

*Public Hearing
Local Law Introductory No. C of 2021
May 20, 2021*

The Public Hearing on Local Law Introductory No. C of 2021 A Local Law authorizing twelve (12) and thirteen (13) year-old licensed hunters to hunt deer with a firearm or crossbow during hunting season with the supervision of an adult licensed hunter was called to order by Deputy Chair Hollenbeck at 10:00 A.M. Seven Legislative members were present with Legislator/Chair Sauerbrey and Legislator Standinger being absent.

There were 14 people in attendance.

The Clerk read the legal notice as published in the official newspapers.

Steven A. Barrows – Candor, NY spoke. “I am a resident of Candor, NY and District 7. I have been a DEC Hunter Education Master Instructor for Firearms for over twenty-five years. In that time, I and my colleagues here in Tioga County have trained hundreds of people of all ages in hunter safety. All fifteen of us, your Tioga County Hunter Education Instructors Group, support the adoption of Local Law Introductory No. C of 2021 to authorize twelve and thirteen year-olds to hunt deer in Tioga County.

“New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) tracks what they call HRSI’s, Hunting Related Shooting Incidents. The philosophy is that with legal measures and safety measures being implemented that these are incidents and not accidents. From 2005 to 2020, NYSDEC has investigated 387 HRSI’s. I have the summaries of each of those sixteen years. Of these 387 HRSI’s, only ten involved persons from the ages of 11 to 15. Of those ten HRSI’s, only two were actually legal hunters, properly trained, licensed, and supervised. The other eight were young people out with a firearm who frankly should not have been. Two young hunter incidents out of 387 statewide, in sixteen years, that is an exemplary safety record for these young men and women and lowers the overall NYS HRSI rate to an average of only two incidents per 100,000 hunters.

“Some people have expressed concern that this last year resulted in closing in-person Hunter Education courses because of COVID-19 issues. In 2020, 67,270 safe hunters were added to New York State’s hunters through online classes. Of the twenty-two statewide HRSI’s last year, three involved persons age 15 or younger. Only one was a legal hunter and not a single HRSI involved anyone that took an online Hunter Education class.

“Hunting is very safe. Younger hunters are among the safest age groups of all. Your approval of Local Law Introductory No. C of 2021 will provide Tioga County’s young hunters the opportunity to pursue one of our greatest game resources, the whitetail deer, in a legal, safe, and supervised manner.

“From all of your Tioga County Hunter Education Instructors, some of which are represented here today, thank you for your favorable consideration.”

There being no additional comments, the hearing was adjourned at 10:05 A.M.