

**AUDIT & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Held via Audio Webinar Pursuant to Temporary Emergency Orders**

**Members: Chairman Castellano, Legislators Gouldman & Sayegh**

**Monday**

**March 30, 2020**

The meeting was called to order via audio webinar at 7:42pm by Chairman Castellano who lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Committee Members Gouldman, Sayegh & Chairman Castellano were present. Also present via audio webinar were Legislators Montgomery, Addonizio, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, and Sullivan as well as Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo.

**Item #3 - Correspondence/County Auditor (Attached for Information Only)**

- a. **Sales Tax Report** – Duly Noted
- b. **Board In Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- c. **Transfer/Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- d. **2020 Contingency/Sub-Contingency Report** – Duly Noted

**Item #4 - Correspondence/Commissioner of Finance**

- a. **Overtime/Temporary Report (Attached for Information Only)** – Duly Noted
  
- b. **Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 20A008/ District Attorney/ Use of Forfeited Asset Reserve Funds to Enter into a Partnership Initiative (Also reviewed in Protective)**

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman.

Legislator Gouldman stated Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) are a great tool for law enforcement to use and he is very supportive of this. He stated these are vital in today's world and Cold Spring deserves this equipment.

Legislator Sayegh agreed that ALPRs are a great law enforcement tool. She stated she understands some other towns are already utilizing these ALPRs. She stated it is the responsibility of the County to have sound legislation in regards to a policy and she is glad that is being considered. She stated at this point, she is in favor of this transfer.

Chairman Castellano stated he is in favor of this as well. He thanked the District Attorney's Office for providing the funds for this purpose.

Legislator Nacerino stated comprehensive discussions have ensued over the last several months in the Protective Services Committee. She stated it is certainly advantageous for Law Enforcement to have this valuable tool.

Legislator Jonke stated the Village of Cold Spring has been patient and this is a great initiative by the District Attorney's Office.

Legislator Sullivan stated after the March 10, 2020 Protective Services Committee Meeting a memorandum was sent to the Sheriff's Department detailing certain things to be included in the ALPR policy. He clarified that this fund transfer is subject to that policy being in place and enforced.

Chairman Castellano stated yes, that is his understanding. He stated purchasing and installing the equipment may take some time, therefore hopefully the policy will be ready once the equipment is ready.

Legislator Sullivan stated ALPRs are good tools that are necessary for law enforcement. He stated it is important to have the policy in place.

By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**c. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 20A011/ Dept. of Social Services/ Funds Awarded to Child Advocacy Center in Accordance with a Cooperative Agreement with National Children's Alliance for Period January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020 (Forwarded due to Health Committee Mtg. Cancellation)**

Commissioner of the Department of Social Services Michael Piazza stated this is a grant that was applied for to restore some of the personnel hours that were reduced in the Safe Harbour Program as a result of a previous State grant expiring in October. He stated the personnel hours will be used for outreach.

Legislator Sayegh stated this grant requires no County match.

Legislator Montgomery stated the Health, Social, Educational, & Environmental Committee (Health Committee) Meeting was cancelled this month, therefore this budgetary amendment is being addressed under the Audit & Administration Committee Meeting. She stated during this time while the County is operating under the emergency order, the Legislature is addressing time sensitive and essential items, however she requested items pertaining to the COVID-19 outbreak be addressed by the Health Committee. She stated she is in favor of supporting this item and the Department of Social Services does amazing work. She stated the Health Committee needs to meet and this item should have been addressed there.

Legislator Addonizio clarified that this grant is to restore Safe Harbour outreach in relation to human trafficking.

Commissioner Piazza stated yes, this is for outreach and adds to the hours at Safe Harbour that were reduced when the previous grant expired. He stated as discussed in

the budget process, when the State grants expire the personnel hours expire as well. He stated this will add back a lot of the work that was being done.

Legislator Addonizio stated the Safe Harbour Program is very important for the community.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is an essential program.

Legislator Jonke thanked Commissioner Piazza for his hard work in moving this forward. He stated as far as this item being addressed in the Health Committee, he does not see the relevance. He stated a detailed memorandum addressing why and how items should be entertained was sent.

Legislator Sayegh stated she would like to respond to Legislator Montgomery's comments. She stated as Chairwoman of the Health Committee she sent a detailed memorandum about why the Health Committee Meeting was cancelled. She stated at that time there was no way to meet unless the mandatory emergency order was disregarded. She stated now that the Legislature has approved a way to meet, these items can be considered. She stated also, the agenda did not have any necessary items at that time.

Chairman Castellano stated the Audit & Administration Committee can address items that may have been missed by their regular Committee earlier in the month. He stated he is thankful that Putnam County put this system together that allows the Legislature to operate remotely. He stated the sooner we can get back to our normal way of business the better.

Legislator Addonizio stated due to the New York State Executive Order, the County needed a policy in place per the Open Meetings Law, which is why the Health Committee was cancelled.

Legislator Nacerino stated even at best, if this item was first addressed by the Health Committee, it would still be included on the Audit & Administration Committee Meeting agenda tonight.

Legislator Montgomery stated the Health Committee Meeting could have been rescheduled to have been held tonight.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #5 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 20T057/ Sheriff's Dept./ Replace 13 Expiring Body Armor**

Legislator Gouldman stated it is important to supply law enforcement with the proper equipment.

Legislator Sayegh agreed.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 20T057 resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #6 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 20T060/ Sheriff's Dept./ Emergency Purchase of 24 Full Face Respirator Kits & 12 Filter Protection Systems for Masks due to COVID-19 Pandemic**

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 20T060; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman.

Legislator Gouldman questioned how long it will take to receive this equipment. He also questioned if this equipment is transferrable between deputies or if it is for individual deputies.

Chairman Castellano stated he does not know and questioned if anyone on the audio conference had an answer.

Legislator Gouldman stated that information can be collected later.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if this equipment was for the Correctional Facility. She stated correctional facilities could be COVID-19 hotspots and she hopes that the Corrections Officers in Putnam County are being protected.

Chairman Castellano stated where the equipment will be distributed is up to the Sheriff.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would like to point out that this is the only COVID-19 related item on any of the meetings that have been held since the emergency order has been in place. She stated she would like to see resolutions included on the agendas to send to the State demanding more test kits and resources for Putnam County. She stated this is what she hoped to see on the Health Committee Meeting agenda if it could have been rescheduled after being cancelled.

Legislator Addonizio stated all of New York State is experiencing a shortage of necessary equipment. She stated the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services is aware of this and has sent an order in to the State so they know that Putnam is in desperate need.

Legislator Nacerino agreed with Legislator Addonizio. She stated this approval is for 24 full face respirator kits and 12 filter protection systems for masks, which is obviously not enough to fulfill the need of every officer. She stated she is optimistic that this order will be received in a short period of time.

By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #7 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 20T062/ Personnel/ Provide for Funding for the 2020 Salary and Benefit Costs Pursuant to the Ratified Contract Settlement between Putnam County and Putnam County Sheriff's Dept. PBA (Also reviewed in Personnel)**

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh.

Legislator Sayegh stated she is happy that this contract has been settled and thanked everyone involved for their hard work.

Legislator Gouldman stated he believes this is a good contract for both the members of the Sheriff's Department PBA as well as the taxpayers of Putnam County.

Legislator Montgomery stated she is relieved this is moving forward and she thanked everyone involved for their work to bring everyone together on this.

Legislator Addonizio stated she is happy that an agreement has been reached.

Legislator Nacerino stated thanked Commissioner of Finance William Carlin for his foresight and planning this expenditure by including it in the 2020 budget, so the funds were already there.

Legislator Albano stated he is glad to be finalizing this; it is beneficial to all.

Legislator Jonke stated this is a win for the taxpayers of Putnam County and he is glad to be finishing this.

By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #8 - Approval/ Bureau of Emergency Services/ FY2020 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) Grant**

Legislator Nacerino stated it is always prudent to seize the opportunity for grant money.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #9 - Approval/ Grant Application/ Office for Senior Resources/ Field Hall Grant Foundation/ Caregiver Respite Grant (Forwarded due to Health Committee Mtg. Cancellation)**

Director of the Office for Senior Resources Michael Cunningham stated the Field Hall Foundation provides grants to not-for-profit organizations and governmental agencies in

the area of Westchester and Putnam counties. He stated they recently sent out a request for soft proposals on items that would benefit the population. He stated they are focusing on a \$15,000 grant for respite care. He stated one of their key services is support to caregivers. He stated Field Hall indicated that they would welcome a formal proposal on the concept and initially there was a due date of March 31<sup>st</sup> however that has been delayed into April as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. He stated the idea of the grant is to provide respite to caregivers in the form of the support of an aid to 30 caregiver families, which comes out to about \$500 per family and enables the Office for Senior Resources to provide about 20 hours of caregiver support. He stated this allows family members time to take a break or run necessary errands while an aid would stay at the home with the family member in need. He stated through this grant, they have the opportunity to establish a solid program for the year. He stated the due date for this grant is now in April and it is part of their summer grant program. He stated they are hoping to have a successful award sometime this summer.

Chairman Castellano thanked Director Cunningham for his work on this and stated this is a great opportunity for Putnam County.

Legislator Sayegh stated the Field Hall Foundation is a great organization. She stated as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak she is sure the caregivers are taxed, and it will be great to be able to provide some respite care. She stated this grant has no County match.

Director Cunningham stated that is correct, this is 100% funded through the grant.

Legislator Montgomery stated she will be happy to support this. She stated she had a constituent who is a senior citizen approach her a few months ago about her concern for her family members as she ages and if there are resources for them. She stated she had the foresight to prepare for her future and it was great to see that she was concerned about those who will be caring for her.

Legislator Addonizio stated this is a wonderful program. She questioned if the caregiver would be able to be a family member.

Director Cunningham stated yes, they would contract with an aid service to provide respite for a family member who is caring for another.

Legislator Jonke thanked Director Cunningham.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #10 - Approval/ Resolution Calling on Members of the NYS Senate & Assembly to Reject Governor's SFY 2020-21 Executive Budget Proposal and Shift 100% of the Cost of 730.20 Competency Restoration Services to the County Mental Health Commissioners (Forwarded due to Health Committee Mtg. Cancellation)**

Commissioner Piazza stated he is requesting that the Legislature pass this resolution urging our State Representatives to reject the Governor's budget. He stated the Governor changed the status of the payment of the 730.20 restorations. He stated 730.20 restorations are made when someone has committed a crime and the judge believes or the defense attorney requests, that an evaluation be done, which would be paid for by the County. He stated if in the course of the evaluation, it is determined that the individual cannot aid in their own defense, the judge can order that person into the custody of the State Commissioner of Mental Health. He stated when that happens the individual is sent to a State forensic hospital; one is in Oneida County and the other is in Orange County. He stated the patient/inmate is kept there at the cost of about \$1,000 per day until they are restored to competency. He stated this means their mental health issues are abated and they can aid in their defense. He stated the cost of this is split 50/50 between the State and the County. He stated Governor Cuomo has arbitrarily through the budget told the counties that they are responsible for 100% of this cost. He stated in 2018, 50% of cost of the restorations cost Putnam County just under \$300,000, meaning if the Governor's proposal has been in effect that year Putnam County would have paid \$600,000 out of local tax. He stated 2019 was much lower and the County paid \$62,000, however if this proposal was in effect the County would have had to pay \$124,000. He stated having to pay 100% of this cost would blow their budget. He stated therefore, they are asking that the Legislature pass this resolution to make clear that the arbitrary budget submitted by the Governor is not acceptable. He stated there is no reason the counties should be assuming 100% of this cost; it is a unified court system and the decision is being made by State judges in State supervised courts.

Chairman Castellano thanked Commissioner Piazza for his insight on this. He stated he believes the 50/50 split is fair and he hopes the State will agree and provide some relief on this.

Legislator Sayegh stated she is fully in support of moving this resolution forward. She stated this would blow our budget and goes back to the Medicaid process in New York State. She stated the State is passing along their budget woes down to the County. She stated it is only fair to split this cost 50/50.

Legislator Montgomery thanked Commissioner Piazza for the clear explanation of what this means. She stated we have to do everything we can to protect what the County has.

Legislator Addonizio agreed and stated it is important to move this resolution forward. She stated it is outrageous to shift the entire cost to the counties.

Legislator Nacerino stated she supports moving this forward. She stated this would become another unfunded mandate and put additional burden on the County's budget. She stated she hopes Governor Cuomo takes this seriously and it does not fall on deaf ears.

Legislator Jonke thanked Commissioner Piazza for working to save the taxpayers money.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #11 - Other Business**

**a. Approval/ Declaring Findings of the County with Respect to Proposals Received for Financing of the County's Energy Performance Contract with Ameresco, Inc., and Making Certain Other Determinations in Connection Therewith**

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

Commissioner Carlin stated they got this out as soon as possible, the bids had to be back in by March 27<sup>th</sup>. He stated considering the credit market earlier in the week they were afraid no bids would be received but two (2) did come in. He stated the rates were 3.25% and the winning one was 2.799%. He stated they are hoping to close the deal on April 15<sup>th</sup>. He stated they would like to move forward with the Article 9 and the debt service will be paid by the energy savings.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman.

Legislator Sayegh requested additional backup on this. She stated the Article 9 is important and goes hand in hand with the County's Climate Smart Initiative. She stated it provides taxpayers with savings through energy efficiency. She stated the interest rate is great at this point in time. She stated she is supportive of moving this forward but would like to see some backup on it.

Commissioner Carlin questioned what material Legislator Sayegh is looking for. He stated he could send the information on the bids that came in.

Legislator Sullivan stated this is a big project where millions of dollars will be spent to upgrade County facilities and make them energy efficient. He stated this is a great thing.

By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.



**b. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 20A017/ Bureau of Emergency Services/ Grant Award through FY 2019 Homeland Security Program Funding**

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

Commissioner Carlin stated this is the 2019 grant that the County was just awarded and will be spent in accordance with the budget they have created.

Legislator Sayegh questioned how much the grant award is and what the purpose of the grant is.

Commissioner Carlin stated the grant award is \$274,920. He stated he will send the specific budget items to the Legislature.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if this is the Homeland Security Preparedness Grant.

Commissioner Carlin stated this is the annual SHSP (State Homeland Security Program) Grant.

Legislator Montgomery stated she is in favor of this. She stated especially with what we are currently experiencing, the County can use even more of these grants. She stated since 9/11 the Federal Government has invested millions in preparedness grants and anything we can do to be better prepared should be taken advantage of. She stated this is an added agenda item that does not pertain to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is in favor of securing funding for this purpose. She stated she would like more clarification and explanation.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. By Roll Call Vote of the Committee: All Ayes. Motion Carries.

**Item #12 - Adjournment**

There being no further business at 8:42pm, Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Beth Green.