

New York Coalition For Open Government

2022 Naughty List

Mary Falace-Mayr - Colonie court clerk has made filing Freedom of Information Law requests difficult for years. When asked why she needed additional information not required by law she answered, "Because that is how we do it here." Asked why they do it that way, the clerk answered, "Because we do." In a unanimous decision an appellate court ruled that Mary Falace-Mayr failed to perform her duty as a public official when she denied FOIL requests that did not meet her criteria.

Edwin Glaser – Henderson Town Supervisor for the towns failure to post meeting documents online as required by the Open Meetings Law. When this was reported by the Coalition, Mr. Glaser responded that the Coalition "...does absolutely nothing" and that "as far as Henderson goes, nothing is going to change." Additionally has refused a donation, which would allow the town to live stream meetings.

Mark Poloncarz – Erie County Executive has conducted secret Buffalo Bill's stadium negotiations, refused to update county legislator's regarding negotiations, had to be sued to release an engineering study, which 94% was redacted, and to top it off, required elected officials to sign a non-disclosure agreement in order to participate in negotiations with the Buffalo Bills regarding a community benefit agreement

Robert Restaino – Niagara Falls Mayor, refuses to allow the public to speak at special meetings, requires block clubs to submit questions in writing in advance, which must be pre-approved when he appears in order for him to answer.

Mark Hammond - Malta Supervisor, stopped live streaming town meetings after a meeting got heated with residents expressing opposition to a development project. Old meeting videos have been removed from the town's website. The town spent \$70,000 purchasing equipment for live streaming which was received in September and meetings are still not being live streamed.

Dan Barney - Town of New Haven Supervisor, recently removed public comment period from all town meetings. Barney even required a town board member sign in to speak during a public hearing.

Peter Barber, Town of Guilderland Supervisor for continuing to violate the Open Meetings Law with improper Executive Sessions in spite of being called out about it by the Coalition in January.

Edwin Fare, Valley Stream Mayor for demanding that a resident stop video recording a village board meeting. It is a legal right provided under the Open Meetings Law to record public meetings.

Michael Hopkins, Valley Stream attorney who agreed with and supported the Mayor's effort to stop a resident from recording a meeting. In violation of the Open Meetings Law.

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2022 Nice List

Kelly Reader - Parish town clerk, the smallest municipality in Oswego county (population 2,500); promptly posts Meeting agendas, meeting documents, minutes, and video recordings of meetings.

Lynne Buchanan – Guilderland, town clerk for ensuring that all FOIL requests are answered timely and following up promptly when requests may not be worded exactly right. She is very courteous and helpful in all these matters for all who file requests.

Donta Myles – Niagara Falls Councilmember has fought for the public's right to speak at special meetings called by the Mayor, who refuses to allow the public to speak.

John Dolce – Supervisor of Rensselaerville (population 1,800), has his clerk livestream meetings on Facebook, using an iPad. A perfect example of how for not a lot of money a local government committed to transparency can work with what they have.

NY Civil Liberties Union - for successfully litigating the release of police disciplinary record lawsuits in Rochester and Syracuse.

Patrick Brady – School Supt. Massena Central School Board (2,500 students), for his creative efforts to livestream school board meetings meetings, which included hiring a music teacher as videographer for a stipend of \$2,798 per year. The music teacher records Board meetings to YouTube Live and also posts the video to the webpage later. As part of his role he works with students to create three video collages (fall, winter, spring) of other events going on in the District throughout the year.

Governor Candidates – Thomas Suozzi, Robert Astorino and Harry Wilson for participating in our candidate forum regarding open government issues. Governor Hochul and Lee Zeldin ignored our repeated requests to participate.