

*Monroe County
Clerk of the Legislature*

*Cheryl M. Rozzi
Clerk*



*Casey K. DiCaro
Deputy Clerk*

*David Grant
Assistant Deputy Clerk*

TO: Legislators, Directors, Staff and Media

FROM: Cheryl M. Rozzi, Clerk of the Legislature

DATE: September 12, 2011

RE: Matter of Urgency – File No. 11-0211

Per President Jeffrey R. Adair, the attached communication is declared to be a Matter of Urgency pursuant to Section 545-24 (A)(3) of the Rules of the Monroe County Legislature as a Memorializing Resolution for Tuesday's, September 13, 2011 meeting of the Monroe County Legislature.

Attachment



Monroe County Legislature

VINCENT ESPOSITO
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 16

VINCENT ESPOSITO
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 16
39 WEST MAIN STREET, ROOM 408
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14614
OFFICE: (585) 753-1940
HOME: (585) 370-1921
E-MAIL: vinnie@vincentesposito.com

OFFICIAL FILE COPY
No. <u>110211</u>
Not to be removed from the Office of the Legislature Of Monroe County
Committee Assignment
Memorializing Referral -L

August 25, 2011

To the Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
407 County Office Building
39 West Main Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Re: Changing the Irondequoit Bay Outlet Bridge Operating Schedule

Honorable Legislators:

The Irondequoit Bay Outlet Bridge, commonly referred to as the "Swing Bridge," spans the narrow channel that connects Irondequoit Bay to Lake Ontario. It is maintained and operated by the Monroe County Department of Transportation (DOT) in conformity with permits granted by the United States Coast Guard (Coast Guard). Monroe County recently studied maritime traffic through the Bay Outlet channel during October 2010 and April 2011, however as of the time of this introduction the Administration has not yet made the results of this study available to the public or the Legislature.

During the seven "warm weather" months from April 1st to October 31st the bridge roadway is swung to the shore to allow boats to navigate the channel 24 hours a day. During the five winter months from November 1st to March 31st the bridge roadway connects Lake Road in Webster with Culver Road in the Sea Breeze neighborhood of Irondequoit.

Opened in 1998, this small bridge significantly impacts the daily lives of residents, business owners, recreational and commercial boaters, commuters, and visitors to this beautiful part of our county. Originally operated with only four months of vehicular access, the schedule was improved to add a fifth month by the Legislature in 2000 due to a clear lack of boating activity in the colder weather. This change was eventually granted by the Coast Guard in 2003, after a three-year study determined the change was appropriate. (For purposes of historical context, a timeline is attached with this referral.)

Given that this channel is the only connection between the Lake and the Bay, and also designated a "Harbor of Refuge" by the Coast Guard, reasonable access for boaters to navigate it rightly takes precedence over vehicle traffic. However, studies conducted by DOT from 1999 to

2003 reported minimal boating use of the channel during cold weather months. By comparison an estimated 5,600 vehicles cross the bridge per day when it is open to road traffic – and still allows many small, non-sailboats to pass under the bridge clearance.

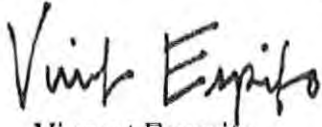
When accessible to vehicle traffic, the Swing Bridge provides enormous benefits to the region, including: increased economic activity from tourists and visitors patronizing the many establishments in the area; improved commuter convenience for residents that do not have to drive an additional 8.2 miles to cross the 104 Bay Bridge; and enhanced safety routes for emergency rescue crews or a potential evacuation of north Webster residents that neighbor the Ginna Nuclear Power Plant.


Ideally, the ultimate goal is to provide year-round access through and over the Irondequoit Bay Channel for both maritime and vehicular traffic. Efforts are underway on such a solution, but it is years away from becoming reality for the residents and businesses in this area.

The specific legislative action therefore is for this Honorable Body adopt a resolution requesting a change in the operational schedule for the Swing Bridge, expanding its use to vehicle traffic by one month, from October 1st until March 31st. Doing so would enact an equitable, six-month schedule for boaters and motorists. We request for the Administration to coordinate efforts with the Coast Guard to take the necessary actions in order to receive Federal approval of the schedule change.

This action shall have no impact on the revenues and/or expenditures of the current Monroe County Budget, as it will be achieved through current personnel and resources.

Respectfully Submitted,


Vincent Esposito
Legislator – District 16


Ted O'Brien
Democratic Minority Leader