

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

PUBLIC HEARING

APRIL 14, 2015

9:30 A.M.

**A PUBLIC HEARING ON INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTION NO. 1273-2015
WAS HELD IN THE
MAXINE S. POSTAL AUDITORIUM OF THE EVANS K. GRIFFING BUILDING
300 CENTER DRIVE, RIVERHEAD NEW YORK**

Present:

**Jason Richberg, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Lisa Pinkard, Legislative Aide to Legislator Monica R. Martinez/9th LD**

Taken by:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

*(*The Public Hearing was called to order at 9:48 a.m. *)*

MR. RICHBERG:

Good morning. It is now 9:48, and we're going to call this Public Hearing for the Brentwood Family Health Center, and I'm going to read the public notice.

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to A9-6 of the Suffolk County Administrative Code, the Suffolk County Legislature will conduct a Public Hearing on the proposed plan to transition the Brentwood Family Health Center, located at 1869 Brentwood Road in Brentwood, New York 11717, to a Federally Qualified Health Center, FQHC, status to provide primary health care services using employees other than the employees of the County of Suffolk. The proposal and plan is set forth in Suffolk County Introductory Resolution 1273 of 2015 and its accompanying documents.

Notice is further given that the County Legislature will hold a public hearing on said proposal plan at the Maxine S. Postal Legislative Auditorium, Center Drive, 300 -- sorry -- Center Drive, Riverhead, New York on the 14th day of April, at 9:30 a.m. And that is from Tim Laube, Clerk of the Legislature.

At this point in time, I see one card and it's from Danny J. Towle. Okay. And, sir, you have three minutes.

MR. TOWLE:

I'll try to be quick. Good morning. Are there any -- are you a Legislator? I'm not --

MS. PINKARD:

I'm her Chief of Staff. I'm Legislator Martinez' Chief of Staff.

MR. TOWLE:

Okay, okay. And I know you work for DuWayne Gregory, right?

MR. RICHBERG:

I'm Deputy Clerk.

MR. TOWLE:

Oh, okay. Okay. I thought you worked for DuWayne Gregory.

MR. RICHBERG:

I used to.

MR. TOWLE:

Oh, okay. So my name is Danny Towle. For the past 23 years, I've worked for the Department of Health Services. I'm currently stationed at the Riverhead Health Center. I'm the Patient Care Unit President. Our unit has over 200 members, some of which work at the Brookhaven Health Center.

I'd quickly like to read our Mission Statement. The mission of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, through its Division of Patient Care Services, is to provide comprehensive primary care in a dignified and respectful manner, emphasizing preventive medicine, and providing diagnostic treatment and referrals to all, regardless of their age, race, sex, creed, color, national origin or ability to pay.

You know, obviously, this Mission Statement is outdated, inaccurate and no longer true.

I'm disappointed at the Legislative Body and our County Executive. You were all elected to represent your constituents, and, unfortunately, more often than not, you do what's in your best interests.

I've seen the press release from Mr. Bellone, \$25 million in savings over the next four years in reference to the health center. You know, obviously, I know, and I believe you guys know, that the County never saves what it expects to save, and it always costs more than you say it's going to cost. So the press releases are nice and fancy, but, you know, in the best case scenario, they're inaccurate, and in the worst, it's an out-and-out lie.

I've seen that the new Legislator from Brentwood is 100% behind the transfer of the health center, and that's a smart move on her part. The former Legislator from Brentwood opposed privatization, as per a questionnaire he filled out for our union. And like my 73-year old mother, he's been laid off. And, fortunately, unlike her, he's an attorney, so I'm sure he's probably working somewhere.

A few facts: Hudson River Health Care took over the East Hampton and Southampton clinics. They continually and constantly call Riverhead Health Center referencing HIV patients and how they could be treated, because they don't provide those services. If you'd want to take a guess at which health center has the most HIV patients, it happens to be in Brentwood. So, when you guys proclaim that, you know, Hudson River Healthcare will provide better services and more extensive services to the constituents, you either don't know the facts because you didn't do your due diligence, or you're lying.

And going back to the layoffs, my mother, who's now 73, was laid off by many of the Legislators who are not here this morning to listen to me speak. She worked at John J. Foley for 15 years and she made a little less than \$40,000 a year. The County didn't have the money to pay her job, although she lived in Suffolk County for over 50 years and raised her family there. I open up Newsday and I find out that the County did have money to hire four ex-staffers from Tim Bishop, three of which were hired as Deputy County Executives, and one who was hired by my Legislator, Sarah Anker. So I find it ironic that you could find money when you want to find money to get people jobs, and, you know, when you have a hardworking person who's making less than \$40,000 a year, you lay her off, you know.

With that, thank you very much for your giving me the opportunity to speak, and I'll see you guys on the 21st in Hauppauge, and the 28th back here, right?

MS. PINKARD:

Thank you.

MR. TOWLE:

When you vote. Okay. Thank you.

MS. PINKARD:

Thank you.

MR. RICHBURG:

Are there any other speakers? Are there any other speakers? Are there any other speakers? Seeing no other speakers, the time is now 9:51, we are adjourned. Thank you very much.

(*The Public Hearing was adjourned at 9:51 a.m. *)