

PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Held via Audio Webinar Pursuant to Temporary Emergency Orders

Members: Chairman Jonke & Legislators Nacerino & Sullivan

Tuesday

6:51PM

July 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:51PM by Chairman Jonke who requested Legislator Albano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Nacerino, Sullivan and Chairman Jonke were present.

Item #3 - Approval/ Protective Services Committee Meeting Minutes/ June 9, 2020

Chairman Jonke stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/ FY2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)/ Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton

Chairman Jonke stated Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Lipton was on the call to speak to this request for approval.

Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton stated this is a Supplemental Grant. He stated there needs to be a correction to the title it is an “Emergency Management Performance Grant COVID-19 Supplemental (EMPG-S)”. He stated that the grant is issued by Homeland Security. He stated the funding is to go towards the County’s cost related to response to COVID-19. He stated the County has been granted \$21,798.

Chairman Jonke requested confirmation there is a 50% County match.

Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton stated that is correct. He stated the EMPG-S funding will be put towards salaries in the Bureau of Emergency Services.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is happy to hear that the County has been awarded this grant funding to supplement the costs to the County.

Legislator Montgomery requested an example of what supplementing salaries looks like.

Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton stated it will offset his salary; the \$21,798 will be applied against his salary.

Legislator Montgomery requested confirmation that this is not a stipend, the funding will in fact be used to pay the Deputy Commissioner of Bureau of Emergency Services existing salary.

Deputy Commissioner Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton stated that is correct.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there will be any money left over that can be put towards such as, planning, development, information sharing and the logistics in the supply chain management. She stated she is looking forward to what is to come with the County's COVID-19 response. She stated there were some issues with the supplies of masks, logistics of sharing the purchase with other Counties and the development and distribution of different management plans. She questioned if any of this grant funding will be used to develop new plans and improve on the current plans.

Chairman Jonke stated he believes Deputy Commissioner Lipton addressed what this is. He stated it is a grant that has been awarded to the County, it will offset a portion of his salary and that is it.

Legislator Montgomery stated then the funding will not be used for what it is called for in addition to the salary component. She stated she believes this County desperately needs improvement in the its response plans, which is what this grant funding is for as well.

Legislator Nacerino stated she does want to point out that the County received a letter from Homeland Security and Emergency Services that the grant was awarded to Putnam County. She stated that indicates that all requirements were met. She stated using the funding towards salaries is a common practice, she saw it done many times in the school districts as well. She stated it is an acceptable expenditure under Homeland Security and Emergency Services' guidelines.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to approve, with the corrected title, FY2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant COVID-19 Supplemental (EMPGS); Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item#5 - Other Business

Chairman Jonke made a motion to waive the Rules and Accept the Other Business; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

- **Discuss/Approval/ NYSAC Proposed Legislation – Grant Local Authority to Establish Appropriate Staffing Ratios in County Correctional Facilities/ County Executive Odell**

Chairman Jonke stated this is a bill drafted by the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC). He stated it is a resolution in support of local control over staffing of our County Jail.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if a comment has been received from Sheriff Langley.

Chairman Jonke stated there is no direct comment from Sheriff Langley. He stated however at past Protective Services Meetings there have been discussions with the Sheriff about reviewing the staffing in the Jail. He stated that he would imagine the Sheriff would be in favor of this.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if Undersheriff Cheverko has been spoken to about this proposal.

Chairman Jonke stated he has not spoken to Undersheriff Cheverko about this matter.

Legislator Montgomery stated she believes given the number of years of experience the Sheriff and Undersheriff have in working with the Jail, it would be good to receive a formal comment from them before the Legislature considers submitting it.

Chairman Jonke stated he agrees. He stated between now and the Full Legislature Meeting on August 4th he will have that discussion with the Sheriff and Undersheriff. He stated he would like to move forward with this tonight.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Sheriff and the Undersheriff have been apprised about the concerns related to the staffing ratio in the jail. She stated she does believe they offered a response, during one of the previous discussions at a Protectives Services Meeting. She stated that she recalls them informing the Legislators that the staffing ratio is not within their authority, it is dictated by the State. She stated she believes if there is an ability to strike a balance, they would be acceptable to that.

Chairman Jonke stated he will reach out to the Sheriff and Undersheriff this week and get their comments. He stated as a result of prior discussions with them, they have reached out to the State to discuss the staffing of the jail. He stated this request is that the State put the control into the Sheriff's and Undersheriff's hands. He stated he cannot imagine that they would be opposed to it, but he will request that they offer a comment, and he will make that request this week.

Legislator Sullivan stated he would like to point out this matter is coming from the Presidents of NYSAC, which he obviously must have received input regarding this matter from many of the Counties throughout the State. He stated they are having the same discussions and asking the same questions we are "can the Counties have the ability to manage the staffing in their Jails as they see fit, with both the fiscal responsibilities and Personnel responsibilities being met". He stated the times he has attended NYSAC meetings, this topic has been a point of discussion. He stated the concern is that the Jails are operating with half capacity, and possibly even below that. He stated yet the cost of running the Jail has not come down. He stated any person running a business or any other entity cannot sustain that model for long, keeping the expenses at the same level while revenues have fallen by more than half. He stated he believes this to be a very good step and is happy that NYSAC is out in front of it and trying to help their fellow County members out.

Legislator Nacerino stated when the topic was discussed with the Sheriff, she does not think he was opposed to this concept. She stated he merely cited it was out of his control at that particular time to make those decisions. She stated this will lend the ability to assess within our own County.

Legislator Montgomery stated she will rephrase her first comment. She questioned if the Sheriff has been given a copy of this proposed resolution that is being put to a vote.

Chairman Jonke stated his motion is going to be for a resolution to support the NYSAC bill. He stated Legislative Counsel will draft a resolution between now and the August 4th Full Meeting if this is approved out of Committee this evening.

Legislator Montgomery stated the Sheriff is not on the NYSAC radar. She stated she will make sure the Sheriff and Undersheriff get a copy and provide their comment.

Chairman Jonke stated he just about 5 minutes ago said he will reach out to the Sheriff this week, inform him of this and get his opinion.

Legislator Albano stated based on the county jail population reduction of 44%, across the State, from this time last year (*as reported by the Division of Criminal Justice Services*) this is a common sense approach to request the authority to make the decision to reduce staffing when it is appropriate. He stated he does not see that anyone would be opposed to that if it is possible.

Legislator Nacerino stated what is in front of this committee is a proposal for this Legislature to show support for this proposal.

Legislator Sayegh stated she supports anytime the decision power can be transferred from the State to those who are in the trenches. She stated this is a perfect example of such an opportunity. She stated she believes the staffing decisions for the Jail should be made by the Sheriff, not the State of New York. She stated she believes it to be important to have all these decisions to be in the hands of those who are the decision makers and present day to day. She stated she believes this is an important resolution and she would like to see it passed.

Chairman Jonke stated a proposed resolution will be drafted by Legislative Counsel for consideration of the Full Legislature at the August 4, 2020 meeting.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to approve to send a resolution in support of legislation as proposed by NYSAC to amend State Law to allow local control and flexibility in staffing the County Jail; Seconded by Legislator Sullivan All in favor.

Chairman Jonke requested a Roll Call Vote:

Legislator Nacerino- Aye

Legislator Sullivan- Aye

Chairman Jonke- Aye

Motion Carries.

Item #6 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:05PM Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Diane Trabulsy.