



Schuyler County to hold public hearing on proposed opioid legislation

Glenda Gephart, Special to The Elmira Star-Gazette Published 8:25 a.m. ET March 9, 2018

Schuyler County may be joining the fight against the opioid epidemic and its effects on residents.

A public hearing on Monday, March 12, will accept comments on a proposed local law that would lead to a lawsuit against the manufacturers and distributors of opioid pain killers.

The hearing will be at 6:30 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers, County Office Building, Ninth Street, Watkins Glen.

“The purpose and intent of this legislation is to allow the county to recover costs related to health care, family and social services, criminal justice, addiction and rehabilitation, and many other areas that have significantly increased,” Schuyler County Attorney Steven Getman said in a news release.

The proposed lawsuit will claim fraudulent and negligent marketing and distribution of opiates in and to the county, Getman said.

“Over the past few years, despite its small population, Schuyler County has seen an uptick in opioid and heroin use and overdose,” Getman said. “To date, county officials have expended significant resources to help its residents battle opioid addiction and prevent further deaths. The lawsuit will seek to reimburse the county for its expenses related to the opioid

crisis as well as provide the county with financial assistance to continue this battle.”

The County Legislature voted in August to retain the firm of Napoli Shkolnik, PLLC to file the lawsuit on its behalf. Napoli Shkolnik will work with Getman, as special counsel.

County Administrator Tim O’Hearn said the lawsuit will be filed at no risk to the county, as Napoli Shkolnik will work on contingency basis that will cover all costs associated with the lawsuit.

“By voting to go forward with local law, the County Legislature hopes to lessen the burden to taxpayers and seeks to hold manufacturers and distributors responsible for their role in the opioid epidemic,” O’Hearn said.

A copy of the proposed local law, as introduced on Feb. 12, can be found online here: [Proposed legislation.](#)

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