

**RULES SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021**  
**3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Thomas J. Faggione, Chairman  
Michael D. Paduch, Barry J. Cheney, Kevin W. Hines, James M. Kulisek

ALSO

PRESENT: Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel  
James D. O'Donnell, Legislator  
Langdon Chapman, Interim Attorney for the Orange County Industrial  
Development Agency (IDA)

Mr. Faggione opened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. and requested everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a moment of silence. All members were present with the exception of Legislators Amo and Vero, who were absent.

Mr. Faggione quoted President John Quincy Adams who wrote to his son Thomas in 1789: "Public business my son, must always be done by somebody - it will be done by somebody or other - If wise men decline it others will not. If honest men refuse it, others will not. A young man should well weigh his plans. Integrity should be preserved in all events, as essential to his happiness, through every stage of his existence." The purpose of this meeting was to discuss: The investigation of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency and the Orange County Funding Corporation. **More particularly, whether certain contracts signed by the entities are void under General Municipal Law".** The investigation of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency and the Orange County Funding Corporation. **More particularly, whether certain contracts signed by the entities are void under General Municipal Law.** This responsibility was placed into their trust with unanimous consent of the Legislature on July 21, 2021." At their first meeting on August 25th they set a goal to formulate a plan and timeline that includes research, review, and the issuance of our findings into a report as to whether any of those signed contracts are void." Their second meeting was on September 20, 2021, with the focus of that meeting being on General Municipal Law 800-804. Legislative Counsel Abraham provided them with background and legislative intent related to General Municipal Law 800-804. Committee members asked questions related to the topic of GML 800-804 and issues related to their task at hand. Those included:

- If there were any additional contracts they had not received
- Status of contracts at the Orange County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) presently related to Galileo Technology Group (GTG)
- Related to the Joint Report:
  - Questions about the interview process and formats
  - And a series of questions related to accountant Leonard W. Vona, CPA, CFE, Fraud Auditing, Inc.
  - Questions related to the salary of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Counsel, Kevin Dowd and his responsibilities.

Between the first meeting and second, several things of note and related to our work took place. One, this committee was provided access to volumes of background information, most specifically,

contracts involving the Orange County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). Second, on September 10, 2021, three defendants, Vincent Cozzolino, Laurie Villasuso, and Edward Diana pled guilty to a **variety of charges, including Corrupting The Government. Collectively, these criminals were forced to repay more than \$1 million for their illegal activities.** Three, on that same day, The New York State Comptroller and Orange County District Attorney issued their Report on the Joint Investigation of the Orange County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). Their third meeting was on September 29, 2021, with the focus being on addressing the facts. Their fourth meeting was on October 13, 2021, where answers to follow up questions posed by the committee were entered into the record. They also agreed to the creation of a draft report for the committee to review. On October 28, 2021, the information compiled through this process was the basis of the Draft Report and was made available to all committee members on October 28, 2021. Today will be their 5th meeting and they will review, revise, edit and/or amend as necessary the draft report. This draft report is considered an attorney work product. Therefore, if this committee wishes to review, revise, edit and/or amend the draft report they would need to enter into Executive Session under attorney/client privilege.

Mr. O'Donnell commented that from the beginning he has said that "they do not know, what they do not know." He was pleased that the District Attorney got back \$1.26 million so far because as far as he is concerned, the District Attorney is done. Therefore, it is up to them to get more money which is part of this committee's work. He was pleased that the Orange County Legislature formed this committee to continue the investigation, but he would have given it to the Education and Economic Development Committee and/or had a mixture of both the Rules, Enactments and Intergovernmental Relations and Education and Economic Development Committees. While legislators can attend all committee meetings, they do not get a vote unless they sit on that committee. He was not happy to see that there was a rush to judgment to have the final report completed by the end of the year and part of why they are present today. In his opinion, there is still a great deal of work that needs to be done and to end the committee by the end of the year would be extremely premature. They all take great pride in the integrity of the institution they call the Orange County Legislature and can anyone here put a price and/or time limit on integrity.

Mr. Faggione added that he along with a few of his fellow legislators had questions in regard to the draft report. At this time, he would ask for a motion to enter into executive session under attorney/client privilege.

Mr. Hines moved to enter into executive session invoking attorney/client privilege, seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Committee entered into executive session at 3:40 p.m.

Mr. Hines moved to leave executive session, seconded by Mr. Paduch.

Committee left executive session at 5:12 p.m.

Mr. Faggione stated that they have exited executive session with no action taken in executive session. It is clear that they are not yet complete in their efforts to review, revise, edit and/or amend the draft report.

Mr. Faggione motioned to set Wednesday, November 17, 2021 as the next meeting of the Rules Special Investigative committee meeting following the close of the Rules, Enactments and Intergovernmental Relations Committee meeting to address the draft report, Seconded by Mr. Paduch.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.