

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE  
BUDGET MEETING  
HELD IN ROOM 318 OF THE  
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Members: Chairwoman Sayegh, Legislators Addonizio & Montgomery**

**Friday**

**6:00pm**

**October 11, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by Chairwoman Sayegh who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Addonizio, Legislator Montgomery, and Chairwoman Sayegh were present.

**Item #3 - 2020 Budget Review**

**Dues – Account 1920 – Page 42**

Chairwoman Sayegh stated these are all great organizations that provide a wealth of information.

Legislator Montgomery stated the Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC) has presented to this committee, and the HVRC stated Putnam County is part of the seven (7) counties that they support, even though Putnam does not pay into the HVRC. She suggested that the County start paying dues to the HVRC.

Legislator Jonke questioned how much the dues for the HVRC are.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated they are \$10,000 per year. She stated it has been considered in the past but it was found to be cost prohibitive. She stated this could be revisited another time.

**Tourist Promotion Agency – Account 6410 – Pages 162 – 163**

Legislator Montgomery questioned the funding in the temporary line (41094).

Chairwoman Sayegh stated that would be discussed at the Personnel Budget Meeting. She stated this budget is mainly the I Love New York funds. She stated the Advertising line (54664) is for advertising within the County, which is not covered by the I Love New York funds.

**Public/Private Partnership (Economic Development Corp) – Account 6420 – Page 164**

Chairwoman Sayegh stated the EDC's budget decreased \$5,000 from 2019. She stated she met with EDC President Kathleen Abels and Board Chairman Richard Weiss who highlighted their priorities for 2020. She stated they will be concentrated on expanding their membership base and finding major sponsors.

**Putnam County IDA– Account 6460 – Page 166**

IDA Board Chairman Bill Nulk stated the distillery and hotel projects are moving along smoothly. He stated the hotel looks like it is going to be ready by Thanksgiving. He stated the IDA is excited about the County's economic development team.

Legislator Montgomery questioned what kind of incentives the IDA offers to businesses.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated the incentives are tax abatements for mortgage tax, sales tax, and property tax.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if those incentives come out of the \$50,000 in the budget.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated they do not. He stated it comes out of the negotiated amounts. He explained how the tax abatements work.

Legislator Montgomery questioned what the \$50,000 was for.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated it is for mandated compliance costs. He stated it is also prudent to have the money available. He stated the 2019 funds have not been used.

Legislator Sullivan stated this begs the question as to why the \$50,000 is necessary.

Finance Commissioner William Carlin stated the IDA brings in fees from their deals that they have completed, which cover their expenses and is why the 2019 funds have not been needed. He stated there may not be completed deals in 2020, so the funding could be more necessary.

Legislator Sullivan stated it would seem that the \$50,000 is too high, considering that no funds were used in 2019.

Legislator Jonke questioned why this much funding from the County necessary, if the fees generated from the deals cover the expenses.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated the IDA does not want to be caught shorthanded like they have been in the past.

Legislator Jonke questioned if the whole \$50,000 is necessary or could it be less.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated he would respectfully request the whole \$50,000 because it is a prudent, safe amount.

Chairwoman Sayegh suggested putting some of the funding into sub-contingency.

Finance Commissioner Carlin stated a reason that was not done initially is that the County did not want to give the perception that they were not adequately funding the IDA.

Legislator Sullivan suggested putting \$25,000 of the funding into sub-contingency.

Legislator Nacerino stated she would support that and if the money is not used, it goes back to the County anyway. She stated the IDA is finally getting on their feet in a cohesive manner and she does not want to hinder that.

Legislator Castellano stated he would like to keep the funding as is, to show that the IDA is being fully supported.

Legislator Sullivan stated that would contradict what has been done with other agencies, when looking at actual expenses compared to the funding.

Finance Commissioner Carlin reiterated that if the money is not used, it will go back to the County. He stated it is dependent on whether the projects go through and fee income is generated.

Legislator Castellano stated Board President Nulk has done a tremendous job with moving the IDA forward.

Legislator Sullivan stated this is no reflection on the job that has been done.

Legislator Nacerino stated there is no fiscal impact here. She stated it is there to protect against the uncertainty.

Legislator Montgomery stated the IDA does a great job, but there is not much of a presence for the IDA in Philipstown. She stated her constituents will look at this as too much funding for the IDA while her district is lacking in so many other ways.

IDA Board Chairman Nulk stated his hope with the new economic development team, there will be more projects for the western side of the County.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated her opinion to just keep it as is, and whatever is not used will just roll back into the general fund.

Legislator Nacerino stated she would support leaving it as is.

Legislator Addonizio suggested doing what was done in 2018 and keeping \$30,000 in the budget, and put \$20,000 in sub-contingency. She stated the money would still be available if needed.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to put \$20,000 into sub-contingency; Seconded by Legislator Montgomery. All in favor.

### **Tourist Promotion Agency – Account 6410 – Pages 162 – 163**

Legislator Castellano requested this item be revisited, due to his constituent who wanted to speak, coming into the meeting late.

Alexandra Ballantine, Brewster resident, stated she is following up on an email that she sent to the Legislature today. She stated she has ideas for making the tourism spending more accountable to taxpayers and have the businesses that benefit from it more involved. She suggested having the Tourism Director only hire Putnam County based vendors. She stated they are currently using a Pennsylvania-based advertising agency. She suggested specific numeric goals for tourism, perhaps with ties to sales tax revenue. She stated the goals can be used to figure out if their approach is working. She stated this way it will be easier to garner support. She suggested, in the future, using a voucher system to give to the various Chambers of Commerce to use as they see fit for their area.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Ms. Ballantine for her comments.

**Item #4 - Other Business** – None

**Item #5 - Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 6:24 P.M., Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.