

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD IN ROOM 318  
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Members: Chairwoman Nacerino, Legislators Castellano and Wright**

**Thursday**

**April 21, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:50p.m. by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested Legislator Wright lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairwoman Nacerino and Legislators Castellano and Wright were present.

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

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that agenda items #6 & 7 will be addressed at the end of the agenda, as they will require the members of the Legislature to go into Executive Session.

**Item #3) Approval/Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes/March 15, 2016**

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that the minutes were accepted as submitted.

**Item #4) Approval/Fund Transfer (16T056)/Transfer to OT Due to Open Personnel Line/Sheriff's Department** (Approved at 4/14/16 Protective Svcs Mtg)

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve Fund Transfer (16T056); Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

**Item #5) Approval/Fund Transfer (16T057)/Transfer from Open Personnel Line To Temp Personnel Line/Sheriff's Department** (Approved at 4/14/16 Protective Svcs Mtg)

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve Fund Transfer (16T057); Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

**Item #8) Discussion/2016 PILOT Program – Additional Funding Request**

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that he has brought with him Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni to address this matter. He stated this is the third year that she is running the PILOT Program for the County.

Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni stated there are over 90 applicants for the 2016 PILOT Program. She stated each year the number of applicants continues to increase. She stated that the applicants include high school, college and graduate level students. She stated currently they have enough funding for 35 student intern positions. She stated some departments have been able to earmark some of their Temp Funds. She stated that she has had the pleasure to speak with every applicant, and they are all outstanding. She stated there are some County Departments that have initiatives planned, that they would love to have the summer interns to work on. She stated for example the Health Department has expressed that they plan to do a great deal of community outreach in regards to the Zika Virus. She stated that there is an intern applicant who is pursuing a degree in Biological Anthropology, which of course would be a great

match to meet the needs of the Health Department. She stated that there are approximately four (4) applicants who are interest in pursuing Engineering degrees, who would be perfect to work in the Highways and Facilities Department. She stated there are applicants who are interested in the areas of psychology, health care administration etc. She stated that Director Sheehy has informed her that there are opportunities for the interns in the different Senior Center locations and they need assistance with their graphic design to update their brochures, there are a lot of really exciting opportunities throughout the County.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she fully supports the PILOT Program. She stated it is an excellent opportunity for the young people to gain the experience and at the same time it is truly a benefit to the County. She stated the students who have been involved in the past PILOT Programs have brought a great deal of knowledge and assistance to the different departments of the County.

Legislator Gouldman stated that he also believes in the PILOT Program. He questioned if the intern applicants who cannot be covered with the current funding, would they consider taking the position as an unpaid internship, and still benefit from the experience.

Director Eldridge stated the several applicants who have been referred to by Personnel Specialist Iasoni have indicated that they are looking for paid internship. He stated that question is included on the application. He stated that a child of a County Employee, does not get paid and there are some others who are working who do not get paid because they are receiving credits or it has been arranged through the students' college. He stated the additional funding would allow them to hire another four (4) or five (5) interns.

Legislator Wright stated he echoes Legislator Gouldman's comments. He stated that it is an excellent program. He stated that there are constraints on the County's budget. He stated he believes in these financially challenging times, the program should remain funded at the amount approved during the 2016 Budget Process. He stated that once the current funding is accounted for, he recommended inviting the balanced qualified applicants to come and work on a volunteer basis. He stated he is not in support of additional funding request. However, he is a great supporter of the program.

Legislator Albano stated that many of the Interns of the past have worked on projects that have saved the County money. He stated there were Interns in the Highway and Facilities Department that went throughout the entire County and identified all of the culverts and pipe crossings. He stated it was a job that needed to be done, however it was time consuming and there is a level of knowledge required to document the findings. He stated it was reported by Commissioner Pena that the Interns did a very thorough and excellent job.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she also recalls Commissioner Pena reporting the great job the Interns did and what a tremendous value the report is to his department. She stated besides the mutual benefit to the Intern and the County, the County, through this program, is supporting the philosophy of "Putnam County Leaders of Tomorrow". She stated for some kids working 28 hours a week in the summer, it is important for them to get paid. She stated that she supports this request for additional funding for the PILOT Program.

Legislator LoBue stated she concurs with the comments made by Legislator Wright. She stated that she also supports and the PILOT Program. She stated she does not agree with the request for additional funding. She stated that she believes the County needs to work with the amount budgeted for 2016, which she believes is \$70,000. Legislator LoBue stated that she has been asked by constituents of what the pay rate is.

Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni stated the high school students receive \$8.00/hour, college students, \$9.00/hour and graduate students, \$10.00/hour. She stated that the program runs for 8 weeks at 28 hours per week.

Legislator Wright questioned if there is a means testing done.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated no.

Legislator Wright stated there may be some potential candidates who do not need the recompense, opening up an opportunity for others who need to have the paying summer job. He stated that he understands it is not a real choice for some. He stated however if the entire program is not means tested then there will never be enough dollars, enough slots to go around. He stated that some slots may be opened by engaging in a means testing. He stated that there is also the view point of looking at this from the position of the County Employee who has a family to support and who is not getting the overtime they would have gotten, if not for the Intern. He stated that the PILOT Program does financially help the County. However, when engaging a paid workforce he believes respect and consideration needs to be given to their feelings and morale.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated there is only positive feedback from the County Employees in reference to the Interns.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she does not believe the PILOT Program impacts the full-time employees to that extent. She stated that she believes the means testing would make the program too cumbersome. She stated that the applicants are vetted on their educational background, their aspirations for their future and are then placed very carefully to match up with that criteria. She stated she believes applying operating on a means basis will reverse the current process.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated the workforce is not saturated with the Interns. He stated the Interns are placed in departments where actual projects will get done. He stated that in the past the Interns have gotten involved with the gathering and researching of information for grant applications. He stated in some cases that work is very time consuming making it difficult for the full-time employee to get to them, while producing and doing the work of their position. He stated the assistance of the Intern in the application process of grants is extremely helpful. He stated the County has actually been awarded several grants that past Interns worked on.

Labor Specialist Glenn Blackman suggested giving the College Students credits instead of payment.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that is done in some circumstances, however the majority of them are paid. He stated that last year there were 40 interns.

Legislator Castellano questioned out of the 40 interns from 2015 how many of them are coming back.

Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni stated she was not prepared to answer that question with the specific number. She stated there are a few, however the County wants to give other applicants a chance to have the experience.

Legislator Castellano stated it is a tremendous opportunity for the students to gain the work experience. He stated past years at the end of the program a few of the Interns have come in and addressed this Committee, providing feedback on their experience. He stated each year everyone in attendance at that meeting states how impressive the interns were.

Legislator Gouldman stated whether the Intern is actually earning credits, they are benefiting in the building of their resume, which is very important. He stated he does not believe it is fair to the current employees to pay Interns. He stated that he has issue with the fact that the Government is telling private industry that they have to pay \$15.00/hour while the County is paying \$8.00 to \$10.00 an hour.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that the New York State Labor Law, minimum wage, does not apply. He stated the Federal minimum wage does apply to Governmental entities.

Legislator Gouldman stated that he does not agree with that. He stated if the Government is telling the private industry they need to pay a certain rate, as a good example, he believes the Government agencies should do the same.

Legislator LoBue requested that the process be explained as to how the Interns are selected.

Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni stated in November an on-line application process begins, that closes around January. She stated that she conducts an initial phone interview. She stated that she questions the applicants as to what their interests are, what skills they have, can they take an unpaid or paid Internship and then she matches them to County Departments. She stated then a needs assessment for the departments is done: what projects are they working on and how many Interns can they accommodate. She stated based on the results of all of that pre-work, the names and contact information is sent to the Department Heads.

Legislator LoBue questioned who makes the final decision on which Interns are selected.

Personnel Specialist Adriene Iasoni stated the Department Heads.

Chairwoman Nacerino continued to express her support for the program. She stated in closing that this program supports the County's philosophy of investing in children.

**Item #9) Approval/Budgetary Transfer (16T069)/Additional Funding for the PILOT Program/Personnel Director Eldridge**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve Budgetary Transfer (16T069); Second Legislator Castellano. One Nay, Legislator Wright.

Legislator Wright stated on the motions he would like to make one final financial observation. He stated this is in more than 10% in cost of the \$95,000 hurt that the Administration and this Legislature put on the County's Retirees, which will be discussed next, agenda item #10. He stated in proportion it is more than 10% of what was visited on the Retirees, who have no, for the most part, employment prospects or opportunities.

Legislator LoBue stated that she agrees with the comments that have been made, on both sides. She stated she is concerned about the fiscal impact of this program. She stated when the PILOT program began, she believes the funding was \$20,000, now it has skyrocketed up to \$70,000.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that he believes the starting funding amount was \$50,000.

Commissioner Carlin stated he does not recall the starting funding amount.

Legislator LoBue stated she is concerned that when a door is opened, it is not able to be closed. This additional \$10,000 will bring the funding up to \$80,000. She stated she is concerned, next year the request will be to bring it up to \$90,000 and so on and so forth. She stated the economy is tenuous at best. She stated the current funding in the budget for the PILOT Program is \$70,000. She stated that is a large amount of money. She stated that she acknowledges the value and importance of the program both to the Interns and to the County.

**Item #10) Discussion/Response –Fr: Commissioner Carlin D: March 28, 2016 Retiree Health Insurance**

**a. FYI/Correspondence Fr: R. Harper Date: March 23, 2016**

Chairwoman Nacerino requested that Commissioner Carlin speak to this matter.

Commissioner Carlin stated there are 124 Retirees that would be affected, which would cost another \$95,000 in this year's cost. He stated that there are more challenges with the Retirees Health insurance. He stated the proposed rates for the Empire Insurance coverage for 2017 reflects approximately a \$300,000 increase.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that health insurance cost is one that continues to escalate. She stated it is not a cost that can be contained or controlled.

Chairwoman Nacerino facilitated further discussion on this matter. No action was taken.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated recently a report was given on the news that United Health Care is backing out of Obama Care.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that it does not include New York, as of today. He stated United Health Care is part of the NYSHIP Plan and they have a large presence in New York.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated in regards to the email (10a.) there are multiple Medigap plans that are available. He stated each year the Office for Senior Resources (OSR) analyses the Medigap Plans. He stated that Seniors come to the OSR office to get advice based on their needs and circumstances of which Medigap plan would serve them best.

Chairwoman Nacerino questioned if Medigap plans can be switched throughout the year.

Commissioner Carlin stated that there is one time of the year that the Medigap enrollment occurs and that is it. The person is committed to that plan for the year.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that there is a proposal that he is working on that involves those on Medicare. He stated if the person has Medicare and is willing to come off of the NYSHIP Plan the County would continue to provide the Medicare Part B reimbursement, Part D and the Medigap policy. He stated that he is compiling the numbers and will provide them to Commission Carlin. He stated that once the proposal is completed he will bring it forward to the Legislature prior to the 2017 Budget process. He stated in 2011 he gave a presentation on this proposal. He stated after that presentation a number of the Seniors who were on Medicare approached him and stated they were interested.

Legislator LoBue stated there should be a seminar regarding this.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that will be done once the actual numbers are calculated. He stated he foresees this proposal as being a win-win.

Legislator Wright stated prior to the informational meeting/seminar, whatever it ends up to be titled, written notification should be sent to every Retiree and give them advance notice so travel arrangements can be made, if needed.

Commissioner Carlin stated it may possibly be filmed as well.

Janet Canady CSEA President made statements regarding the changes in the Retirement Health Insurance that was approved for the 2016 Budget. She stated that she does not believe the increases were moderate, as stated for folks who are on a fixed income. She stated that she is thankful that this matter will be continued to be researched.

**Item #11) Approval/Proposed Resolution Calling on the State of New York to Fully Reimburse Counties For District Attorney Salary Increases Set by the State** (Approved at 4/14/16 Protective Svcs Mtg)

Chairwoman Nacerino stated this matter did get approved at the April 14<sup>th</sup> Protective Services meeting. She stated the resolution speaks to the matter of the increase that will be given to the District Attorneys throughout the State of New York. When the State adopted their budget they did not include funding to cover the salary increase of the District Attorneys. She stated it is another unfunded mandate that the State is putting on the Counties. The proposed resolution calls for the State of New York to fully reimburse the Counties.

Legislator Wright stated that in the case of Putnam County, the State does not mandate that Putnam County have a full-time District Attorney. He stated it was a decision made by Putnam County. He stated the decision was made based on the projection of breaking the 100,000 population threshold, which did not happen. He stated that Putnam County is not able to say that this is an unfunded mandate.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she believes it was a wise decision to have a full-time District Attorney in Putnam County. She stated that she does understand Legislator Wright's point.

Commissioner Carlin stated that he will keep the Committee apprised on the funding regarding this matter. He stated if the State of New York pays for the salary increase then a Budgetary Amendment reflecting the State's revenue will be presented to the Legislature for approval. If not, he will have a Budgetary Amendment reflecting funding to be taken from Contingency.

**Item #12) FYI/2016 Accident Report –Duly noted.**

**8:40p.m.**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss agenda Items #6 & #7, Contractual Matters with the County Attorney; Seconded by Legislator Wright. All in favor.

**9:10p.m.**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to come out of Executive Session; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that no action was taken.

**Item #6) Approval/Proposed Resolution/Ratification of PCSEA Agreement**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve the Ratification of PCSEA Agreement; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

**Item #7) Discussion/Proposed Formation of a Commissioned Police Officers Union**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to table the discussion of proposed Formation of Commissioner Police Officers Union; Seconded by Legislator Wright. All in favor.

**Item #13) Other Business - None**

**Item #14) Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 9:10P.M. Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Wright. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Trabulsy, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature