

important to look into how the money is being spent and the justification of having a full-time director position. She stated she believes the hiring process should be investigated as well. She stated she does not believe it is fair to have a marketing agency paid by taxes not support the private corporations. She stated she would like to limit government interference on the economy.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like the remaining \$27,391.21 be removed from the County Contribution (25641000 54950) line.

Acting Director Smith stated the Visitor's Bureau still has the rest of the \$27,391.21 from the I Love New York Grant. He stated if the Agency does not using the remaining money they will receive lower funding from the State. He stated there are still are outstanding debts that need to be paid.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the anticipated ending balance for the matching funds account would be.

Acting Director Smith stated it should be zero.

Legislator LoBue questioned how much the radio advertisement on the radio station cost.

Acting Director Smith stated the Visitor's Bureau has had many radio advertisements. He stated the largest radio advertisement cost would be from CBS and it came to \$17,000; which was paid through matching funds. He stated he believes the success from advertisements is reflected in the attendance of the events, such as the Eggstravaganza.

Legislator LoBue stated the Legislature is in a tough position with the 2016 Budget. She stated the Legislature needs to look at ways to cut the Budget and make sure all the allocated funding is used wisely. She stated she would like to see how many people have attended the events based on advertising dollars spent.

Acting Director Smith stated it is important to consider there are some matters that are more difficult to quantify; people who come up from New York City and have lunch in the County or use the gas stations in the County.

Legislator LoBue stated she is not impressed with the Visitor's Bureau's website. She stated things are not updated in a timely manner and she believes that the website presents the public with a bad first impression of the County.

Legislator Gross stated the mission of the tourism is to help every and any industry in the County.

Ms. Valentine stated not every business benefits equally.

Legislator Gross stated the County would contribute \$214,139 to the Visitor's Bureau.

Acting Director Smith stated that total Legislator Gross referenced includes matching funds from the State.

Legislator Gross stated perhaps the Legislature should reduce that Putnam County contribution and have the Putnam County Chambers of Commerce (“Chamber”) be more involved with some of the Visitor’s Bureau’s tasks. He stated the Legislature has to discuss many different matters that have exponential costs.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated it is important to remember the County is a tourist destination. She stated the Visitor’s Bureau does more things than just advertisements. She stated they promote Main Street in the Village of Cold Spring, local businesses, and much more.

Acting Director Smith stated the local newspaper illustrated the success of the Columbus Day Parade, which the Visitor’s Bureau sponsored. He stated the Visitor’s Bureau helps with many projects that sometimes are not visible to the public, such as the installation of Christmas lights.

Legislator LoBue stated the events that were listed have been done at a fraction of the cost in the past. She stated some of the spending is unnecessary such as a consultant for the bike race when that should be the Director of Tourism’s job.

Legislator Gross questioned if the Visitor’s Bureau is involved with the Chamber and if it is an aggressive relationship.

Acting Director Smith stated yes, he stays in close contact with the Chamber. He stated there is also a close relationship with the Hudson Valley Region. He stated the Visitor’s Bureau is a member of the Hudson Valley Regional Tourism who runs aggressive campaigns. He stated he believes that tourism is a booming industry throughout the State. He stated this budget is not too large, especially with the contribution that comes from the State. He stated he would like for the budget to remain the same.

Legislator Gross stated he would like for the private industries to feel more represented. He stated as a County Government, we strive to represent everyone.

Legislator Nacerino stated she believes the Chamber does a good job in communicating and collaborating with businesses. She stated we, as a County, pride ourselves on its quality of life. She stated the County has a good quality of life due to the efforts of tourism and the County has so much more potential. She would like to keep the budget the way it is for the Visitor’s Bureau.

Legislator Scuccimarra concurred with Legislator Nacerino.

Legislator Albano stated he also supports keeping the proposed budget for the Visitor’s Bureau. He stated the activities sponsored or organized by the Visitor’s Bureau positively affects our sales tax.

Legislator Gross stated he recommends cutting the Visitor’s Bureau funding to \$200,000.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if \$14,000 was removed from the County Contribution (25641000 54950) line, due to the matching grant \$28,000 would actually be removed.

Acting Director Smith stated the impact would depend on what line the funding would be cut from. He stated if it would be taken out of the operating budget, it would come out of the monthly check they receive. He stated the State dictates what the Agency will receive and then the County matches their offer. He stated every dollar is utilized in ways that are positive for the County.

County Auditor Michele Alfano-Sharkey stated as Acting Director Smith mentioned, the State awards the Visitor's Bureau with a match and the County usually has to match the funding awarded in order for them to receive their funds. She stated if the County does not match the awarded funding the Visitor's Bureau will have to give the funding back to the State.

Acting Director Smith stated there are tight regulations the Visitor's Bureau has to abide by, especially with the quarterly reports. He stated every item that is listed in the matching funds needs to be approved by the State. He stated the matching funds need to be used outside the County.

Chairman Gouldman stated he believes that tourism is a big part of the community and he would like to keep the budget the way it is. He stated tourism will help bring people to the western side of the County which would benefit businesses in the area.

Legislator Addonizio stated the Legislature is faced with a very tough budget this year. She stated she is not discrediting the Visitor's Bureau but the budget needs to be looked more closely into.

Acting Director Smith stated the Visitor's Bureau does many projects and advertising for the County, such as all of the advertising for the Veterans' Wall Event. He stated he would appreciate if his budget would not be cut. He stated he believes \$214,139 is a very modest budget for the Visitor's Bureau.

Legislator Gross questioned what the leased transportation (25641000 54678) line used for.

Acting Director Smith stated it is funding the ability to use transportation for tourism related events.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like the statistics of who utilizes the transportation to measure the success of the buses and the trollies. She stated it costs between \$300 and \$500 for one (1) trolley trip.

Acting Director Smith stated that expenditure is out of the Transportation Department.

Chairman Gouldman stated out of the \$214,139 the County contributes \$141,996 to the Visitor's Bureau's Budget.

Acting Director Smith stated the Transportation Department controls the trolley system. He stated the Visitor's Bureau can use the trolley system for their events.

Legislator LoBue stated the Visitor's Bureau does not have the authority to use County Transportation at their discretion. She stated there were trolley services for the Veterans' Wall

and only one (1) person utilized the service. She requested the documentation of the events where the Visitor's Bureau requested permission and utilized the County transportation system and the total passenger ridership for each event and cost incurred for to the County.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin stated a few years ago, the Legislature put the money in the leased transportation line to keep a separate recording of transportation services used for the Visitor's Bureau events.

Legislator LoBue questioned how much was spent out of the \$10,000 in the leased transportation budget line.

Acting Director Smith stated not a lot of the allocated money was spent.

Commissioner Carlin stated that funding can be taken out; however if there is no funding in that line, there is no money to provide transportation during events.

Legislator LoBue stated she does not believe the transportation services are truly needed.

Legislator Castellano stated the actual money spent in 2015 thus far from the leased transportation (25641000 54678) line is \$635.38. He questioned if there are any outstanding bills that the Legislature is not aware of.

Acting Director Smith stated he believes there are outstanding bills that the Visitor's Bureau has not received yet. He stated the Transportation Department sends the bill to the Auditing Department and then it is then deducted from that line.

Putnam County Chambers of Commerce President William Nulk stated he is on the Transportation Advisory Board and this is the first year of implementing the trollies. He stated it is something that the Board perceives to be a success and understands that there still needs some tweaking to be done. He stated this is the experimental year.

Legislator LoBue stated she is apprehensive that the word experimental is being used. She stated under the Bondi Administration, Former County Executive Bondi wanted to remove the trollies in the Village of Cold Spring because ridership was so low. She stated the Legislature needs to investigate if this is truly cost effective.

Acting Director Smith restated the dedicated trolley system is not something done within the Visitor's Bureau; it is done through the Transportation Department.

Chambers President Nulk stated the funding being discussed is used for special events that are part of tourism in the County. He stated a few years ago the Chambers conducted a study to see what it most beneficial to the County, and the study concluded it is tourism.

Legislator Nacerino stated she would not call the trolley system an experiment but a "PILOT program". She stated when something is introduced for the first time; it is never a complete success. She stated exposure during the first year is important to create an awareness of the new program.

Legislator Gross stated he is not opposed to tourism in the County; however this is a very tough budget.

Acting Director Smith stated he understands the tough situation, but if money is eliminated from their budget it will affect the public as well. He believes the budget deserves to stay as is and the Agency spends the funding very efficiently.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if the total of individuals who ride the trolley system can be provided to the Legislature.

Acting Director Smith stated yes, the Transportation Department should have all that information recorded.

Economic Development Agency (EDC) - Page 132

Legislator LoBue stated to date \$207,072 is available for the EDC as illustrated in the report provided by EDC Acting Chairman Jeffery Kellogg. She questioned if there are any outstanding bills that need to be paid.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated the EDC does have outstanding bills. He stated in the email correspondence he sent to the Legislative Office, having the president position vacant created a savings of \$74,052.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like remove the \$175,845 from the proposed budget because the EDC has a surplus of funds.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated a funding reserve was created in the event of an opportunity that needed funding. He stated the reserve increased significantly because of the vacant president position. He stated he believes it would be a horrible message to send to the new EDC President that all funding will be cut.

Legislator LoBue questioned why the Legislature should appropriate \$175,845 when the EDC has an extensive reserve.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated the approximate \$75,000 added to the reserve was due to the vacancy. He stated the \$133,000 was built up from County contributions and fundraising.

Legislator LoBue stated she is interested in knowing the remaining County Contribution of the \$207,072. She stated recently there was a local organization that was found to have excess funding; therefore when the Legislature appropriates funding she wants it to be used in its entirety.

Legislator Addonizio stated since approximately \$75,000 was saved from a vacancy in 2015, she proposes to reduce the County Contribution (25642000 54950) line by said amount for this coming year.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated that is a fair proposal.

Legislator Castellano questioned if the funding not used went to vacancy control.

Legislative Counsel Clem Van Ross stated that the EDC is an outside agency; therefore the money not used did not go to vacancy control.

Legislator Gross questioned how Acting Chairman Kellogg would feel if some of the EDC's proposed funding going to the Industrial Development Agency ("IDA") because the Administration did not allocate any funding to them.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated the IDA is an important agency and they should receive some funding.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she believes the EDC has run themselves very well in the last few years. She stated she supports the Administration's proposal of allocating the \$175,845 to the EDC. She stated the EDC should not be penalized for creating a reserve. She stated the IDA had an opportunity to receive \$75,000 last year. She stated she believes it is uncalled for to allude to a similar situation that is occurring in an organization located in Mahopac.

Legislator LoBue stated the Legislature allocates funding and if it is not used the organization should state they do not need all that funding. She stated the IDA was offered a loan with many strings attached.

IDA Chairman Richard Ruchala stated the IDA is an inside agency of the County.

Legislator LoBue stated as an example the Putnam Humane Society nor does the EDC have a loan agreement with strings attached.

IDA Chairman Ruchala stated the EDC and the IDA used to work together. He stated under the current Administration they have been split. He stated he came before the Committee and has not received any assistance in allocating funding. He stated the IDA is mandated to exist until 2041.

Legislator Albano stated he supports Legislator Addonizio's proposal reducing the County Contribution (25642000 54950) line in the EDC's budget by \$75,000 and increasing the funding to the IDA by that amount.

Acting Chairman Kellogg stated he suggests the EDC reimburse or repay the approximate \$75,000 that was not used due to vacancy.

Industrial Development Agency (IDA) - Page 134

IDA Chairman Ruchala stated the IDA needs to be funded \$125,000 to pay for a CEO and office expenses. He stated he has requested numerous times for funding and has only received support from Legislator LoBue. He stated the IDA is the Legislature's responsibility.

Legislator LoBue stated the IDA is mandated by the State. She stated the EDC brings in the leads and the IDA is the incentives arm. She stated without incentives such as abatements for

sales tax, the County will not attract corporate developments. She stated the EDC and the IDA use to share funding and services.

Legislator Gross stated providing the IDA with the \$75,000 will assist them with “picking themselves up”. He stated the loan contract proposed last year was so restrictive, and would set the IDA up for failure, they had to reject it.

Legislator Nacerino stated she supports Legislator Addonizio’s proposal. She stated next year such proposal will have adverse effects; therefore the Legislature must be cognizant that this proposal will not work in future years due to the vacancy in 2015 that created the increase in the reserve. She stated in this juncture it will help the IDA get a jump start.

Item # 4 – Other Business-None

Item # 5 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:06 P.M. Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.