

Minutes
Public Safety Committee
March 18, 2026, 4:00 p.m., Legislative Chambers
Livestreamed on YouTube
Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Gustafson, Proctor, Merritt, Larson

Members Absent: Bankoski

Others Present: Chagnon, Lee, Swan, Woodard, Harp, Quattrone, Zafuto, Rensel, Sharp, Carlson, Pacos, Gregory, Barone

Complete video of meeting can be viewed on YouTube

Legislator Gustafson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes (12/10/25) & (02/18/26)

MOVED by Legislator Proctor, SECONDED by Legislator Merritt to approve the minutes

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

Legislator Gustafson: And now we will open the privilege of the floor. Is there anyone here to speak to the privilege of the floor?

Legislator Larson: I would, if no one else, Madam Chair.

Legislator Gustafson: Sure.

Legislator Larson: Of relevance to the Public Safety Committee. It was in the newspapers that the County Executive went very public with a policy of putting the county government behind an effort to create apparently a new municipality in northern Chautauqua County, that would combine the city of Dunkirk, the town of Dunkirk, the village of Fredonia, and the town of Pomfret. Relevant to the Public Safety Committee, I'd like to hear from the Sheriff briefly on whether prior to this announcement, the Sheriff had prepared any kind of a brief white paper or policy statement, analysis, of how public safety might be provided in such a combined municipality. So, I'd like to give him a chance to do that and discuss whether the County Executive, prior to this public announcement, had asked the Sheriff to provide a blueprint or a possible blueprint of how public safety might be provided. Secondly, if I still were on the Economic Development and Planning Committee, I'd be asking there whether the County

Executive asked our own planning department to provide any kind of report on how public safety might be provided to such a combined municipality. It would be nice to know, even on a very preliminary basis would our planning department be able to conclude whether costs would go down or whether costs would go up for public safety in such a combined municipality. Obviously, it's possible that costs would go up for the town of Dunkirk, go down for the Village of Fredonia or something, but I'd like to know if any groundwork was laid before this announcement. Lastly, I keep pretending that the Legislature takes seriously that we set policy for county government. I know we passed a resolution, or I think I did, we did, with no money attached. Speaking to- the County would be involved in promoting consolidations and sharing of services. There was no money attached to it. I believe we're going to have resolutions next Wednesday, taking unappropriated fund balance money and putting toward certain consolidation proposals. There was no money put in the budget for it. I do wonder if we pretend to be involved in setting policy in this county, with this announcement by the Executive, that he would envision this combined municipality in the north county, would he then consider a combined municipality in the south county? Madam Chair, you live in the Village of Lakewood, I believe some of you are in the town of Busti. Some years ago, the Village of Lakewood people voted against dissolving. They've already had a chance at consolidation and they voted, "no," at that time. They can change their minds. But I wonder if the County Executive has thought about dissolving the City of Jamestown and dissolving the Village of Falconer, the Village of Celeron, putting Jamestown, Celeron, Falconer, Ellicott, Town of Busti, and the Village of Lakewood together as a new municipality in the south county. The County Executive, the news coverage was pretty thorough on the public announcement by the County Executive up in the north county. The paper reported Pomfret Board member, EvaDawn Bashaw, I apologize on the pronunciation, wondered how a city in the state of New York could even get dissolved. Quote, "We don't know," Wendel said. Sometimes, some of my fellow legislators don't appreciate my bringing my lifetime experience as an attorney, eight years county attorney, and other experiences to the body. But I'll save the county a lot of money. The answer is, the New York State Constitution and statutes have no provision for dissolving any city. Period. So, the next question would be, is this County Legislature under—or the Executive and the Legislature—are we willing to ask our Assemblymen Molitor and our Senator Borrello to introduce legislation in Albany that would allow at least small cities the size of Dunkirk or the city of Jamestown? Would those two representatives really introduce legislation in Albany to allow cities of, say, 30,000 or less the same opportunity to dissolve that villages have? As some of you may know, villages have a right to vote to dissolve themselves back in the town they came from. The residents outside of the town have no say. And the residents of Forestville voted to dissolve. I think they made a wise choice. And the residents of the Village of Cherry Creek voted to dissolve. Again, I think a wise choice. They had the luxury there of the village and the town of the same name. So, who's to notice? Next door to us, the village of Randolph and village of East Randolph both voted to dissolve a few years ago. So, those are policy questions. No offense, but probably most legislators have no interest in any of this. But to me, it's a big deal and if we're going to have resolutions come to us for \$50,000 to support this consolidation effort or 150,000 to support that consolidation effort, we ought to have some involvement in saying, does that make sense to the Legislature in the first place? What are the odds the people of Lakewood now vote to dissolve their village? I think you have a hunch. So, how much money do we spend on studies and consultants if the judgement of the body is, it's not going to go anywhere. But, again, I'm probably being pie in the sky that we want to get involved in the policy of Chautauqua County

government instead of budget resolutions to fill gaps from last year's overspending. So that's the privilege of the floor for me tonight on public safety. We can get an answer from the Sheriff if you want on whether he's done any kind of a study or white paper or anything on how public safety needs might be met in the combined north county municipality. Obviously, any of you the economic development committee other than the chair by office, I would respectfully request that requests be made of our planning department tonight on whether they have been involved in any groundwork for this announcement of this concept of a new municipality in the north county. Thank you.

Legislator Gustafson: Thank you very much. And to answer your question, I do not believe that Sheriff Quattrone has come armed with that information and I respectfully request that he get back to the full legislature with the answers to your questions. Is there anyone else to speak to the privilege of the floor? Seeing none, we'll move on to the first proposed legislation.

Proposed Resolution – Government Reduction Initiative Assistance for Town of Pomfret for Sharing and Consolidating of Services between Municipalities
—*Presented by Lauren Sharp, Senior Planner with the Department of Planning & Economic Development and Dan Pacos, Town of Pomfret Supervisor*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Acceptance of the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services Upstate Model Family Representation Office Grant for the period of January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2028—*Presented by Nathaniel Barone, Public Defender and Derick Gregory, Assistant Public Defender*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with North Lake Fire District to Purchase 2 Cardiac Monitors—*Presented by Tim Carlson, Chief Paramedic with EMS*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with Village of Lakewood to Lease Space for Fly Car M73 and Paramedic—*Presented by Tim Carlson, Chief Paramedic with EMS*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Execution of New York State Office of Homeland Security Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet) Readiness Grant Program FY2024-2026—*Presented by Sheriff Jim Quattrone, Chautauqua County Sheriff*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Execution of New York State Office of Homeland Security Funding Grant Operation Stone Garden FY 2025—*Presented by Sheriff Jim Quattrone, Chautauqua County Sheriff*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with County School Districts for School Resource Officer Services—*Presented by Sheriff Jim Quattrone, Chautauqua County Sheriff*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with Clymer Central School District for a Special Patrol Officer Services—*Presented by Sheriff Jim Quattrone, Chautauqua County Sheriff*

Unanimously Carried

Presentation – Potential Changes to the Administrative Code – *Presented by Emily Woodard, County Attorney, and Nathan Harp, Assistant County Attorney*

MOVED by Legislator Proctor, SECONDED by Legislator Larson to adjourn

Unanimously Carried (4:55 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,
Olivia L. Lee, Clerk of the Legislature/Kristi R. Zink, Deputy Clerk