

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

Members: Chairman Sullivan and Legislators Addonizio & Albano

Thursday

6:30pm

February 15, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:46pm by Chairman Sullivan who requested that Legislator Albano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Addonizio, Legislator Albano, and Chairman Sullivan were present.

Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – December 14, 2017

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Item #4 - FYI/ Board of Elections Annual Report

Board of Elections Commissioner Cathy Croft stated this year there could be up to three (3) elections because there is a chance there will be a Federal primary at the end of June. She stated there will be a State and local primary in September. She stated this primary is usually held on a Tuesday, but will be held on Thursday, September 13, 2018. She stated the reason for this is because that Tuesday is both Rosh Hashana and September 11th. She stated primary elections have not been held on September 11th since 2001. She stated the third election is the regular election in November. She stated there is a memorialization on tonight's agenda for early voting. She stated Governor Cuomo included the proposal of early voting in his address; it has been presented before but has not gotten passed the Senate. She stated there are currently 37 states that have early voting or voting by mail. She stated this proposal would also allow registration closer to the election, currently registration must be completed 25 days before the election in order to be able to vote. She stated if the early voting proposal goes through, Putnam County would be required to have two (2) voting locations because there are 62,431 voters within the County. She stated they would like to have the two (2) locations near public transportation. She stated it is her hope that it goes farther on the State level.

Chairman Sullivan requested that Commissioner Croft provide an overview of what Board of Elections does.

Commissioner Croft stated there are six (6) Towns in Putnam County, 86 election districts, and 22 polling sites. She stated election workers are trained twice per year, although New York State law requires training once per year. She stated about 450 election workers are trained for the general election. She stated election workers have a long day which begins at 5:00am and continues past 9:00pm. She stated if early voting goes through, the hours on Election Day will be shortened. She stated the

current proposal for early voting would require voting to begin 12 days before Election Day. She stated polls would have to be open at least five (5) hours on weekend days and at least eight (8) hours on weekdays, with two (2) of those days being open until 8:00pm. She continued to discuss the work done by Board of Elections. She stated voter registration is kept updated with any changes that voters submit. She stated they recently began going to high schools to register students. She stated if an individual is turning 18 anytime during the year, they can pre-register. She stated if someone's birthday falls right before Election Day, they must pre-register in order to vote in that election. She stated the Board of Elections handles all material for candidates that live within the County such as petitions, signatures, and challenges. She stated State candidates whose district may include Putnam County file their material directly to the State. She stated because of the smaller size of the County, the Board of Elections is able to go the extra mile to make sure everyone is getting the best service, including providing transportation to voters on Election Day.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated there is an issue in the Town of Philipstown where there are people willing to work the polls, but cannot get to Carmel to take the training. She stated many of these individuals are seniors who do not have access to transportation. She stated she has looked into working with the Planning Department to have a bus available; however it turned out to be very costly.

Commissioner Croft stated many poll workers carpool, which is encouraged. She stated in the past, the training was held in different locations throughout the County, however that is no longer possible because of the machines. She stated they are happy to help coordinate rides for poll workers.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated if transportation was available for the training she believes it would help to get even more workers.

Legislator Castellano questioned if the same training is held in Westchester County, or if it is a different system.

Commissioner Croft stated it is a different system. She stated she recently spoke to someone who has worked as a poll worker in both Putnam and Westchester and they said with the training and everything that goes into it, Putnam was the better place to work.

Legislator Castellano stated he worked at the polls years ago when he lived in Westchester and he remembers that they went to local municipalities.

Commissioner Croft stated she is unaware if Westchester still does that, but the new machines make it more difficult. She stated Putnam used to go to the various towns as well with the old lever machines.

Chairman Sullivan questioned who moves the machines.

Commissioner Croft stated there are two (2) drivers that transport the machines and she and Commissioner Anthony Scannapieco have transported them as well.

Legislator Sayegh stated on the first page of the annual report it states that the voter turnout for November is 42%. She questioned if this percentage was County wide.

Commissioner Croft stated yes, it is County wide. She stated the absentee ballots are missing from that statistic. She stated voter turnout is done throughout the day. She stated she believes the actual voter turnout was 49%. She believes the Constitutional Convention brought many voters out.

Legislator Albano questioned if the 42% was of the Putnam County population or of total voters.

Commissioner Croft stated the percentage is of registered voters. She stated she believes the presidential election brought out about 79% of registered voters. She stated Philipstown has a great voter turnout. She stated Carmel usually does not have as high of a turnout.

Item #5 - Approval/ Home Improvement Fees/ Pursuant to Section 135-8(A) of the Putnam County Code

Deputy County Attorney Gloria Tressler stated some fees are either new or increased and some were eliminated. She stated the outline in the backup includes a short explanation of the changes.

Legislator Addonizio questioned the increase in the two (2) year application fee from \$250.00 to \$275.00.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated the fee increased by \$25.00, but now includes as many vehicle decals as the contractor needs. She stated very few contractors need more than two (2) or three (3) decals. She stated if a replacement decal was needed, the contractor would pay \$5.00 each. She stated it is the hope of the Board that this change will improve revenue.

Director of Consumer Affairs Michael Budzinski stated about 800 renewals were done last year.

Chairman Sullivan questioned if there is currently a separate charge for each decal.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated currently only the first decal is included. She stated some items were removed from the fee schedule such as the fee for a duplicate registration for lost, destroyed, or mutilated cards. She stated this was removed because the credit card type ID cards are no longer used. She stated a denied application is now refunded in its entirety rather than the \$50.00 partial refund.

Legislator Nacerino questioned when the fee schedule was last revised.

Director Budzinski stated it has been a while.

Legislator Nacerino stated it is important for the public to be aware that revisions are not made to the fee schedules frequently.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated she believes the last revision was in 2011.

Legislator Albano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor. (*This item was tabled at the March 6, 2018 Full Legislative Meeting*)

Item #6 - Approval/ Home Improvement Civil Penalties/ Pursuant to Section 135-11(G)(4) of the Putnam County Code

Legislator Addonizio questioned why the “*contractor failing to register*” civil penalty was crossed out.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated the wording was changed. She stated this has been split into two penalties; “*found working with no registration*”, which designates contractors who have never been registered and “*found working with expired registration*”, which designates contractors who have not renewed their registration. She stated although the civil penalty is the same, the Board wanted both designations on the penalty schedule.

Legislator Sayegh questioned the removal of “*contractor failure to maintain e-verify and/or payroll documentation of workers*” found on a job site.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated e-verify is no longer in the local law.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if e-verify was a Federal Law.

Deputy County Attorney Tressler stated yes, but it is not a New York State Law.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if Federal Law supersedes State Law.

County Attorney Jennifer Bumgarner stated e-verify is currently required in the law, so taking it off of the Civil Penalty Schedule does not make sense unless the other amendments to Chapter 135 of the Code of Putnam County Entitled “Contractors” are passed. She suggested not approving this schedule until the amendment to the law itself is approved.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to table the approval of the Home Improvement Civil Penalties Pursuant to Section 135-11(G)(4) of the Putnam County Code; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #7 - Approval/ Local Law to Amend Chapter 135 of the Code of Putnam County Entitled “Contractors”

Chairman Albano made a motion to table the approval of the Local Law to amend Chapter 135 of the Code of Putnam County Entitled “Contractors”; Seconded by Chairman Sullivan. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Local Law to Amend Chapter 190 of the Code of Putnam County Entitled “Plumbing & Mechanical Trades”

- a. **Subsection 190-4 Entitled “Definitions”**
- b. **Subsection 190-6(D) Entitled “Composition of the Board”**
- c. **Subsection 190-8-a**
 - i. **(A) Entitled “Fire Protection System Contractor”**
 - ii. **(B) Entitled “Fire Protection System Inspector”**
 - iii. **(C) Entitled “Geothermal”**
 - iv. **Revised letters for following subsections**
- d. **Subsection 190-22(B)(2)(b) Entitled “Adjournments”**

Director Budzinski stated he was contacted by the regional representative for the National Fire Sprinkler Association who found some inconsistencies with some items within the Plumbing & Mechanical Trades Law regarding fire sprinklers. He stated he, the Board Secretary, and a few Board Members met with the representative to go over the inconsistencies. He stated what is reflected in these proposed changes are consistent with the National law.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #9 - Approval/ Local Law to Amend Article 5-A, Section 5-A.01, of the Putnam County Charter Entitled “Department of Planning, Development, and Public Transportation; Commissioner”

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Chairman Sullivan stated the Putnam County Charter was created in 1977 and a lot has changed within the County since that time. He stated the Commissioner of Planning, Development, & Public Transportation position requirements and the needs of the County have changed quite a bit. He stated the County is now a mature and developed community that is no longer growing like it was in the 1970’s and 1980’s. He stated Putnam does not have many areas that require new planning to the extent that it did in the past and no major new roads are planned. He stated rather, Putnam is faced with improving and rebuilding the current infrastructure and finishing a few larger projects that are underway. He stated there may be other projects that come along, but will likely fall under the purview of the towns and their planning and zoning laws. He stated he believes most major planning and development has already occurred and is behind

us. He stated the County now needs to focus on improving and rebuilding infrastructure and roads to make the most efficient use of what already exists. He stated the plan has already been put in place and now improvements are being made such as sewer and water projects, which will drive economic development. He stated now is the time for execution, which involves looking for funding sources, building private-public partnerships, and working with other municipalities in the regulatory process with agencies such as the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation), DEP (Department of Environmental Protection), and DOT (Department of Transportation) in order to put in place the infrastructure necessary to build the commercial corridors needed to drive the sales tax to continue to fund the government and the services offered. He stated for these reasons he supports the amendment of Section 5-A.01 of the Putnam County Charter.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated the Charter Review Commission will begin their review of the Charter within the next year, which is done every 10 years. She stated the Charter Review Commission could be implemented at any time and this would allow the residents of the County to decide whether this amendment is appropriate. She stated the County Charter is like our Constitution; it is what the County governs by. She stated she does not agree with changing it to fit a particular person.

Legislator Castellano stated currently, the description of the position in the Charter requires a Bachelor's Degree and eight (8) years of experience. He stated an attorney is exactly what is needed in this position so contracts can be reviewed and grants can be applied for. He stated the person in question has done an outstanding job the past couple years and has brought funding into the County, saving taxpayers money. He stated there have been grant opportunities that have gone unfulfilled over the years and progress is now being made. He stated he does not have an objection to this amendment.

Legislator Albano stated he is on the fence about this amendment. He stated it is not realistic to only make changes to the Charter every 10 years when it is reviewed. He stated there are going to be tweaks made in-between. He stated in this situation, the individual acting in the position has proven themselves through the work they have done. He restated that he is on the fence about the amendment.

Legislator Addonizio stated she believes there are many people who are under the impression that a Planning Degree is currently a requirement for the Commissioner of Planning. She stated the Charter requires a Bachelor's Degree and experience. She stated she looked into the requirements in surrounding counties and some do require a Master's Degree in Planning.

Legislator Nacerino stated she does not believe that is totally correct. She stated she supports this Charter change. She stated although the Charter is reviewed every 10 years, it does not mean action should be delayed in between. She stated the individual has been acting in this role for a couple of years now and has excelled. She stated the proposed change to the Charter is the best of both worlds because it will not box out

any particular skill set, but will embrace that of an attorney and planner. She stated this position is an appointed position by the County Executive, meaning the person can be appointed at any time and could also be removed at any time. She stated this is an important position and Putnam County is at a crossroads of change. She stated it is the responsibility of the Legislature to take action and she is supportive of this change.

Chairman Sullivan stated there are currently many ongoing projects such as the sewer projects in Southeast, Carmel, Mahopac, and Kent. He stated these are critical projects and it would not be advantageous to wait. He stated there are also infrastructure projects that will really help develop the business corridors. He stated this is not a lifetime appointment and he does not see any reason why this individual should not be able to be appointed to the position.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Charter Review Committee gathers once every 10 years to reassess the Charter, to weed out antiquated language or things that are no longer applicable, and to insert things that may be applicable moving forward. She stated she believes the Legislature is not obligated to wait a decade to make necessary changes to the Charter and it would be foolhardy to do so.

Chairman Sullivan stated the Charter was developed in 1977 and a lot has changed in the County since that time, including the requirements of the position of Commissioner of Planning, Development, and Public Transportation. He stated if something needs to be changed for the benefit of the County it is within the Legislature's authority to make a change.

Legislator Jonke stated he would like to first state that the individual in question is currently doing a great job. He stated he is on the task force for the sewer project in the Town of Southeast and they have directly benefitted through the diligent work put forth by this individual. He stated he is uncomfortable with amending the Charter for one (1) person. He stated he is a former member of the Town of Southeast Planning Board and is familiar with what planners do. He stated this change should be given careful consideration before putting it through. He stated this amendment would change the Charter for an individual and the Legislature should be careful with how it proceeds.

Legislator Addonizio requested that Personnel Director Paul Eldridge speak to the degree requirements for this position.

Director Eldridge stated the wording that currently exists in the Charter does not require a specific degree. He stated the proposed amendment also does not require a specific degree. He stated the education requirement is for a Bachelor's Degree.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she believes this amendment is being rushed. She stated the individual has been acting in the job for a few years and she is not going anywhere. She stated there is no reason to change the Charter at this time. She stated Transportation Manager Vincent Tamagna is in the audience and was on the Charter Review Commission twice and she would like to hear about the review process.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated he chaired the Charter Review Commission in 2000 and 2010. He stated they go line by line through the entire Charter. He stated he does not believe there have been any changes made to the Charter since the residency requirement for the Commissioner of Highways & Facilities was amended in 2012. He stated this change was made to allow an individual with the requisite experience outlined in the Charter to become Commissioner although he lived outside of Putnam County. He stated the Charter Review Commission is a citizen's group that works very hard going through the Charter and making recommendations. He stated before the last Charter Review Commission in 2010 there was no requirement for any degree for the Commissioner of Planning position. He stated the Commission recommended that a Bachelor's Degree be required, which is what is currently in place. He stated the review process involves the community, is healthy and transparent, and removes the political nuances. He stated you will not find a harder working person than the individual that is currently acting in the position. He stated this person does not deserve to be taken through a process that will challenge who they are and how they do what they do. He stated every Department Head and County employee works very hard every day and does a lot with a little. He stated as a former Legislator, he understands this process from both the viewpoint of the employee and Elected Official.

Chairman Sullivan stated he looked at the meeting minutes from 2016 when this amendment was first reviewed and saw that Legislator Scuccimarra was in favor of the change.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated what she has stated tonight is what she currently believes about this amendment. She stated she has every right to express her beliefs.

Legislator Albano stated he will vote to move this item out of Committee to go to the Full Legislative Meeting, but he is unsure how he will vote at the Full Meeting.

Chairman of the Recreation and Park Advisory Committee Robert Buckley stated he was involved in politics in Westchester County for about 28 years before retiring in 2012. He stated in that time, he witnessed the Westchester County Executive appoint individuals into positions who did not necessarily fit into the job qualification. He stated the County Executive's reasoning for this was that it is important to have an individual who knows how to manage and can communicate with other agencies. He stated an attorney is obviously well educated and the person in question has been in this position for some time and therefore now has some experience. He stated he understands there is a Charter Review Commission that reviews the Charter every 10 years; however the Legislature has the right to make amendments to the Charter in the meantime. He stated Director of Personnel Paul Eldridge stated earlier in the meeting that a Master's Degree in Planning is not currently required for the Commissioner position. He stated if the Legislature believes changing the Charter is the right thing to do, it is his hope that it goes through.

Legislator Castellano stated the Charter is a living document and can be amended. He stated the individual is in the position and is doing a fantastic job. He stated the current educational requirement for this position is a Bachelor's Degree and as an attorney, this person's education exceeds this requirement.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #10 - Approval/ Local Law to Amend Article 9, Section 9.02 of the Putnam County Charter Entitled "Department of Highways and Facilities: Powers and Duties"

Chairman Sullivan stated this amendment would move the administration of all programs and projects conducted by the Soil & Water Conservation District from where it currently is now, under the Department of Planning, Development, and Public Transportation to the Department of Highways & Facilities. He read from a blurb sent by Commissioner of Highways & Facilities Fred Pena about this move.

Legislator Albano made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated again, she has an issue with amending the Charter. She stated she is on the Soil & Water Board, which has five (5) members, and the Board was not apprised of this potential move. She stated the Senior Environmental Planner in the Planning Department, who also runs Soil & Water, is paid in part by the State due to her role in Soil & Water. She questioned if moving this position into another department would have an impact on her role and what she is paid. She stated she believes this is being rushed and it would be better to take time to assess if this move is the best thing to do.

Legislator Nacerino stated she recalls this being discussed when the Planning Department was moved to the office in Patterson. She stated she believed this was one of the key components of the move.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that discussion was about Transportation and Planning, not Soil & Water and Planning.

Deputy Commissioner of Highways & Facilities John Tully stated this move has not formally been discussed with the Soil & Water Board because there will not be any change to the work that is done for the Soil & Water district. He stated this is a lateral move from the Planning Department to the Highways & Facilities Department. He stated it is his belief that this move will increase efficiency and effectiveness and will be more economical. He stated each day that the Highway Department is integrated with Soil & Water they are learning more and more about what work can be improved upon. He stated the employee in charge of Soil & Water has the requisite skills to take the work being done to the next level. He stated the Highways & Facilities Department

works on environmental issues with the East of Hudson Watershed Corporation on items such as drainage and stormwater management, which relate to Soil & Water in some way. He stated he believes having Soil & Water under the Highways & Facilities Department will help do their job better and help manage some of the programs more effectively to the benefit of the bottom line of the County. He stated he took a very hard look at the reimbursement of the salary from the State. He stated he does not see a single dollar not being gained from this move. He stated in fact, he sees the potential for more performance measures being met through the support staff in the Highway Department and Soil & Water. He stated through this move, Soil & Water will be aware of more issues going on. He stated the Highway Department recently had a discussion about a seminar that Commissioner of Highways & Facilities Fred Pena attended at the Cary Institute regarding the use of salt on County roads. He stated Soil & Water will be working with the Cary Institute to try to bring the program to Putnam to help educate County staff. He stated this is one (1) example of how Soil & Water will be integrated into the daily business of Highways & Facilities.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she also took the seminar on salt at the Cary Institute a few years ago and it was very enlightening. She stated she understands that environmental issues go hand in hand with the work done through the Highway Department. She stated she is supportive of Soil & Water being under the Highway Department; however she would like to wait for the Charter Review to make this change.

Deputy Commissioner Tully stated when the change is made is the prerogative of the Legislature. He stated he has participated in the Charter Review on a couple of different levels and he does not believe there is anything being done that cannot be undone if the Charter Review Commission comes to that conclusion. He stated he will also be making the same comments he just made to the Charter Review Commission to advocate for this change.

Legislator Nacerino stated when looking at proven effectiveness and how best to collaborate on a daily basis, waiting for the Charter Review Commission to make the change seems foolhardy. She stated the Charter Review every 10 years is a collaborative look at the Charter, it is not mandated to wait until then to make an amendment. She stated the job of the Legislature, in her opinion, is to act when a change needs to be made to accomplish goals that are set forth.

Legislator Albano stated he was glad to hear the explanation of this move from Deputy Commissioner Tully.

Chairman Sullivan agreed. He stated anytime the bottom line can be benefitted and make work more efficient, it is a no-brainer in his opinion.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All on favor.

Item #11 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 18A012/ Veterans Peer to Peer Program Funding

Putnam County Veterans Service Agency Director Karl Rohde stated this is all State funding. He stated the program is very successful. He stated when this program first began they had a warm line where individuals could call during day time hours. He stated the warm line recently became a 24 hour service and there has been a considerable increase in the number of Veterans calling. He stated unless there is a very serious matter, the calls are kept confidential and the callers are anonymous. He stated this funding has been cut out of the Governor's budget for next year. He stated he went to Albany to fight for this funding to be kept in the budget. He stated the Senators and Assembly Members who represent Putnam are in favor of restoring this funding. He stated it would be important for the Legislators to send their support as well and requested that the Legislature send something to the State.

Legislator Gouldman suggested sending a letter to the State from the Legislature.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated this funding goes to many counties to help Veterans.

Director Rohde stated 13 counties currently have the Veterans Peer to Peer program. He stated if more counties have the program, his fear is that the funding will be based on population, which would mean Putnam would receive a lot less. He restated his concern with the funding being taken out of the budget and reiterated that support from the Legislature would be beneficial. He stated the peer to peer model is really the most effective.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she has worked with Program Coordinator John Bourges and other members of the Veterans Peer to Peer program in another capacity at the Topfield Equestrian Center. She stated they do such great work and the Legislature should do everything they can to keep this funding.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if there was an issue regarding this funding several years ago.

Director Rohde stated Putnam County was taken out of the funding a few years ago because he was frugal with the funding received, not realizing that if money from the State is not spent, it will be cut. He stated the unused money that would normally go back to the State was able to be kept, and Putnam was put back into the program the following year. He stated the year that happened was the same year he pursued a contract with MHA (Mental Health Association) to administer this program, which has had great success since.

Legislator Albano stated the Veterans Peer to Peer Program is great. He stated the feedback he has heard has all been very positive.

Legislator Albano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to draft a supporting resolution to restore the funding in the State budget for the Veterans Peer to Peer Program; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #12 - Approval/ Budgetary Transfer 18T020/ County Attorney/ Provide Additional Funding to the Tax Foreclosure Contract

County Attorney Bumgarner stated this contract is paid out of a budget line in the Finance Department's budget because most of the work done is for and on behalf of the Finance Department. She stated there is currently a set fee of \$30,000 for this contract. She stated the firm takes all the properties that have been in arrears for three (3) years or more and they engage in the process under Article 11 of the Real Property Tax Law by which the County forecloses on properties and takes them and then is able to turn them around and sell them either through auction or the Chapter 31 process. She stated this is a lengthy process and a lot of research is involved. She stated there is a title company and title searcher that performs all of the background work. She stated this is important because all interested parties must be notified and if someone is missed, it could cause a very big issue. She stated the process takes a very long time and once all the steps are followed, a continuance search must be completed to make sure there has not been anything else filed against the property. She stated what they are trying to do now is provide incentive to shorten this process by getting the title searcher, the Finance Department, and the attorney to commit to starting and completing one full action every year on an annual basis. She stated this will require some additional work and coordination between everyone involved. She stated they spoke to the title searcher who stated he would be able to turn them around more quickly. She stated the lawyer then had to commit to reviewing them quicker. She stated these actions need to be commenced and completed within a shorter period of time; which she has amended the contract to include. She stated the other thing the firm has agreed to do on the County's behalf is to handle all of the initial and supplemental postings, which will alleviate work for the Finance Department. She stated the biggest area where the County can realize some savings is by actually increasing the annual amount of the contract is by the firm agreeing to amend the contract so it reads that the firm will handle the standard Article 11 tax foreclosure proceedings, but also any litigation incident thereto. She stated sometimes there are properties that need to be litigated separately, which requires separate contracts to be drafted with a lawyer. She stated these separate contracts would be drafted by the firm and charged on an hourly basis in addition to the tax foreclosure contract. She stated they have now agreed to put all of that incidental litigation into the contract.

Chairman Sullivan questioned how many properties included in the sale the County has each year.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated over 100.

Chairman Sullivan stated it takes three (3) years before the process can be started. He questioned how long after the process begins does the County acquire the property.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated they are currently working on 2012 actions.

Chairman Sullivan questioned if the process always takes that long.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated the 2010 action is when the contract was put into place and there were many issues with it. She stated it took a long time to clean up and finalize those actions. She stated it should begin to speed up and it is her hope to finish 2012 and begin 2013 this year. She stated she is cautiously optimistic that this process will start to pick up over the next few years. She stated she is closely monitoring the provisions of the contract and taking a more proactive role in trying to get this process moving along.

Chairman Sullivan questioned if someone stopped paying their taxes, in three (3) years the County would begin the process, how long would it take for the County to acquire the property.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated in a perfect world, it should be about another 18 months. She stated right now, the 2012 liens are being foreclosed on which means that they have not paid their taxes in five (5) years now.

Legislator Addonizio clarified that those proceedings began in 2012.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated yes, the property owners are noticed and attempts are made to enter into payment plans. She stated many of the properties are withdrawn because they are resolved in other ways

Legislator Albano stated many times the bank will step in as well.

Legislator Castellano stated the bank will step in if there is a mortgage. He stated the County could lien the properties in the event they sell.

Chairman Sullivan questioned when the County liens the property.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated a lien is put on the property immediately.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if it has ever happened where the property is sold and the County collects the taxes.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated yes. She stated even if it is sold in a short sale the County gets it back first.

Legislator Castellano questioned if the lien collects the 9% interest as well.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated there are penalties and interest.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if the property owners stay in their homes while they have not paid taxes.

Legislator Albano stated the owner staying in the home can be a good thing because the property stays maintained.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated the great majority of the properties being discussed are vacant land and unbuildable lots.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #13 - Approval/ Appointment/ Board of Electrical Examiners/ Rossiter

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #14 - Approval/ Reappointments/ Board of Electrical Examiners/ Massaro, Morrison, & Taggart

Chairman Sullivan thanked Mr. Massaro, Mr. Morrison, & Mr. Taggart for their service to the Board of Electrical Examiners.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #15 - Approval/ Appointment/ Plumbing & Mechanical Trades Board/ Spinelli

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #16 - Approval/ Memorialization/ Urging New York State to Fully Fund Early Voting Operations

Chairman Sullivan stated Governor Cuomo announced that his budget will include \$7 million for the early voting operations. He stated if early voting becomes mandatory, this funding will allow Counties to financially sustain it.

Legislator Jonke stated he recently spoke with Assemblyman Byrne and he expressed his opposition to early voting and day-of registration.

Legislator Albano stated if early voting passes through the State, this memorialization would be in place urging the State to fund the operation.

Legislator Castellano stated his concern is that the State may fund early voting for one (1) year and then the County would be stuck funding it moving forward. He stated the process to vote is very simple. He stated votes can be cast on Election Day, or an absentee ballot can be sent in if an individual is not available on Election Day. He questioned why Putnam County would need early voting. He stated this is a slippery slope.

Legislator Albano stated the amount provided to Putnam County may not even cover the entire cost of the early voting operations.

Legislator Jonke stated \$7 million statewide does not sound like a lot.

Chairman Sullivan stated at the NSYAC Conference in January he was told the cost of early voting statewide would be \$6.4 million. He stated he agreed with Legislator Castellano.

Legislator Scuccimarra suggested waiting on this memorialization to discuss it further.

Chairman Sullivan stated this memorialization came to the Legislature from the Commissioner of the Board of Elections and he has requested that it be passed.

Legislator Castellano restated his concern that the funding will not continue past the first year. He stated he has voted every year since turning 18 and it is not hard.

Chairman Sullivan stated 37 states currently allow some form of early voting. He stated New York is one of 13 states that does not have early voting and requires an excuse to obtain an absentee ballot.

Legislator Jonke stated the only excuse needed to obtain an absentee ballot is that you will not be in the County on Election Day.

Director Rohde stated he had to wait until he was 21 to vote and his first vote was cast while he was in Vietnam. He stated it is his opinion that there is no need for early voting.

Legislator Nacerino stated there are two (2) different conversations being had here. She stated although some may not be in favor of early voting, if it is to be imposed, the County would like the State to provide funding for it. She suggested sending a letter along with the memorialization expressing the County's opposition to early voting, but should it pass and be imposed upon the County, Putnam expects that the necessary resources would come from the State.

Chairman Sullivan stated he shared Legislator Castellano's concern about State funding past the first year. He stated he believes allowing early voting is not a bad thing, however he is concerned with the funding aspect of it.

Legislator Castellano stated Commissioner Croft stated earlier in the meeting that Putnam County would be required to have two (2) voting locations, one on each side of the County. He stated the County would be renting those locations and would need to pay the workers. He stated he does not believe \$7 million state wide will cover this cost.

Chairman Sullivan read the following information from the resolution proposed by NYSAC. He stated early voting would begin 12 days prior to all special, primary, and general elections. He stated automatic voter registration would be implemented upon application or renewal of driver's license or ID card and the individual must opt out if they choose not to register to vote. He stated this would also allow individuals to register and vote on the same day.

Legislator Albano questioned if there is enough demand for this in Putnam County.

Legislator Castellano stated he does not believe it will be heavily utilized in Putnam.

Chairman Sullivan suggested tabling this memorialization to collect more information.

Legislator Addonizio stated many times, information about candidates comes out right up until Election Day, sometimes altering the opinion of the voter. She stated if an individual casted their vote early, they were unable to take into consideration all of the information.

Legislator Castellano stated Legislator Addonizio has a very good point. He stated everybody should be voting on the same issues on the same day.

Legislator Addonizio stated a lot can happen in 12 days.

Legislator Nacerino stated her concern is that with early voting, Election Day would have no relevance anymore.

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to table the Memorialization/ Urging New York State to Fully Fund Early Voting Operations; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #17 - Discussion/ Naming of County's Portion of the Lahey Pavilion

Chairman Sullivan made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she was contacted by the developer because he wants to put a sign out on the street detailing what is in the Lahey Pavilion, therefore he needs to know what the center will be called. She stated she had a few options in mind; however a letter was received today from the County Executive who requested input from the Town of Philipstown and the seniors in Philipstown.

Legislator Addonizio suggested keeping Butterfield in the name.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated her suggestion would be the *Julia L. Butterfield Senior/Community Center*.

Legislator Addonizio stated she is in favor of that name.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she would like to request that the County Executive send a similar letter to the Village of Cold Spring requesting their input as well.

Chairman Sullivan stated it was nice of County Executive Odell to include the Town of Philipstown in the decision making process.

Legislator Scuccimarra agreed and stated it is important that the Village be included as well.

Chairman Sullivan agreed.

Item #18 - Discussion/ Designation of Official Newspapers in Putnam County

Chairman Sullivan stated the Legislature received letters from newspapers requesting consideration for their designation as Official Newspapers in Putnam County. He stated as it reads in the Charter, the Legislature is required to name at least one (1) newspaper and not more than three (3) newspapers. He stated when the letters were received the County already had three (3) Official Newspapers. He stated to amend the Charter to allow another Official Newspaper could result in a substantial cost to the County and he believes the existing newspapers are providing appropriate coverage.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated one of the newspapers that requested to be considered did not have the required distribution.

Legislator Albano stated the newspapers can all apply and the Legislature will review each one as long as there is enough time to do so.

Legislator Addonizio stated the cost must be considered as well.

Legislator Albano stated as long as the Charter is not amended and there are still no more than three (3) newspapers, the Legislature can consider all applications that are received and choose the three (3) best for the County.

County Attorney Bumgarner suggested speaking with Director of Purchasing Alex Mazzotta because he could put out a request for quotes, which would provide specific fee schedules from each newspaper.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated there are no problems with the current three (3) Official Newspapers within the County.

Legislator Nacerino stated there is a specific criterion the newspapers must meet. She stated she believes three (3) Official Newspapers of the County is sufficient.

Legislator Albano stated the Legislature should look into all the options. He stated the current newspapers are working out well.

Chairman Sullivan questioned how the request for quotes would be done.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated the request for quotes is more informal than an RFP (request for proposal). She stated information regarding the specific service would be put together along with how the fees would be broken down. She stated in this situation, the Purchasing Department would contact everyone directly as well as post it on the website.

Legislator Castellano stated competition is always good.

Item #19 - Update/ Veterans' Service Medal Advisory Panel

Chairman Sullivan stated as per resolution #254 of 2017 the Veterans' Service Medal Advisory Panel is required to report to the Rules Committee on a monthly basis.

Legislator Castellano stated there are currently seven (7) members on the Panel, three (3) of whom are Veterans. He stated they have had two (2) meetings and have established an outline of what they would like to do and the next step is to look into funding. He stated they have planned a Breakfast Fundraiser on March 10, 2018 at the VFW in Carmel. He stated the cost of the breakfast is a \$15 suggested donation. He stated sponsorship is also available. He stated they launched a Facebook page, *The Putnam County Veterans' Medal*, this week that is gaining popularity by the day. He stated this is an exciting Panel to be a part of. He stated honoring Putnam County Veterans going back to WWII is such a fantastic thing. He stated they have contacted at least four (4) companies that create medals and are currently waiting for solid proposals from them. He stated they received one solid proposal from a local Putnam County artist. He stated in 1919 when this medal was originally given out, the front showed a Native American, however it is unknown who he is. He stated the image of the Native American seems to be representative of someone who would have been from Florida. He stated the artist has a better rendition of what a Native American from this area would look like.

Director Rohde stated the meetings have been great and many ideas have been discussed. He stated he likes that the original medal is being used. He stated this medal will be available to all Veterans, no matter where they served. He stated he has received feedback from some Veterans who have expressed that they would like to see this money spent elsewhere within the Veterans Community. He stated he responded

to this feedback by explaining that there are different “colors of money.” He stated this is not money that would be spent somewhere else. He stated another decision was made to have Veterans self-identify and apply for the medal. He stated this way, the Panel does not put themselves in the position of possibly missing anyone. He stated advertising will be done to notify the community that this is being done.

Legislator Castellano stated one qualification to receive the medal is that the individual must be a Putnam County resident of at least one (1) year. He stated they utilized the same qualification as the Do Me a Favor program that is run out of the County Clerk’s office. He stated they are trying to be very inclusive. He stated anyone who has served as put their life on the line for the residents. He stated this will spotlight Veterans who really deserve recognition and our thanks.

Legislator Nacerino stated County Clerk Michael Bartolotti is helping the Panel by creating the application form. She stated this is really to bestow an honor on the Veterans. She stated the Panel strongly believes that our Veterans deserve this recognition and honor.

Chairman Sullivan stated March 10, 2018 at 9:00am is the Breakfast fundraiser at the Carmel VFW.

Item #20 - FYI/ Litigation Report

Chairman Sullivan questioned if there is anything on the report the Legislature should be especially aware of.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated there are one (1) or two (2) older cases going through the Federal Court system that are concerning. She stated the annual report recently submitted includes a full litigation report.

Item #21 - Other Business - None

Item #22 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 8:34pm Chairman Sullivan made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Beth Green.