

**RULES, ENACTMENTS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING
Held In Room 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman Nacerino, Legislators Castellano & DiCarlo

Monday **6:00 P.M.** **October 7, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested that Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Castellano, DiCarlo, and Chairwoman Nacerino were present.

3) 2014 Budget Review

Legislature – Account 1010

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she would like to decrease the Office Supplies Line because she believes that based on what was spent so far this year that we can decrease this line by 10% to \$5,000.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to decrease the Legislative Office Supplies line to \$5,000, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she would like to decrease the Equipment Rental Line because she believes that based on what was spent so far this year we can decrease this line by 10% to \$2,025.

Legislator Oliverio asked everyone to keep in mind that these numbers to-date do not include October expenses and probably not even the entire month of September's expenses. He stated that many of these rental payments come due at the end of the fiscal year. He stated we need to remember inflation and the remainder of the fiscal year and he does not believe we should cut this line down.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that the average per month so far we should be fine with decreasing this line to \$5,000 for 2014. She stated that we need to find cost-cutting measures. She stated that in the school district that she works with, they cut and they cut again and they all survive. She stated that when we look at things that have not realized the budget line, we should take the initiative to cut conservatively.

Legislator Oliverio stated that you do that unless you are aware of what the cost is going to be. He stated that we may not be aware of the full extent of the cost and urged everyone to be cautious.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she agrees with him but this is the venue to vet this out. She asked if there was anything outstanding to the end of the year for this line.

County Auditor Michele Alfano-Sharkey stated that the copy machine has a monthly payment and if we go over the set amount of copies we get charged or if we use color we get a colored print charge.

Legislator LoBue stated that unless we are expecting an increase we should cut it down.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she would feel comfortable decreasing it to \$2,025.

Legislator Castellano made a motion to decrease the Equipment Rental Line by 10% to \$2,025, seconded by Chairwoman Nacerino. All in favor.

Legislator DiCarlo asked about the Travel Line.

County Auditor Alfano-Sharkey stated that is for Legislators' travel.

Chairwoman Nacerino asked what the Miscellaneous Line was used for.

Clerk of the Legislature Diane Schonfeld stated that was used various things including Outside Counsel if necessary.

County Executive – Account 1230

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she would like to decrease the Furniture & Furnishings Line by half based on numbers used to-date this year unless there is a specific expenditure targeted for next year.

Legislator Oliverio reminded everyone of the discussion of the high expense of office chairs in a recent meeting. He stated that on the State bid, which we must use, the cheapest office chair will cost \$250-350. He stated if the Executive Department breaks office chairs they will blow through \$1,000. He thinks the Line should be kept as requested. He stated he is not big on expenditures but what we don't want to do is not budget for something and then find a need for those funds; he believes that that is where the taxpayer gets slammed.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she believes we need to start trimming the fat. She stated there seems to be a great deal of flexibility of where we transfer money around. She stated that if there is a need there can be a transfer. She stated she believes we need to start looking where we can cut expenditures. She stated that furnishings for the upcoming year need to be prepared for in the budget needs and what Legislator Oliverio is speaking to is an emergency situation.

Legislator Oliverio stated that we need to take into account the expiration of items but what if you don't know it's going to break and it does. He stated that Department Heads put in the cost that could happen and if it doesn't it goes back to the taxpayer the following year. He stated if it is not there and we have to spend it then you are creating a taxation hole for the following year. He stated that he would rather have a cushion on these items than not. He stated he is not saying nest-eggs and hiding money; he stated

it is money for contingencies. He stated that departmentally it makes safe the best guesstimate of the tax rate on the taxpayers.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she respectfully disagrees. She believes there is money in departments to cover costs. She stated that we have the flexibility to transfer money. She stated that if we did not demonstrate the need last year do we need to keep these cushion lines fully padded. She stated she sees that there are a lot of lines that are not used for what they are earmarked for and that is not a true indication of what those monies are earmarked for.

Legislator Oliverio stated that we approve the transfers so the onus falls on us.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that there is some room for changing how we vet the transfers.

Legislator Albano stated that he agrees with Legislator Oliverio.

Legislator LoBue stated that this Line should be cut in half because that department went through a full remodel last year.

Legislator DiCarlo stated that the whole budget process is explaining why you need what you need.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that when we nickel and dime in some places it allows for us to nurture our initiatives. She stated that she has seen the schools go down to bare bones.

Legislator Oliverio stated that he has worked 33 years in a school district and 18 years in County Government and he believes that comparing schools and the County is like comparing apples and oranges. He stated the schools started out bloated and are just now getting to cutting just a little bit of the fat around that bone where the County has been on the bone since he has been here.

Legislator LoBue stated after this budget is passed departments will be ordering everything they can to drain their lines before the end of the year. She believes there is always room for reduction.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that it is our job to look at these lines and to see if there is a need for these amounts.

Legislator Castellano made a motion to decrease the Furniture & Furnishings Line by 10% to \$900, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she would like to decrease the Printing & Forms Line by 10% to \$700. She stated that if anyone wanted to voice why there was an increase from last year she invited them to.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to decrease the Printing & Forms Line by 10% to \$630, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

County Clerk – Account 1410

Chairwoman Nacerino asked about the increase in the Overtime Line.

First Deputy County Clerk Michael Bartolotti stated that was due to NYSAFE Act and if the County Offices are closed but the Courts are open his department must remain open and therefore it is considered overtime.

Chairwoman Nacerino asked about the increase in the Temporary Line.

First Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated that is the NYSAFE Act.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she would like to decrease the Education & Training Line by \$500 to \$2,500.

First Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated he does not have an objection to that decrease.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to decrease the Education & Training Line by \$500 to \$2,500, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

Department of Motor Vehicles – Account 1411

Chairwoman Nacerino asked why the Temporary Line increased.

Commissioner Carlin stated that was because a regular position was eliminated and they have been using temporary help to complete the work because of what is going on at the State level.

Records Management – Account 1460

Chairwoman Nacerino asked why the Temporary Line increased.

First Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated that the Records Center had exceeded capacity at the end of 2012 and in dealing with that we have an incredible amount of shredding to do to keep that trim.

Chairwoman Nacerino asked why the Office Supplies Line has increased.

First Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti asked that the Committee respectfully keep that Line as is because supplies are getting more expensive as the days go by and with his department's volume they are using more.

Law Department – Account 1420

Chairwoman Nacerino asked why the Temporary Line increased.

Commissioner Carlin stated that is part of the consolidation and for clerk services.

Veterans Service Agency – Account 6510

Chairwoman Nacerino asked what Leased Transportation was.

Commissioner Carlin stated that it is Transportation service that we contract out to bring them around.

Legislator LoBue asked if it was the new van.

Commissioner Carlin stated that was correct.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that we bought that van.

Commissioner Carlin stated that was correct but we pay for the driver, etc. He further stated it used to be through Office for the Aging and now it is done through Transportation.

Legislator LoBue asked who had the statistics on the use of this van.

Commissioner Carlin stated the Transportation Manager Vincent Tamagna does.

Consumer Affairs – Account 6610

Director of Consumer Affairs Jean Marie Noel explained that the fees for Item Pricing were changed and that is why the report shows the numbers it does. She explained how her department is working to save the 2012 over-budget.

Southeast Museum – Account 7564

Legislator LoBue asked that the Southeast Museum's budget be restored to their requested \$30,000 from their tentative \$27,000.

Legislator Gross agreed and stated that they are expanding their programs.

Chairwoman Nacerino agreed and stated that is why we cut small potatoes which offset this increase.

Legislator DiCarlo pointed out that we are increasing this account but because other Outside Agencies did not ask for an increase they are not getting one.

Legislator Othmer voiced his support for historical studies and museums.

Legislator LoBue stated that the Putnam Arts Council did not ask for more money but she would like to see them receive the same increase.

Legislator Albano stated that we cannot increase everything.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she is sure there is a reason that the Southeast Museum requested more money and that there is a reason the Putnam Arts Council did not.

Legislator LoBue stated that in all fairness they probably thought they would be denied.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that we still have time to discuss the other agencies but for now she is comfortable with increasing the Southeast Museum by \$3,000 to \$30,000.

Legislator DiCarlo stated that if everyone was given the same opportunity then he is fine with that but if they weren't then that can be problematic.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she believes the request should come from those organizations.

Legislator Oliverio asked if there can be outreach done. He stated that Legislator DiCarlo's point is a good one.

Chairwoman Nacerino suggested a rotating basis of monetary boost with the Outside Agencies.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to increase the Southeast Museum Line by \$3,000 to \$30,000, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

Humane Society – Account 8512

Legislator LoBue asked the Administration about the status of the 10 acres of Southeast.

Legislator Othmer stated that they are going to stay in their own building because they do not want to partner with anyone else. He stated that they want to raise their own funds.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she would like to revisit that whole thing.

County Executive MaryEllen Odell stated that in her conversations with the President of the Humane Society it became clear that the Society was not going to be able to raise the funds to improve the new site. She stated that as County Executive she reached out to the Society's current neighboring parcel owner because the President believes that if she could add 50 yards she could expand and be sufficient. She stated that the President believes she could renovate with funds the Society could raise that way.

Cornell Cooperative Extension – Account 8750

Legislator Othmer explained the need for the additional funding that was requested by the Cooperative Extension but which was removed from the budget by the County Executive. He also stated that there is a projected savings of approximately \$5,400 by having the Cooperative Extension convert to County internet and phone and therefore

the requested increase would really only be approximately a 1.8% increase which is less than what the library got. He asked that all Legislators support this requested increase.

Chairwoman Nacerino asked Commissioner Carlin if the departments “use it or lose it” in their funds that are used to-date.

Commissioner Carlin stated that it is unless it was encumbered already; the rest flows over to the Surplus General Fund.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to increase the Cooperative Extension Line by \$8,908 to \$305,848, seconded by Legislator DiCarlo. All in favor.

Executive Director of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County Marjorie Nichols Keith stated that they asked for an increase but as they reviewed their budget with the Administration they found some ways to reduce their expenses as Legislator Othmer stated. She stated that if they transferred to County internet and phone they would save \$5,400.

Chairwoman Nacerino asked Deputy County Executive Bruce Walker how it affects other outside agencies housed on campus.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated we do the same thing. He stated that there is no point in having the people we fund paying for duplicate services.

Legislator DiCarlo stated that since we were going to give the \$8,908 to Cooperative Extension and they are saving the \$5,400 why don't we give that difference to the Putnam Arts Council and the Putnam History Museum. He stated we are realizing that savings anyway, let's give it to the Putnam Arts Council and the Putnam History Museum to be fair and equitable.

Legislator Oliverio stated that that can be discussed at the Audit & Administration Committee Budget Meeting.

There being no further business, at 7:10 P.M., Legislator DiCarlo made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chairwoman Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Krista M. Butler, Administrative Assistant.