
Davina Thurston, Vice-Chairperson

Chairperson Hughes called this Public Safety Committee to order at 9:30 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matthew Brassard, Chris Clark Kenneth Hughes, Mary Lamphear, Tracie McGill, Steve McNally, Clayton Menser, James O'Bryan, Timothy Pierce, Richard Preston, Matthew Stanley, Davina Thurston, Michael Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson and Meg Wood. Cathleen Reusser and Timothy Follos were excused.

Department Heads present: Jim Dougan, Josh Favro, Miriam Hadden, Judy Garrison, Roy Holzer, Mike Mascarenas, David Reynolds, Heather Sheehan and Dan Woods. Michael Langey and Mary McGowan were excused.

Also present: William Tansey, Michale LaVallie and Jennifer Manierre, Director – Clean Energy Citing NYSERTA. Eric Weyand was excused.

HUGHES: Good morning everybody the time is now 9:30, I will call this public safety committee. Please stand and salute the flag. Good morning everybody thank you for being here this morning. We are going to move right into the Veteran's office report.

PIERCE: I will speak to that. We did receive a report, it was emailed to me last week and because I was out of town I didn't get it into Judy in time so we'll include that report with next months.

HUGHES: Terrific, no worries and I see you have a resolution that you would like to bring forth?

PIERCE: There is. We are looking for a new sexton. The cemetery opened in June of 2006 and Loren Henrichs had been the sexton taking care of the stones and the cemetery since that time and he submitted his resignation and at our annual committee meeting we approved James Beaton to replace him. James is on the board and has been assisting Loren for the last several years.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF JAMES BEATON AS THE ESSEX COUNTY VETERANS' CEMETERY SEXTON REPLACING LOREN HENRICHS, EFFECTIVE APRIL 30, 2026. O'Bryan, Pierce

HUGHES: Any questions or concerns on this resolution? Being none, all in favor aye, opposed – motion carried. Thank you. Anything else from Veterans?

MENSER: As I brought several times in the past the Marine Corp. League which is obviously Veteran's organization had an essay contest for all the high school seniors in Essex County and I had requested that the supervisors provide copies of this to the schools to ensure that they were actually getting out and the program has been successful again. We did only get essays from seven towns Moriah, Lake Placid, Crown Point, Lewis, Ticonderoga and Westport but even that is better than we've done in the past and as it turns out, I have the prizes with me and if the supervisors would like to provide those to their towns then I will give them to you today so that you can provide them to the school directly and have a little more say what's going on at the school so, Sara Reynolds from Westport came in first.

TYLER: Why don't you just give it to her father?

MENSER: Can't do that. So, you need to give that to the school so they can give it out at their award ceremony.

TYLER: You got it.

HUGHES: Congratulations to Sara Reynolds.

MENSER: Dalton Garvey came in second.

HUGHES: Congratulations to Dalton Garvey.

MENSER: And Isabella Vargo and Landon Brassard from Moriah.

HUGHES: Congratulations to both of them. Thank you for your leadership on that Mr. Menser I appreciate it. Anything else from Veteran's this morning? Okay, thank you. Moving on to the County Sealer, Mr. Woods good morning.

WOODS: Good morning everyone, you have my report from last month. I will give everybody a minute to look at it. If you have any questions I'd be happy to answer.

HUGHES: You have the report from Mr. Woods from Weights and Measures. Anybody have any questions any concerns, compliments, kudos for him? I just want to say I had a chance to join Mr. Woods at a gas station in Moriah where I observed him measuring gasoline and it was quite a fascinating experience. I know he said it was super boring but for me it was very interesting to see just how that actually happens, the process there is a method to his madness and I was very impressed by how you did and what you did so keep up the good work. I encourage anybody that is interested in measuring gas or checking things out to contact him.

O'BRYAN: What accuracy do you shoot for in weights and measures Dan when you perform these accuracy inspections? I know you talk about them every month but –

WOODS: Yes sir. A passing score by New York State Law is 98% you are allowed two out of 100 over charges before it becomes a finable offense. Usually anywhere – the bigger companies all have pricing accuracy coordinators their job is to make sure all prices match which is on the shelf and what's in their system the ones that have pricing accuracy coordinators as a position in their stores usually pass or come very close they are above a 95% anybody that does not have that position gets below that's an observation that I've seen in the last five years.

O'BRYAN: How often do you check each of these businesses that you actually checked on with inspections now? Does it happen annual? Does it happen every couple of years or when you have time?

WOODS: I try to make it annually to all the larger stores and if they fail I go back, if they get above a 90% I try to give leeway there and say they are at least attempting to pass. I keep them as annually and anybody that gets below a 90% I go back a second time, if they are very bad I can go back a third time.

O'BRYAN: And who sets the fine? Do we set that as a county Mike?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, we can get you all a copy of the local law.

O'BRYAN: It seems as though I see these, maybe not the exact same store but same companies they are just accepting of that. It makes you wonder.

WOODS: We have raised the fines from the minimum for these ones that continue to fail. We are not fining them the maximum amount because we're trying not to push them out of business and close stores that will actually hurt the public more than it will help but we are trying to fine them enough to make a difference to where they change it to pass.

O'BRYAN: Thank you.

MCGILL: Mr. Woods can you tell me how often you've been visiting Willsboro last year?

WOODS: Willsboro last year I went twice I believe and this year I've been there once.

HUGHES: Any other questions for Mr. Woods? Looks like we're all set. Thank you very much. Board of Elections – Mr. Holzer. Good morning sir.

HOLZER: Good morning. My counterpart Mary had an appointment today but she sends her regards and she thinks of you guys.
You have my report just a little tidbit 15 days until the primary, 140 days until the general election, early voting starts this Saturday in Lake Placid reminder, there is no early voting in Lewis for the primary and a little information for you to remember last year for early voting up in North Elba we had a grand total of 8 people that voted so we are trying to save money by having early voting in North Elba. We are arranging for people around this area that want to vote, they can come into the Board of Elections, fill out an absentee ballot information, we'll process it right there, we set up a table little privacy screening so you can vote right in the Board of Elections for anyone that inquires from you.
Exciting news, last week we trained 24 new election workers. Just to put it in perspective we need at least 173 to run an election so we're still looking for workers especially in Lake Placid and Jay we are severely lacking for workers. Locally on the primaries, there's primaries in the entire county on both sides but locally we have Crown Point, Etown and Willsboro that have primaries.

HUGHES: Good report. Thank you. Any questions for Mr. Holzer this morning?

MASCARENAS: Roy, could you just remind everybody of why it's in North Elba for new board members that might be like, why the heck are we doing it there?

HOLZER: So, it isn't our decision. In fact when I saw it was there I was against it because of the early voting because of the expense of it because of the expense and result when you only have 8 people showing up for early voting and the thousands of dollars that you spend it just doesn't make sense. It's a mandate from New York State and they say it has to be in the largest community in the county. We are trying and we've tried in the past to get a waiver from the state but they are not exactly forthcoming with that stuff.

HUGHES: Thank you. Any other questions?

THURSTON: Can you send all of us out the entire list of candidates that are on the ballots this year?

HOLZER: Sure.

THURSTON: Thank you.

HUGHES: Any other questions for Mr. Holzer this morning? All set, great thank you very much sir. Mr. Langey has been excused but he did provide a report for us this morning. If you have any questions for Mr. Langey please contact him directly. He could not be here because he is in court this morning. Moving onto Emergency Services – Mr. Josh Favro.

FAVRO: Good morning. Do you have any questions on our report?

HUGHES: You have Josh's report here.

FAVRO: You'll see on the back page we've added some statistics on our emergency services app it's been downloaded since we got it it's been downloaded 1800 times and it gives you a graph of each month how many times people actually opened it up and used the app so it kind of shows it is working and working well.

HUGHES: I appreciate that information. It's a brand-new initiative for us this past year, we've paid some good money towards that and there's a cost for the ongoing maintenance and accessibility new supervisors if you don't have it you can go to the google play store or the app store and download Essex County Emergency management services and you'll be able to download that for free. It's an excellent, excellent communication device.

FAVRO: We will add that to our report probably every other month or if there is a change.

HUGHES: Thank you.

FAVRO: I do have one resolution. I have a resolution to apply for the combined State fiscal year 25/26 statewide interoperable communications grant, the SICG grant in the amount of $1,411,982.00. This is the grant that supports our radio system.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE COMBINED STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 STATEWIDE INTEROPERABLE COMMICATIONS GRANT (SICG) IN AN AMOUNT UP TO $1,411,982.00. Lamphear, Stanley

HUGHES: Any discussion on this? Can you just remind us where that money would go? How we would use this money?

FAVRO: This money goes towards that maintenance contract we spoke about earlier, any interoperability equipment. As far as the radio goes, so a lot of the equipment gets paid for through this grant antennas, cables, that sort of thing. Like I said, it pretty much supports how we maintain the radio system.

MASCARENAS: There is some staffing in there too I believe dispatch?

FAVRO: That's the PSAP.

MASCARENAS: These are formula driven grants too. They are not really competitive so every county kind of gets their allocation and then you put it toward eligible items. It's not a competitive

thing so it's not like we can go up or down and the only reason why I bring it up is you know we have needs in terms of our radio and how that goes this is an annual allocation from New York State.

HUGHES: Great, thanks. Any questions? All in favor aye, opposed – carried. Anything else sir?

FAVRO: That's all I have this month.

HUGHES: Sheriff's office.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: Good morning. You have my report. Do you have any questions I can answer them, if not I will see you, most of you in a little while.

HUGHES: Looking forward to it. Any questions for the Sheriff this morning? And again, after we are done today please feel free to join us for the tour of the jail and your offices up at 702 Stowersville Road. Hope you can attend. Great, thank you.
I just want to take a step back to Josh's report it was mentioned in the EMS meeting that last month there were zero dropped calls. Zero EMS calls and I just want to make sure that it was shared here that's an excellent accomplishment on behalf of all volunteers and paid staff that we have and I just want to make sure that was made known and keep up the good work.
No report from the coroners, moving onto Probation, Heather Sheehan.

SHEEHAN: Good morning everyone. How are you? You have my report and I can answer any questions you may have. I did just want to thank the supervisors that came out to our tour on May 11th. It was great and nice to have you there and answer any questions you may have had.

HUGHES: You did a great job leading the tour, it was great to see your staff. Great to see the facilities and thanks for the opportunity. Any questions, comments for probation? Looks like we're good to go for another month. Thank you very much.
Moving onto the Public Defender, Eric Wyand. He is excused but did provide a report in the second to the last page of your packet. I just noted two quick things, one there's two interns for the summer that they are welcoming which is wonderful and the fourth bullet wishing Emily Evatt well on her maternity so that's all good news there.

MASCARENAS: Quick update, we've got a presentation. We met with Eric and Miriam last week public defender is down currently to two attorneys. We are working with Leah and Reg Bidell on a plan to meet the need of the indigent. I think we've got a pretty good plan in place but I'll give you a full update on kind of how the whole system works next month and see all these different players and how they go and I'll provide you a flow chart and what ILS says we can or can't do in terms of what our current plan is we'll have a full update next month.

HUGHES: Thank you sir. Moving onto Conflict Defender, Miriam Hadden.

HADDEN: Good morning everybody. My report is in the packet if you have any questions I can answer them. I also wanted to put a plug in for our Law Day luncheon which hopefully all of you received an invitation to that I sent out a couple weeks ago. It's on June 23 in Lake Placid and we're going to be honoring a couple who have donated a great deal of money to the school district to fund the eighth-grade field trip to Washington DC which is a four-day long trip. It's all expenses covered and it's been an amazing experience because of the opportunity that it has created for a lot of children who've never left the Town of North Elba because they can't afford to do that so it's

opened up a lot of educational opportunities. The same couple has also done of a lot, they donate a lot of money to other charities and they've done a lot to support the community up in Lake Placid so hopefully some of you can be there.
In addition I just wanted to mention that I also have an intern who is here with me today. This is her second year with the Conflict Defender's office as a summer intern. It's Reese Shambo and she is from the town of Ausable Forks and she also informed us that she is going to be next year after she graduates she's going to be working with border patrol up in Champlain so she's currently studying criminal justice and we're happy to have her.

HUGHES: Reese, thanks for joining us. I hope you have a great internship absolutely. Any questions for Miriam this morning? Thank you for the reminder of the Law Day invitation as well. Okay so now we have a guest that I would like to introduce Jennifer Manierre, is that correct? Alright French skills coming in. Jennifer is the Director of Clean Energy Citing NYSERTA and is here to provide us a presentation on BESS which is an acronym for Battery Energy Storage Systems. Welcome.

MANIERRE: Alright has everyone heard about battery energy storage before? Has anyone not? Alright we are going review anyway also cut me off if I start getting close to 15 minutes because I don't want to go over my time.
Okay cool, so anyway I'm Jen Manierre. I'm the Director of Clean Energy Citing at NYSERTA. That does not mean my team goes out and chooses sites for different clean energy projects. What we do is work with local Government officials much like yourselves to help you understand and deal with the issues that surround where projects are sited some things that come up and help you understand the different technology, how to deal with them, how to permit them. We do that through one-on-one technical assistance, we have written resources in the form of guidance for local government officials, you can kind of see a few of them on the screen there on the left-hand side. You can call us. You can email us, we are from the government and we're here to help. That's our job to be a free technical consultant for all the cities, towns, villages across the state and hopefully answer any questions that you have or if we don't have the answer we'll try and do the research we also have contractors on board and consultants that are even more subject matter experts so we can contact them if we need to. Our email address is just cleanenergyhelp@nyserta.ny.gov it's up there along with the written resources and some recorded trainings and things like that are on our website. It can be a little hard to navigate sometimes but if we just google clean energy siting NYSERTA it should take you there or it's NYSERTA.ny.gov\site and all of our stuff is there so energy storage in particular I just wanted to pull out and show you that guide book in particular about the great stuff that's in there because we do not have a lot of time today we could sit here for two hours and talk about all the different things dealing with energy storage but this is the fact sheets that you can download. I actually have some of them in my bag I will try to remember to put them out before we go. There's a link to the fire code. There's a brand-new FAQ document which I think is really great it's questions, answers, questions, answers we just developed that a few months ago so it's a brand-new portion to the guidebook which I think is just super useful and will have all your questions answered and if they're not let us know and we'll try to answer any questions there are. There's also a model zoning law, a model permit for smaller battery storage systems should you choose to adopt or want to adopt them. There's all the different deliverables that came out of the Governor's emergency fire safety working group which we'll talk about in a little bit so all the stuff that came out of that fire program recommendations and water quality testing stuff it's all in there for you to review as you see fit and then finally peer review resources that explain probably in excruciating detail the process for third party peer review for any of the larger energy storage projects that are

going to be getting NYSERTA funding so you can understand the local scrutiny that they are under so that is online for you as well.
Brief agenda today I'm going to real quick introduce the technology itself just so everyone knows what we're talking about, touch on planning and zoning a little bit. I could do this for two hours or more if you want to. I'm going to talk about everyone's favorite topic fire safety consideration and then I'm going to throw all those resources at you again just so you don't forget.
A quick intro why are we even talking about battery energy storage right and I think a lot of folks think that the only reason we're talking about battery energy storage is because we're installing all of these solar projects or wind projects renewable stuff maybe the sun's not always shining, the wind is not always blowing and the main reason we need these batteries is to make up for that and make sure that we have electricity at all times and that is one of the benefits of energy storage and it is one of the reasons we're doing it but it is not the only reason and I would say perhaps not even the primary reason even if we didn't have renewables there would still be a need for energy storage across the state some of which that are sort of on the screen right so our electric grid is very old decades and decades old, it's in need of upgrades and it's very expensive to upgrade the system and the infrastructure itself and the battery energy storage can sort of plug in strategic spots in the grid and sort of elevate the need to upgrade the infrastructure that is there energy storage can kind of like defer those costs for upgrades in certain cases and raise your hand if you are happy about how high your electric bill is. Cool so one of the ways utilities make their money is by building infrastructure, they build the infrastructure and it sort of charges back onto your bills that's what we are paying for so if we can defer some of that cost of infrastructure I'm not saying if you put an energy storage in your town right now all of a sudden your bills are going to go down but the more we put in around the state over time collectively perhaps they don't go up quite as much as they would have so it's also a cost saving measure as well so looking at resource accuracy. Do we have enough energy when we need it where we need it, energy storage can help with that. Reliability and resilience making sure that the grid can do what it's supposed to do and sort of plug energy storage into strategic locations and make the grid a little bit more robust and reliable and then formula which I already touched on.
You're not going to be able to read all these but what this chart up here shows is that the utilities, the grid operators, commercial buildings and residential buildings going from left to right showing you different benefits that energy storage has on all those different scales. So, there's benefits for the utilities which I sort of touched on a little bit. One of them on the top left increasing renewable integration the sun's not always shining, the wind is not always blowing storage can take excess electricity from those when they are over producing and then put it back into the grid when they are not when we need it so that's one. I already talked about reducing operating expenses and savings all four of these sectors have that green piggy bank on the bottom because there's not much need for cost savings in every scenario here. We talked about the grid, storage can help balance the electricity supply and demand the grid and the wires that need to be very perfectly balanced at all times. The demand has to exactly meet what the supply at any given moment and that's another example of energy storage batteries in particular are really good at doing is being super responsive at the very fine detail putting little bits in, taking little bits out and just keeping everything sort of balanced and happy so that's another thing so improving power quality and reliability and avoiding those system upgrades.
We'll move into the third which is commercial buildings so larger commercial buildings that have, picture a large industrial plant that has a very high energy flow. They pay a premium on their power to be able to draw from the grid at times of peak demand like those hot summer days when everyone is turning on their air-conditions and flipping all these switches on coming home from work if they want to pull large amounts of energy from the grid during that time when everyone else also needs energy they pay a premium it's called a peak demand charge so if they can get a battery on site for their own use and pull from that battery during those hours of peak demand

they can reduce their demand charges and save money on their utility bill so that is just another example on more localized scale where you would save money and then finally moving over to residential customers on the right hand side. You can use it as backup power just like a typical generator so that's one use case for the residential and I know some utilities now are doing at least PILOT programs if not full blown programs where you sign your battery up to supply power to the grid during those times of peak demand I just mentioned so if you and 300 of your neighbors all have batteries that are signed up to this program you can all sort of feed into at the same time and function like one larger battery and help meet the needs of those times when we all need energy and again, making sure it can get to where it needs to go without potentially more costly upgrades and you can get paid for that service for your home battery sort of sends electricity back into the grid from it another cost saving measure.

This next chart here is just showing a little image of different stuff on the grid and all the different use cases for batteries for plug in so you might see it collocated with a wind facility or a factory like I just mentioned they are using it for peaked demand or at a community solar project or at a small business or in your homes or just sort of plugged into the grid on its own as a stand alone system not associated with any renewable project, not associated with any building just plugged into the grid providing grid services much like a power plant just a little visual there.

Another thing I often hear is we are doing all of this just to meet the load down in New York City right? Why are we doing all of this in upstate New York and sending it all down to the city and we are a farm for them? A lot of energy will end up going down to the city at times when they are needed but I shared this chart just to point out that upstate in general, to me upstate is anything above Westchester basically. We have stuff happening too. The circles that are on here show the interconnection cue for the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) who is responsible for running the grid in New York State it can make sure it goes where it needs to when the grid is operating so whenever there is a new large load project coming on think an industrial facility or perhaps a data center however you feel about that whenever they need a lot of energy they have to ask the NYSIO basically for permission to make sure when they plug in there is enough energy to meet their need so this is showing that interconnection cue and you'll notice a lot of higher lots that are in line are up here so we have a lot of future demand on the grid upstate as well so that's going to necessitate not just new generation perhaps when the grid operates also energy storage for all of the reasons we just talked about.

Also, it's not just batteries and it's not necessary the idea of that energy storage is not necessarily new we have some types of energy storage already in New York that top left photo is the Blenheim-Gilboa power plant which is more central New York I guess if you want to define the regions it's a pumped hydro facility so when there's excess power or cheaper power on the grid they have to pump water up in the reservoir and hold it there until they need more power and then release it to generators to release electricity so that's one form of stored energy. It's energy storage but it's not battery energy storage. Some one told me that it might be the largest version of that in the world or in the country or something but just fun facts.

On the top right there it's a fly wheel energy storage project that one has been around probably for a couple decades now I would think. Don't ask me to explain how it works but I think basically there's these big cylinders that get spinning sort of in a vacuum and you let them keep going and when you, so you're taking energy from the grid to get them going and they kind of keep spinning, keep spinning and spinning and then you can use them to pull energy from the grid when you need it so a more physical form of energy storage I guess there and then finally on the bottom is what you're thinking of today battery storage facility I think that is in Saratoga County there's one that looks just like that one out in Western New York too. That's a 20-megawatt project there's a few of them already around the State.

This chart now I guess is showing all of the like smaller scale battery energy storage systems that are already installed in New York there's lots of residential and small commercial folks having this

system and incentivizing the systems for a while now. You'll see that there is over 500 megawatts installed for 7300 projects and this was as of November of last year so I'm sure there's a descent amount more but anyways there's thousands of projects already installed across the state but on a smaller scale but you might not be aware of them. The darker the color of the county up here the more megawatts already installed. Just sort of showing you we have this stuff all around us already on a smaller scale.

Maybe I should have started with this one, what is a battery energy storage system? It's made up of just battery cells like in your cell phone, your lap top, your remote control whatever bunch of little battery cells or perhaps bigger battery cells they are different shapes and sizes straight bunch of them together to a module, stack a bunch of modules that's got a graph put them altogether and add a battery management system to it and a computer that runs the thing it's like the eyes and ears it can monitor each individual cell and know if it's overheating it will shut that module down and they're monitored 24/7 in a remote facility some computer will get the word and know exactly what to do and shut things down or send someone out there if they need to swap out a rack or whatever they have a very sophisticated computer system running the modules so put that altogether maybe a container goes around it and that's what we are talking about when we are talking about a battery storage system.

So planning and zoning again we could talk about this for quite awhile or go through, I've mentioned we have our zoning law I could go through that excruciating detail but I'm not going to you can read it if you want or call us up or we can do in another session but what I want you to remember today is that the fire code for New York State applies to everyone by default automatically. I think most of the concerns that people have about battery storage is safety related and fire related so you should just know if you didn't know already that we have a very robust fire code in New York State and you do not have to do anything that applies in your town. That's most of what I have to say about zoning other than, again, it's not just about those larger utility safety systems and I ask folks to remember your residents might want to do this, your small business owner's might have these cases so just remember when you're thinking about planning for these systems or are looking at a zoning code a documents zoning code just remember that all these different use cases use this as well and they will be getting benefits from them so just keep that in mind.

Fire safety considerations – I already mentioned everyone has a fire code but before we even get into those details I want to point out that while there's potential fire safety concerns with any type of electric building constructure I will never stand up here and say that these systems are fail safe nothing is ever going to happen because that's not necessarily true things can happen but what we've seen over the years if you can't read it this chart has the year 2018 on the left up through 2024 on the right it's from the Electrical Power Research Institute they've been tracking large energy storage battery incidents around the globe since 2018 and publishing that data you can look it up online if you want to but this graph is sort of summarizing what's out there now. The dark blue bars are showing the number of battery incidents that they've tracked most recently so when you first look at it well, those blue bars are not even down that much they're still some what steady in failure incidents around the globe for these systems so what's going on here but if you look at the light blue it's almost like expediential increasing there that's the installed megawatt hours so the amount of battery systems going in over the vested time frame drastically grew so the rate of incidents per installed megawatt hour has been going down drastically and that's what the orange line represents this sort of relationship between those two and it's kind of approaching zero again not to say anything can't happen but they are getting down. The rate of incidents has been going down and I like to think that some of it is probably due to better codes, better lithium batteries everything like I mentioned before they commercialize in the companies, they are just getting better at it so the rate incident is going down it probably never be actually zero though so with that said, in 2023 New York State had three large scale energy storage projects catch fire all

three locations had fires in 2023, it was not great. It was during a period of two months that summer, it was not very fun for us dealing with that but the silver lining is it sort of forced us to take over and look at what our safety regulations we had and if there was anything we could be doing better so the Governor created the New York State Inner Agency Fire Safety Working Group all the different agencies that participated are listed on the left hand side NYSERTA played a pretty major role in completing but we also worked with the Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services, the State & Fire Office, the Office of Fire Prevention and Control, DEC - Department of Environmental Conservation, then we pulled in the Department of Health at some point, Department of State also they are responsible for code development then we also pulled in third party experts subject matter experts to help with this as well. Six different state agencies working together actually did some stuff, got some stuff done so this slide is showing what came out of that work. Why do fires happen? What can we do to prevent it from happening again to the extent that we can and then if it does happen again we want to make sure that we are perhaps better prepared to deal with them. So one of the things we did was air, soil and water quality testing at the three fire sites that's 500 something pages I think. It's on our website too if you want to look at it. It shows that everything that was tested for there were no concerning levels of contamination, nobody got hurt so that was good at the time. If you have not heard yet there is I would be remis not to mention it, just as of like last week I think there is a lawsuit from the Suffolk County Water Authority on Long Island making some defamation claims against the project that caught on fire down there in East Hampton we'll see how that goes. I've got to bring it up though but when we tested stuff we haven't found anything we were testing for that's all I'm going to say about the lawsuit right now because that's all I can say really other than that we're supportive and we also want to make sure that if something did come from that we know that we know why and prevent anything in the future. I think the Governor has said we are going to go around and retest some of the other sites around the state as well so more to come on that but had to mention it. One of the biggest successes I think that came out of the fire safety work I think were the fire code recommendations that were eventually incorporated in the most recent fire code that was adopted January 1 of this year so dozens of people sometimes on these calls over weeks and months and hours pouring through every line of the energy source section of the fire code looking for any loop holes that are just even if not a loop hole just what can we do to make this better and more robust and safer. We came up with I think eleven recommendations, gave them to the Department of State and they adopted them pretty much in their entirety. I'll share a couple of the highlights with you in a little bit but that was a big success I think so we now have the best fire code in the country for fire storage I don't think anyone would argue that.

One other thing that we did was go around and test all of the previously installed larger energy storage systems across the state I think it was 300 kilowatt hours or something like that so picture the size of a refrigerator maybe. Went out and inspected all of those to make sure they were all in still good working order, see if there was anything weird out in the field or maybe they have like a tree overhanging it and that's a fire safety concern any weird stuff we wouldn't want to see to make sure that those points are included inspection check list process going forward and also to recognize that they fix whatever their issues were and we have a webinar for local government folks like yourself just to sort of explain all this and that's one of the recorded ones on the website if you are bored and want to watch that. I'm going to skip over this one in interest of time, it's just showing the timeline of the different fire codes that the state has adopted with respect to battery storage since 2020.

This is the fun slide I think. I'm going to share a couple of the highlights.

HUGHES: Jennifer, I'm going to give you five more minutes. That's great, thank you very much.

MANIERRE: This basically the end. A couple things on the fire code there were a few things in there that were discretionary previously so the authority had the jurisdiction to chose whether or not they wanted to enforce this thing, if you didn't know about it you are not going to do it right, so we made a couple of those mandatory now so there's no question about it and one of those things is third party peer reviews for larger energy storage systems so the developer or project owner has the okay for the local government to hire a third party expert to review their project and make sure it's compliant with code because it's a complicated code if you're not an expert on it so we felt that was a really great addition it was optional now it's mandatory for a third party peer review. Pre incident plans you might refer to it as an emergency response plan that was not part of it before now the project has to work with the local fire department to develop a site-specific emergency response plan for that one particular project and also offer annual onsite training to the local fire department as well of course they can invite their friends who also may be responding for that training. It doesn't have to be just the one in that town so that. And then finally, hazardous support personnel this is another one of the items discretionary and is now mandatory so the developer has to provide within 15 minutes of the emergency line being called someone to answer, a subject matter expert someone that has access to all of the systems, to know what's going on to help guide first responders in the event that something is happening. They are on the phone right away being able to guide them and they have to show up on site within four hours to help guide as well. They are not going to be doing active fire fighting or anything like that but there is a subject matter expert to help them so I think that's really great too and no one else in the country has that requirement. These are all different rules and standards that apply there's a lot. The one thing I want to point out here at the very bottom the battery emergency training the state fire office has every emergency training available to everyone now it's free, it's a couple hours I've taken it, it's descent, it covers everything from electric vehicle fires all the way up to battery storage system fires, scooters, stuff for your home everything that has to do with battery emergencies they have this free training now for first responders so a lot of folks don't know that exists but so I do point that out and that's it. This is just a reminder of how to contact us.

HUGHES: Great. There's a lot of information here in a short amount of time. Any burning questions for Jennifer? Just in the interest of time because we are over by twenty minutes are there a couple of questions that you would like ask Jennifer now that would be beneficial to the group that would be great.

MCNALLY: Is there a typical spot where you have to have something to accommodate one of these? A substation? What do you have to do for a commercial?

MANIERRE: Substations are a very easy spot for energy storage systems to integrate it's kind of an upgrade to the substation if you will so if you one in your town that might be a spot where a developer comes looking to put an energy storage system right, near substations is very popular, transmission lines as well. I think we had a developer presenting the other day and he said anywhere within like half a mile of those systems is potentially doable but obviously it's more expensive for them the farther away you get so substations are a sweet spot.

HUGHES: Thank you. Any other questions?

MENSER: You talked about people having a private battery system that can get a on a list to get reimbursed from the electric company. When they first came out with solar panels for private residents they did same thing and I put them in and then in 2024 they changed the regulations to where the power company no longer has to reimburse you. I've got 9,000 kilowatts banked that I can never use and they are charging me to send it to them how's that work?

MANIERRE: Well those are different. So the batteries are more dispatchable so I think there's probably more value with them for the grid to be able to call upon them when needed verses your solar project that is just going to be generating whenever the sun is shining and it maybe the grid doesn't need it at that moment in time so the financials of it all I think are a bit different and will perhaps change over time as more people started installing solar. They are all pushing it into the grid at the same time maybe it's not such a great thing so I'm not an expert in the compensation mechanisms like that and what you're talking about how it changed a few years back I do recall it changing I can't explain it very well other than to say that batteries and solar are a bit different and I think the biggest difference is batteries are dispatchable we can call on them when needed. I'm sorry you have all those hours you cannot use.

HUGHES: We have two more questions, one from Mr. O'Bryan and Mr. Brassard and then we are going to adjourn.

O'BRYAN: Jennifer I just had a quick question. You said 7311 storage projects in New York State those are in place already?

MANIERRE: Yup.

O'BRYAN: Over how long a period of time?

MANIERRE: You are testing my knowledge now. I can't remember when we first started tracking or incentivizing the energy storage projects but I would guess over the last, don't quote me on this maybe the last eight years or so.

O'BRYAN: And these are battery energy storage systems? That's a huge number.

MANIERRE: Yup a lot of small ones.

MENSER: Those are primary small ones right now according to the state's website there are 96 large scale projects in the state.

MANIERRE: Yeah, there's a lot more large ones that came out that's why it feels new.

O'BRYAN: Thank you.

BRASSARD: This is more of a statement. Nothing against you more towards New York State you know, it's more of land use so we have to fight here tooth and nail to cut a tree, get an emergency cell tower put up and it just seems like the state is just steamrolling and basically rubber stamping these projects wherever they want inside the Adirondack Park and I just think it's wrong. I understand the need for battery storage I just don't understand how it can just be done so quickly it seems when we have to fight for everything. I have a hydro project for the Town of Moriah that literally has been going since the 90's similar to what you're talking about completely underground we are not disturbing, nobody is seeing anything and when it is all said and done it will be equivalent to a nuclear power plant and the state has done nothing but hang this guy up year after year after year so that's just my two cents.

MANIERRE: I appreciate it.

HUGHES: Thank you. Any final comments Jennifer to the board?

MANIERRE: Actually one thing I didn't mention is that unlike large solar and wind projects that might be permitted at the state level through the Office of Renewal Energy Siting every size standalone energy storage system is currently permitted at the local levels I think that is a very critical item.

HUGHES: Great thank you for coming to Essex County I appreciate your intellect on this. Any questions for her you can contact her at the email on the website. Is there anything else for this committee this morning? We're adjourned, thank you.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Public Safety committee meeting it was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors