

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

Members: Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Gross & LoBue

Friday **October 4, 2013**
(Immediately Following Physical Services Budget Mtg Beginning at 5:30 PM)

The meeting was called to order at 6:50p.m. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Gross, LoBue and Chairwoman Scuccimarra were present.

Item # 3 - 2014 Budget Review

Dues – Account # 1920

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated dues include Pattern for Progress, the Lower Hudson Valley, Regional Dues, and the New York State County Executive Dues.

Public/Private Partnership (Economic Development Corp.) – Account # 6420

Legislator LoBue stated Shop Putnam is being comingled with other funds and she would like to see it kept separate so it can be tracked.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned what the purpose of comingling the funds is.

Economic Development Corporation President Meghan Taylor stated the feedback she received from Shop Putnam showed it to be ineffective with little participation from local businesses.

Legislator LoBue again stated as this is marketing it should be kept separate in order to track it.

President Taylor questioned what the Legislature would like to see it used for.

Legislator LoBue stated Shop Putnam was previously used for marketing and she questioned what President Taylor planned to use it for in 2014.

President Taylor stated she has devised a marketing strategy going forward and that is the majority of the budget increase.

Commissioner of Finance Bill Carlin stated the money going to EDC makes sense because they should have the money and flexibility to market Putnam County. He also stated the County will see the results of this.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the results of this will be.

President Taylor stated the results are already being seen as the Village of Brewster has been deemed an opportunity area and the County has four priority projects.

Legislator LoBue stated nothing had been awarded to the Village of Brewster yet.

President Taylor stated if the Village of Brewster was to be awarded, it would be in December.

Legislator LoBue stated the EDC's budget in 2013 was \$140,845 and now it is \$165,845. She questioned if the increase is due to the marketing with Shop Putnam and if this was the only increase.

President Taylor stated that Shop Putnam was part of the increase and the only increase from 2013 to 2014 is the \$25,000.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the \$17,291 for Shop Putnam is part of the \$25,000 increase.

Commissioner Carlin stated the \$17,291 is what was spent in 2012 for Shop Putnam.

Legislator LoBue questioned if this was a straight increase or if a part of it is from Shop Putnam.

Commissioner Carlin stated it incorporates the money from Shop Putnam. He further stated the total 2013 budget including Shop Putnam was \$140,845 and the purpose of the \$25,000 increase was to give them the tools and the opportunity to market Putnam differently than it had been done in the past.

Legislator LoBue stated the salary of the previous director was \$50,000 and when the budget was small, he absorbed it.

President Taylor stated her salary is decided by a board of eleven people, which has no affiliation with the County. She also stated she felt it was fiscally responsible to include a salary line for herself. She stated the previous director was part time and had an assistant and now it is just herself in a full time position.

Legislator LoBue stated she hadn't realized this when reviewing the numbers in the budget. She questioned how President Taylor intends to spend the extra \$25,000.

President Taylor stated the EDC has a marketing campaign and strategy for 2014. She compared some budget lines from 2013 to 2014. For instance, advertisements in 2013 held \$300, which did not get them far. Therefore, in 2014 they asked for \$5,000, which she feels is still a small number. She also stated that in the past, the EDC was not able to attend some conferences that required traveling as they did not have the money to do so. These conferences can be beneficial to the County, therefore traveling was incorporated into the budget this year as well. She then stated the marketing campaign budget was increased to \$16,600 with the plan to hold educational seminars on how to do business with Putnam County. She further stated Shop Putnam was internal to the County and she is going to make it more external to attract new businesses.

Legislator Oliverio stated he cannot support an increase of over 10% and what we have here with the EDC is about 17%. He stated increasing the budget so far so quickly is too much. He also stated the reasoning for the increase is worthy, however the Legislature does need to make choices. He requested reducing the increase from \$25,000 to \$15,000, which is still about an 11% increase from last year.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated this is a department taking a different direction.

Legislator Oliverio stated it should be done slowly.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned what this \$10,000 decrease would do to the budget.

President Taylor stated she would not be able to follow through with her plans. She stated her disagreement with Legislator Oliverio's statement of taking the increase slowly as people are finally looking toward Putnam County as a place to do business.

Legislator Oliverio stated he is willing to give the \$15,000 in order to take advantage of the increased interest in Putnam County.

Legislator Gross stated other Counties, New Jersey and Connecticut are very competitive with us and he believes the push should be done now and it will pay off in the long run.

Legislator Albano stated when money is spent, the County gets it back tenfold. He stated this is money well spent as it will create money coming back to the County.

Commissioner Carlin stated this is looked at as an investment of money that will pay off in the long run.

Legislator Nacerino stated her agreement with the budget increase as more jobs are being brought into the County and to decrease the extra \$25,000 would be detrimental to the progress made.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated her understanding of Legislator Oliverio's thoughts, however she believes the money is needed to keep the great job done by President Taylor going.

Legislator Othmer stated the County has been stagnant for ten years and Ms. Taylor needs a chance to turn this around.

President of the Putnam County Chambers of Commerce, Bill Nulk, stated in the six months Ms. Taylor has been President of the EDC there has been much success. He also stated the extra \$10,000 in a \$142 million budget is nickels and dimes.

Legislator LoBue stated her agreement with Legislator Oliverio as she is cautious to put so much money into one department.

Tourist Promotion Agency – Account # 6410

Commissioner Carlin stated money comes from matching funds from the State which is dependent on I Love New York. He stated the budget is the same as last year; however \$10,000 was put into a lease transportation line for providing a shuttle or Trolley to those coming off a train for an event. He stated this is not money going toward the Tourism budget, it is going to the transportation shuttles during large events. He also stated this was not a line in the Transportation budget because he felt it needed to stand out to the Legislature for this year and subsequent years. He further stated the Tourism budget is level funding and this is not more money going to an outside agency.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the public will know that this shuttle or Trolley is available.

Deputy County Executive Bruce Walker stated this is not meant to be a shuttle to go to and from the train stations on a regular basis. It is for special events such as the Shakespeare Festival.

Commissioner Carlin stated when advertising for the event is done the shuttle should be mentioned and advertised as well as it will draw people in.

Legislator Nacerino stated each line seems to be interchangeable and she feels, this being the case, each line does not give a true representation of what that money is going to be used for. She questioned if there are any lines that stay solid and are not interchangeable.

Commissioner Carlin stated a fund transfer must be approved by the board.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated the Legislature has the authority to move any line back and forth.

Legislator Nacerino stated the budget is therefore nontransparent.

Legislator Oliverio stated that then falls onto the Legislature, as they approve such transfers.

Legislator Castellano stated an example when Emergency Services needed new chairs. He stated this could have been included in the original budget, yet when the time came they had no choice but to approve the transfer of funds.

Legislator Nacerino stated she feels the lines are too flexible.

Item # 4 - Other Business - None

Item # 5 - Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:32 P.M., Legislator Gross made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Chairwoman Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Green, Administrative Assistant.