

**Energy & Environment Committee
Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: December 9, 2020; 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656,
Meeting ID: 969 3086 6209
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairwoman Manna Jo Greene
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Fawn A. Tantillo, Laurie Lichtenstein
PRESENT: Legislators Al Bruno, Peter Criswell, Laura Petit and Mary
Wawro
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: David Gordon, Legislative Minority Counsel; Deputy County
Executive Evelyn Wright and Marc Rider; Department of Environment Director Amanda
LaValle.

Chairwoman Greene called the meeting to order at approximately 6:06 pm and lead the Pledge
of Allegiance.

Resolution No. 449 – Amending Capital Project No. 519, Ulster County Law Enforcement
Center Energy Upgrades – Amending the 2020 Capital Fund Budget – Department of Public
Works (Building & Grounds)

Resolution Summary: This resolution would amend the 2020-2025 Ulster County Capital
Improvement Project by increasing the funding by \$54,000.00 for a design contract to replace eth
Ulster County law Enforcement Center boilers with energy efficient equivalents bringing the total
Capital Project to \$685,000.

Motion No. 1: **Motion to discuss Resolution No. 449**
Motion By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See transcript

Voting in Favor: Legislators Bruno, Criswell, Petit and Wawro
Voting Against: Legislator Greene
No. of Votes in Favor: 1
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Approved**

Chairwoman Greene asked if there was any other business, hearing none;

Motion to Adjourn
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit
No. of Votes in Favor: 5
No. of Votes Against: 0
Time: 6:55 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Fawn Tantillo
Minutes Approved: February 1, 2021

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County Executive Evelyn Wright and Marc Rider; Department of Environment Director
Amanda LaValle.

Chairwoman Greene

I would like to call the special meeting of the Energy and Environment Committee to order and the December 9, 2020 Special Meeting of the Energy and Environment Committee to order. We have, I believe, just one item on the agenda. And I think we're well prepared for it. So, I see that legislator, Bruno is, is there ready to start us off with the pledge

Several speakers

I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Chairwoman Greene

Thank you. And tonight, we're going to revisit Resolution Number 449, which we postpone to get more information. And there has been more information forthcoming in law enforcement, Public Works capital projects, and I believe also in ways and means. And I would like to ask for a motion for purpose of discussion, a motion that we move for discussion, a second nap. Great. Um, and my question to the committee is, does everyone feel that they have their questions adequately answered? Or do you have any other questions we have staff available? Go ahead. legislator Bruna?

Legislator Bruno

I don't have so much of a question as a statement, I guess. I may probably be in the minority with this all the time. But I've been looking a lot at capital project 519, which is what this is based off of. And just a scenario to paint a picture in March of 2018. We pay we spent \$250,000, for an energy efficiency audit. T

hen in September of 18, we spent another \$31,000 a flex study. I'm not really sure what a flex study is, but we spent another 31,000 on it.

In May of 19, we spent \$242,000, to bring the gas line to the site, to the county jail to the law enforcement center. It was a good buy at the time, I understand the reasons for it, but we still spent a quarter million dollars to do that.

Then in February spend another \$108,000 to bring the gas line from the site into the building to the boilers.

That's a total \$631,000. Way over half a million dollars. I'm sorry, I'm sorry about that. Okay, um, and now we're asked for another \$54,000 for design work for replacing the piping. We pay this if we say yes to this. We're now up to \$685,000. And next week, at our next regular session, we have two more resolutions before us Resolution Number 451 and 464 which includes \$57,400 for service work on the old boilers and another \$72,200 for service work and maintenance on the controls of these boilers.

Out of this and even if you want to lose you don't forget that last two resolutions \$685,000. And we haven't bought a boiler yet. These boilers this Law Enforcement Center was commissioned in 2007. That's 15 years. And we're already ,you know, up to a million dollars in the heating system. There's something really wrong here. And I have a real problem with saying yes to this. If we have a heating system, Cleaver Brooks boilers which are known as like the best in the industry, across the board, I mean they have a life expectancy of 30 plus years. And here we are 15 years in and we're being told that these boilers are not serviceable and not repairable and that we're gonna have to buy new ones because they're breaking down all the time. I don't know whether that falls back on the old school where they built this jail, the Law Enforcement Center or not. But I have a hard time spending that kind of money that quickly on something like this, it just doesn't seem realistic. And why is this going to be every 15 years, I'm gonna have to spend another million dollars. I'm all about energy efficiency and upgrading. And, and I can really appreciate, I do know that that doesn't come. And then it comes at a cost.

Payback time, especially now, during COVID, where we scramble the week, we put money back from some very worthwhile programs, we stopped giving raises to people who really, honestly deserve them but it wasn't the right thing to do at this time. Now we're gonna be into...since 2018 to 2020, we're gonna be into this project for almost a million dollars, and we got nothing to show for it yet. We'll have the same old boilers running.

And and so I gotta be honest with you, at this point, I did get a lot of information since the last meeting. And I can't with a good clean conscience to my constituents and my tax, the taxpayers of my district say, yeah, we're going to spend another \$54,000. So the county can design the work, it needs to replace the boiler. I mean, the boilers alone are probably going to be another half a million dollars, plus the, to get rid of the old boys and get them out and throw you probably another half a million dollars. So, we're going to have by the time we're done, close to \$2 million to replace a heating system in a building in less than about 15 years, you would kill a

contractor if they did that to your house, you would kill him. So, I can't justify this right now. I'm sorry.

Chairwoman Greene

Mark, I see your hand and I wanted to just ask Amanda to explain flex tech, and then I'll call on you next. And I have my own comments. But let's take this in order. Thank you, Amanda, if you would just explain the flex tech.

Amanda LaValle

Thank you. I can speak a little bit, Legislator Bruno, to some of those initial the work that was done back starting in 2018.

The first thing is to let you know that that \$250,000 for energy efficiency as I was laid out in that resolution was state NYSERDA grant money that we were awarded by being the first designated Clean Energy Community across the state. And we very purposefully with that kind of prize, decided that we were going to take a hard look at the jail because we were A. concerned with some of the things we were hearing as far as the system's there. But also knowing that it is the single largest energy consumer. 40% of the county's energy bills, almost a million dollars a year, are spent at the law enforcement center. So I can assure you that it's something that staff, across the board, is are very cognizant of, and are always looking for ways from our various angles, to look for solutions that best you know, protect the interests of the taxpayer and keep that building functioning.

So that first \$250,000 was grant funded money, no county match, for energy efficiency improvements there. And we were able to do a lot of lighting work, as well as purchasing an electric vehicle for the SRO and some additional projects at the jail.

The next step then was to use flex tech. And we were able to leverage state grant funding again, to do a heating and cooling master plan for the building. The Department of Environment work with public works, and they were very, very cooperative and receptive to our input in that process and taking a step back to look at 1. What's going on here, as far as why are these systems in the state of distress that they're in right now? And 2. how do we... are there opportunities either right now or in the future to deploy renewable energy technologies at the jail? And what do we maybe have to do now that we can do so in a way that we're never precluding? Or you know, in minimizing the chance that we're, we're kind of shutting the door to a future renewable technology at the jail.

We may not have the perfect answer right now for renewable technology there, but we don't want to be re-engineering a system and make it very difficult, impossible, costly for us to do something in the future.

So, we went through that whole study, we looked at solar thermal, we looked at geothermal. We looked at biomass. We looked at the the retrofits, and out of that heating and cooling master plan. By far, the most cost effective way to deal with the, I'm going to use the word

crisis with the boilers, was to go forward with a natural gas extension, which does just switching those boilers from fuel oil to natural gas reduces the greenhouse gas emissions due to heating on that building by 25%, which is substantial when you consider that building alone is 40% of our energy use countywide.

So, we've done so diligently. I think we've taken the extra time to look at that. And also, at the same time have those engineers to talk about, you know, was it the commissioning? Was it the year that the contractor could operate the system there before? Before the county took kind of control of the building? I should say, was it prior to the commissioning the official when they commissioned it, but before the county took over the building? Also, there are issues around engineering with thermal shock to that heating system that we've gone through with a fine-tooth comb to really talk about what system provides the return temperatures, that doesn't create those same stresses on those boilers. We think that most of that failure has to do with thermal shock.

But it's a serious issue. It's a lot of money. No one can understand. I mean, the questions around why it's failing so quickly, our... everyone should be asking. But I do want to assure you that it's been a very diligent process to turn over every rock we could possibly put our eyes on.

Chairwoman Greene

I think I saw another hand up, Mark.

Deputy County Exec. Rider

I mean, Amanda, pretty much hit it. I don't need to add anything onto that my only comment would be, I would continue to research the jail because it it, it continues to be the gift that keeps on giving. I mean, there's been articles, the overruns all of the you know, we're replacing a roof in the next couple years Well, before the roof should be replaced. The factors on that, you know, it, it's well documented that the construction of this jail.

Chairwoman Greene

Anybody else? Legislator Petite, and then Legislator Bruno.

Legislator Petit

Thank you. I mean, I I'm on board with Legislator Bruno. It, it troubles me more than anything to see, you know, the accumulated costs, you know, especially when we get into engineering and I would like to ask County Deputy Rider, since his background was in procurement, if it's possible, do we have to spend 10,000 more 50,000 60,000 for an engineering draw? Or could we put out an RFP and see if, you know, these companies could come in and do that for us, they then be, you know, installing a piece of equipment that would run and, you know, be exactly what we need. I mean, it does... when we first put approved the gas lines, it was just in case we needed them. So, you know, I don't know if anyone was aware. I mean, the gas lines were "just in case" because Central Hudson happened to be installing them on 32. That's what we were told at Public Works. We were. But anyway, I guess I'll stop there. I'm just wondering if there's

any way that we could start peeling back the costs. You know, I'd hate to see a million dollars before we even get the heaters installed.

Deputy County Exec. Rider

Procurement on this was all done properly. I mean, there isn't a, there isn't an opportunity for a bidding thing, sorry.

Legislator Petit

The thing Okay, we can come in and do the, you know, submit it without the engineering people coming in for another 50 - 60,000.

Deputy County Exec. Wright

And I can add a little to that answer because I went through this with with Commissioner Jackson in some depth after our last meeting. So, state procurement policies require us to have a different firm... Mark, correct me if I'm getting this wrong... different firms do that design work. And it's not just design. It's also some inspection and supervision of the the installation. So, that there's no, it's not proper to have one firm do both the design and the installation. This does this design work did go out to bid. Commissioner Jackson told me there were 14 firms that bid on it. The average bid was in the \$100,000 range, and some were more than double that. So, this is a good value and a good procurement process. And it is the proper way to do it.

Chairwoman Greene

Legislator Bruno, then Legislator Criswell.

Fawn Tantillo

No, you're muted. You're on mute.

Legislator Bruno

Sorry, guys. I have a couple of questions. One thing, Amanda, you said that we're now in this crisis of these boilers that have only been there for 15 years. And I understand the debacle that we had building this jail and everything that went before it. I mean, while I wasn't a legislator, I do read the papers. And I do understand to be careful the words I use, but what a mess it was.

That being said, One question I have is a lot of money were invested. And I don't even question whether it's being done correctly. As far as how the procurements done, I have no doubt, you guys are doing your due diligence. My question is, first of all, thermal shock is something that happens from a poor design of a heating system in general, I know what thermal shock is, I know what it does to a boiler. And it can be prevented with simple controls, believe it or not, and some minor piping rages. If the piping was done wrong to begin with, and that can be corrected.

However, one of the things that comes out to me is does the county employ a boiler operator, a plant operator, technician, a guy who are more than one guy who oversees the operation of our heating systems? Somebody who can be there who does the blow downs on these boilers,

daily, hourly per shift as necessary. Somebody who does the normal maintenance, the burners on cleans the filters, cleans the strainers. I'm not saying public works are just when they think about it, they got a free moment, they send somebody over there to do maintenance.

The operation of a boiler House of this magnitude requires a person, a person, a human body there, to do the work and and to maintain them. And I'm almost thinking that maybe it would be more cost effective going forward. And I'm not saying "no" to this yet. But going forward, the county may want to look into contacting CSEA, or whoever it may be that can provide somebody who actually knows what they're doing. And I'm not saying that the Public Works doesn't, put an experienced boiler operator to maintain these boiler and give us the longevity that we deserve. I mean, like I said these boilers should be less than 30 plus years. And a lot of it could be from simple maintenance.

I mean, let's face it, we're now we're spending when I look at when I look at Ashley mechanical, Kingston and got a stellar reputation on the work they do with lawyers. And I'm looking at the \$57,000 just to maintain these boilers. And I know what that means. That means pulling them open once a year and cleaning them and stuff. But you still need people that are everyday need people to blow down the low water cut off the blow down the sensors to maintain the water quality, that's a huge thing. To maintain the temperatures; to keep prevent thermal shock from happening to make sure you don't have condensate coming back to that boiler, into those boilers at 50 degrees. Those are things that normal people who run boiler plants do. Um, we might be, you know, if it costs us let's say we pay somebody \$100,000 a year plus benefits. It's still cheaper than a million dollars every 15 years. Am I making any sense? Mark? I hope

Deputy County Exec. Rider

I yeah. And I mean, I will double check with Tom on the exact qualifications of these individuals. But we have teams of buildings and grounds workers that work only at that location and on that equipment. And so I'm not aware they're there 24 hours a day, we have multiple shifts that jail cannot ever go without somebody from maintenance there. If something happens at three in the morning, somebody on site so

Legislator Bruno

Good, and I wasn't aware. That's why I'm asking that was more of a question than the statement. And I just want to make sure that we are providing the right maintenance to these boys. Because let's say we move forward to this thing. And by the time we're done out the door, in 2021, we spend over you know, probably close to \$2 million on a new heating system. That's energy efficient, probably more than that, are we going to maintain them where the last 30 years, it's very hard pill to swallow to say, you know, another 50 years we're gonna do it again. And that's that's something that I really have to wrap my head around. I apologize if you think I'm belaboring this, but I this is the this is what I come from. This is what I look at these very critically.

Chairwoman Greene

Amanda, I think Legislator Criswell was next and then you unless it's a direct response,

Legislator Criswell

Yeah, please, go ahead.

Amanda LaValle

It's a direct response. I would just say also, you know, the the systems design and engineering that is causing these problems, there are very long loops in this building. And that is creating some of these problems and poor design. What we're doing now between flex tech and engineering is trying to remedy those problems, and it takes time to do it, and money to do it properly. So that that future investment is, is appropriately sized, piped, watched for the returned temperature. You know, we have the right maintenance schedule when it comes to the, you know, the what is it propylene glycol, you know, everything is being watched. So that's part of what, what we're going through right now.

Legislator Criswell

I just wanted to, something that Deputy Rider said flagged for me this idea of the roof being problematic. And I don't know much about the history of this building, except that it's been problematic. And I don't know the timeline or anything. But is there any way that we can address the contractors who did faulty work with legal ramifications and have some sort of insurance payback oncrappy work?

Deputy County Exec. Rider

It's all been, It's all been done? So this was going back to about 2006? And 2007? I think the overruns were, were almost three times the cost somewhere in that realm. It's actually what? Well, I'll leave it there. But you know, 2006, in 2007, there's lots of problems there was legal action taken on many of the contracts.

Legislator Criswell

Okay, thank you.

Legislator Bruno

We just don't have money.

Chairwoman Greene

I have a few comments. But I want to be sure everybody on the committee has a chance to speak. Go ahead.

Legislator Criswell

Yeah, I just want to say one more thing. So I am so not an expert in this area. And I, I feel like I'm hearing people who have done really serious due diligence. And I feel like there also is a moment where you kind of have to trust the people who are in the weeds on the ground. And so that's where I'm heading with this decision.

Chairwoman Greene

Anybody else? Okay. So I have a couple of things to say. First of all, I want to just say that, I find it a real honor to serve on this legislature with people with such diverse knowledge basis. And I trust that out of that diversity and deep knowledge, we're going to come up with the best possible solutions. And, and that's not to dismiss the staff. But it's almost as if we expect the staff to bring, you know that knowledge and competence. And I just have to comment, because this happens time and again, I learned so much from my colleagues. And I'm grateful. And I want to express that.

That said I'm I was here, I wasn't here in 2006. But I was here for this particular project from its outset. And I do believe that the best decisions were made given the information available. As I said, I think at a previous meeting, the degree of climate crisis was known. But I also believe that the staff was trying to balance costs, immediate costs, real dollars and cents cost to the county versus the kinds of costs that we're seeing with the global climate crisis that are not, you know, there's a phrase about internalizing the externalities. Those costs. those externalities, I don't believe were adequately factored in.

I think moving forward. much stricter attention will be paid to the carbon and greenhouse gas implication, and that'll be part of all these planning processes. So I think there was a bit of a, a lag where we had a certain amount of knowledge, but not enough to internalize those externalities.

And I have one other comment. But before I do, I heard "roof". When I think, especially for that facility, I have been... a lot of people have asked over the years, why don't we get stolen, either on the grounds or on the roof at that facility. So I hope that the engineering will certainly include not just telling us the cost, the extra costs from making the new roof be able to support a solar system, but to be able to factor in the actual benefits. Because even in the short term, this facility is taking a huge amount of energy and has the ability to generate some of that energy on, on site. And I'm doing everything I can with the regional renewable energy implementation planning process to be sure that the best incentives for transitioning to renewable energy, which is now a state mandate, on red flags. So roof... promised me that the roof will be evaluated for solar.

Deputy County Exec. Rider

We will absolutely evaluate the roof. First of all, can I add one other little comment in there? as well. I hear what you were saying about 2018. Just like and I know, we understood the climate crisis, but we have to bring projects to the legislature that will get 16 votes in order to get bonded. And so even if we had felt like those costs, were were worth it back... then even if all of the staff on the administration side, we have to be realistic in in what we're putting forth. And while we may have seen the cost and and agree with you, we have to get 16 votes. So

Chairwoman Greene

when speaking of votes, we're getting close to voting. Go ahead, Legislator Bruno, Bruno.

Legislator Bruno

So, I got a question for Mark. If I can.

I can appreciate that. I know. Nothing happens without a majority. Um, my question is, knowing what you know, Amanda and Evelyn is well, this \$54,000 for the design work. What's the next phase of this project? Where do we go from here? Is the next one awarding a contract to a contractor to replace the boilers? Is the next one another study for something else? I mean, where are we going? Do we have a timeline, some kind of a roadmap so we can see where we're going with this? Because, looking at this, I mean, from 2018 to 2020. And still going forward, it could go on forever. And I don't want to see that happen.

Deputy County Exec. Rider

Yeah, so this will give us a set of plans to go out to bid with. And so the next step after this contract, they will design the bids, and we will go back out to bid for the replacement of the boilers. So next time we come to you after this should be after we've gone to bid and we have the cost to replace the boilers.

Legislator Bruno

So, with that, um, is there any concessions that can be made the next two resolutions that are before us next week? 451 and 464. from both Ashley and, I forgot, Eastern Heating & Cooling, I believe it was, for the control maintenance.

Deputy County Exec. Rider

Yeah, so these are one year maintenance contracts. They're one year maintenance contracts they're "not to exceed", so but they're "not to exceed" contracts as well. So we may not spend that full amount but we don't anticipate that by 22 that these boiler I mean maybe by 22 we don't anticipate in 21 that these boilers will be replaced.

Legislator Bruno

Okay, but you anticipate in 2122 year heating season, that will need \$75,000 worth of maintenance on the controls of the old system. A lot of money for maintainance and controls

Deputy County Exec. Rider

Right. Again, if we don't use it, we won't use it. But I think that, you know, it needs to be there, I'd have to look at what we spent last. And I can get you that before a session what we spent last year,

Legislator Bruno

That session, session, I understand that that's another another fight next week or discussion, but these are all pieces of that same puzzle at the end of the day that the taxpayers are gonna pay for. And if I can, while still talking, I appreciate everybody's tolerance of letting me speak on this a little bit. Amanda and Evelyn, I do understand that the money was through a grant. A lot of the monies we're paying through state and federal grants, and through NYSERDA and stuff, and I can appreciate that. But, but I'm also understand that grants, money still comes from the taxpayers. And while it may not be coming on a Saugerties or Kingston's tax bill, it is still coming

from us in a roundabout way through New York state and federal government. So we're supposed to be stewards of taxes in general, wherever they come from. So I'm attuned to that I understand this is probably one of those necessary evils that I may not be happy about. But I also understand that we have to do this right, you can have the same contractor design, that's going to install, I understand the [inaudible]

Chairwoman Greene
Legislator Petite,

Legislator Petit

I actually went, when Evelyn said that it triggered my my first stab at putting in a grant. So I built a bridge, essentially. And it was very hard to find an engineer willing to do some of the specs, because then they couldn't put in for the bid to actually build it. So thank you for that. But also is a heads up, generally... so, I'm thinking if it's going to be 54,000 or 52,000 for the engineering, then that means the job is probably going to be over 500,000 because it's about 10%. So I guess we should expect to see a bill between 500 to 600,000..

Chairwoman Greene
All right, any other

Legislator Petit

That was it, That was just a point.

Chairwoman Greene

Before I call for a vote, I want to say that I believe that everything was done as well and reasonably as it could, could have been done. And we're also in a very difficult situation in that a lot of money has been spent with certain conclusions and certain goals. So we're, we're sort of halfway there...or more than halfway there. Well, that depends on on what the final price for installation is.

But, um I personally would like to have the privilege of, of voting a protest vote based on my own ethics and the fact that I believe today, yesterday or today, the Comptroller announced that New York State will be divesting in fossil fuel investment. And I would like to celebrate that by drawing a line in the sand and voting no.

However, I, as I said, we're halfway there, we're kind of in the middle of a project where a lot of work and you know, the best thinking available, went into the project, and we put a lot of money. And it kind of has to move forward. When I think about, you know, a million dollars or more than a million dollars, it's very hard for me to believe that the investment in geothermal would not have been appropriate. And I've heard different reasons why. I just wanted to say that when Iron Mountain came to Rosendale for a variance, because the building that they wanted to build was not in compliance with our zoning, and so that not only did the zoning board have to rule on it along with the town board, and I suggested that they look into geothermal and it was a seven year payback and they were thrilled because it everything after

that is savings for them. And they were able to, you know, take a step in the right direction in terms of sustainability. And they were very grateful. Um, so I'm not sure that I, you know, I'd have to go back and read the the feasibility study, and the flex tech and the analysis that was done. But you know, these dollars are so high that it just seems to me that it would have been a good investment to go for either geothermal or some other beneficial electrification and then, and then provide the renewable energy to run it on site. And that's just top of my head. Amanda, please.

Amanda LaValle

Yep, I am going to make a very long story very short. But again, due to the design of the jail, and the fact that we would be attempting even to retrofit an existing fossil fuel system to geothermal, which has very different water temperature properties. It is exorbitantly expensive, not even modestly more, we're talking very low estimates of probably seven to \$10 million.

So, it's a very long story, happy to discuss it at some future point when we talk about retrofits, but it's, it's, um, unfortunately, at this moment without intervention at the state and federal level, it is cost prohibitive for us to go out on our own.

Chairwoman Greene

Legislator Wawro, do you have any comments or concerns before we call the vote?

Legislator Wawro

There we go. No, I'm comfortable with having gone through the process.

Chairwoman Greene

Thank you. Okay. Thank you. Anybody else? All right. So this is I would like to go, go from our we had a first and second to discuss Resolution Number 449: Amending the Capital Project Number 519, Ulster County Law Enforcement Center, energy upgrades to Amend the Capital Budget, 2020 Capital Budget for the Department of Public Works, Buildings and Grounds. All in favor, please raise your hand or signify by saying aye.

Several speakers

Aye.

Chairwoman Greene

All opposed. And again, this is just a protest vote to maintain my integrity in terms of drawing a line that we should not be investing in fossil fuel moving forward. So with that,

Fawn Tantillo

One moment, Legislator Bruno, did you vote, how did you vote?

Legislator Bruno

I... much to my chagrin, I'm voting yes. Because of the project. We're in too deep to turn back now. I also agree with the Legislator Manna Jo, that you should really seriously look at to stop the burn and move towards renewable energies. And I understand the costs involved with with that. I'm going to have to be a "Yes," because we're in too deep to turnback.

Fawn Tantillo

Sorry, the way your camera was I couldn't see your handl.

Legislator Bruno

Yes.

Legislator Criswell

Just just to be on the record. I also agree with legislator green, but I feel like in for a penny in for a pound. We need to move forward with this. And I do trust the people who like I said, I trust the people who are in the weeds, and this is what they deem necessary for this project. So I'm voting yes.

Legislator Bruno

And and if I if I can say this publicly, I want to thank Mark, Amanda, and Evelyn, all three of you. So you know, as much as (laughter) a hard time I may or may or may not have given you people. I just want you to know that I do appreciate and I thank all of you for your insight and your intuitions, your reminders my first year here, and I'm learning as I go. So Thank you.

Chairwoman Greene

Laura, did you want to say something

Legislator Petit

We passed environmental protest somehow? (laughter)

Legislator Bruno

Exactly.

Chairwoman Greene

So we, the motion carries four to one. And you know, I'm not sure I would have voted that way,b ecause we are so far down this road and so much good work was done. But I appreciate the ability to, to offer a protest vote. And

Legislator Petit

Evelyn has her hand up

Chairwoman Greene

Yes, go ahead.

Deputy County Exec. Wright

Yeah, thanks. I just wanted to say, you know, Amanda gave a short version of where the energy study for this facility came out. What I'm learning, because we've just have been going through the results of the the energy study for the county office building with the folks at NYFA is that, you know, it's just very costly to retrofit a building that was designed for a hot water system, with geothermal because it's just a soup, is just a different technology. Geothermal doesn't produce water at that temperature.

We're going to have a similar conversation, when it's time to work on the County Office Building. I want everybody to be prepared for that. The the line we draw in the sand, and we will, I hope drawn the sand and we need to mobilize the, you know, the rest of the legislature and our our thinking around this in the sand, is never to build another facility this way. So that we don't face these decisions. It's just a very, very different thing when you're building from scratch, and you make those decisions.

So I just want to be kind of prepared for thinking about these decisions going forward. In the end, the difference between retrofitting, and, and yeah, and, and Laura points out, quite rightly, there are buildings that have been successfully retrofitted, and RUPCO's building is a good example. But these larger facilities, the the County Office Building, and the jail, where there's this these long piping systems, and you have to take the whole building practically apart in order to replace it. It's, you know, nobody wants to come to the answer that we have to buy another gas boiler, I you know, nobody wants to. So just, I just wanted to, to lay that groundwork for future discussions.

Chairwoman Greene
Legislator Bruno.

Legislator Bruno

Yeah. I can't agree with you more. I do understand retrofitting. Sometimes it's impossible, it can cost you as much as it would cost to build it up, just to try to make you try to shove... something my grandfather used to say many years ago, and "try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." You really can't do that and to expect to 2020 technology, and all its energy efficiencies, to be adapted into a building that was built in the 70s is virtually impossible.

That being said, when we get to the County Office Building on Fair Street, I think the conversation needs to happen on whether or not it's even worth it. In the payback, and both environmentally and financially, and it may make sense to build a new building somewhere else. Maybe the Bank of America building could become the new county office building. Who knows. I'm just saying there's other alternatives besides retrofitting an old building, in some cases, it may be to cut your losses and move away from it. Man struck new, energy efficient and cost effective ways of doing it. Yeah. I mean, we're in for a million dollars, and we haven't put it we haven't got anything else. I mean, so just picture, you know, how much of a building with a million dollars put into Could you go with it, you know, new building might be worth it. A lot faster. We just spent half a billion to put up a new building. And it's LEED certified manage, Oh, we got grass on the roof. Well, powered with gas though.

Chairwoman Greene

You know, we're in a transition and transitions are almost always difficult. When, I like to liken it because I was a Lamaze teacher for so long to when a woman is in transition. That's the most difficult part of the labor. And it's been a long time coming since Jimmy Carter put solar up on on the the white house. And then I think Ronald Reagan took it off or you know, we've been back and forth on this for a very long time. And it's been a long labor. And I really appreciate what Deputy Wright said about drawing the line in the sand moving forward. And the difficulty,

I want to say one last thing. And that's kind of to put a plug in for the Climate and Community Investment Act, which has not passed. But if it does it, it's basically a carbon tax that would be reinvested in renewable energy, infrastructure, storage and energy efficiency, especially energy retrofits. When you think about, you know, New York City where people have to open their windows in the middle of the winter, because you can't control individual areas because there's a centralized system, and, and burns way more fossil fuel than is efficient. So I think, you know, that's sort of how I would sum sum this up is that we're in a transition, Transitions can be difficult. But I think this county is definitely headed in the right direction, both from both sides, the Legislature and the Executive branch. I think we have, you know, very good people who really get to the bottom of things. And even though sometimes it takes a long time to get to the bottom, I really appreciate the hard questions that, for example, Legislator Bruno has put forward tonight.

So with that, and my little plug for CCIA,,, Do I hear a motion to adjourn or is there any other new business or old business? Okay, I saw your note. I is that that hand a motion to adjourn, Legislator, Bruno? And seconded by Legislator Petite. All in favor, please signify by raising your hand and saying aye.

Several speakers

Aye. Aye.

Chairwoman Greene

And anybody opposed? All right. Motion carries. meeting is adjourned at 6:54. We did well. Thanks everyone.