

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Addonizio and LoBue

Tuesday

April 12, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who requested Legislator Gross lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairwoman Scuccimarra was present. Legislator LoBue arrived at 6:40 P.M. Legislator Addonizio was absent.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra requested that Legislator Gross sit on the Committee as Legislator Addonizio and LoBue were not present at the beginning of the meeting.

Item #3 –Approval of Minutes-February 18, 2016

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Legislator Lobue made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; seconded by Chairwoman Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #4 –Update/New Initiative/Hudson River Valley Heritage/Treasures of Putnam’s Past to Be Published Online/County Historian Sarah Johnson

County Historian Sarah Johnson stated she has been the County Historian for about a year and a half. She stated the Hudson River Valley Heritage (“HRVH”) was created to help small organizations have information in a digital format. She stated HRVH Membership costs \$700 per year; the membership includes training for digitizing those images, the ability to borrow equipment, the use of web software, web posting and data backups. She stated there are now approximately 221 images posted online. She stated former County Historian Dennis Castelli had numerous films digitized that are now accessible online as well. She stated the Historian’s Office has been facilitating local historical societies to organize their images. She stated it is important to be part of HRVH because Putnam County has numerous amazing primary source materials. She stated HRVH partnered with the Digital Public Library of America and the traffic increased about 30%. She continued with the presentation and demonstrated how to access the HRVH Website (*presentation attached*). She concluded the presentation by stating the membership is based on the number of images one is hosting. She stated participating in HRVH embraces County wide collaboration.

Legislator Albano questioned if there is a fee to access the digitized images.

County Historian Johnson stated no. She stated the County Historian’s Office absorbs the costs so, it does not cost anything for the local historical societies to join.

Legislator Albano questioned it if would be beneficial to tie this project in with tourism.

County Historian Johnson stated yes. She stated the Historian's Office is currently working on creating virtual driving tours, which will be a nice project to tie in with cultural tourism.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if the Historian's Office has a Facebook page.

County Historian Johnson stated links have been put on the HRVH website to connect to their Facebook. She stated they provide updates on social media.

Legislator Castellano questioned if pictures have been taken of the historical markers that are throughout the County.

County Historian Johnson stated yes, the Historian's Office can display the historical markers. She stated when the weather gets nicer it is planned to clean up the signs.

Legislator LoBue stated at one point in time the Town of Carmel did have a cemetery tour.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated there is also a tour done in the Town of Philipstown around Halloween.

County Historian Johnson stated she believes tours definitely appeal to people, especially genealogists.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if people have items to be put on the HVRH website, how they should contact the County Historian's Office to do so.

County Historian Johnson stated the items can be emailed to her via county email. She stated she is interested in having an open scanning day to allow those with materials be put on the website.

Item #7 – Discussion/Roadside Trash

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated there is a tremendous amount of litter along the roadways. She stated the Legislative Office has received letters from the Towns and constituents complaints regarding this matter. She stated the County has a contract with PARC (“Partner. Achieve. Reach. Connect”) and they assist with the issue of litter as well.

Director of Probation Gene Funicelli recalled this issue being discussed last year. He stated Alternatives to Incarceration (“ATI”) Program Worker Jackie Ciampia reached out to the different Towns within the County to see if they need assistance with cleaning up the litter and there was little response to the inquiry made. He stated the Probation Department did receive feedback from Town of Putnam Valley Councilwoman Jackie Annabi regarding the litter in her community. He stated he can assist the Towns as long as certain criteria are met; such as the workers must be supervised.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned how many workers are in ATI.

Director Funicelli stated ATI has numerous workers, however if the workers are sent to various Towns at the same time it would spread their resources thinly.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if the Probation Department provides ATI workers transportation to the works site.

Director Funicelli stated they transport themselves to the location. He stated he can request ATI Program Worker Ciampia to reach out to the Towns again and see if arrangements can be made with the community service workers to clean the litter.

Legislator LoBue stated the County has a contract with PARC.

Director Funicelli stated the ATI Program has no interest in interfering with PARC's work.

Legislator LoBue stated if there is a roadside trash issue, typically the Legislators will contact the Health Department and they notify PARC. She believed there is a scheduling issue.

Director of Environmental Health Robert Morris stated PARC is very responsive to the cleanup request. He stated the issue is PARC workers cannot be in two (2) different towns at the same time.

Legislator Nacerino stated she has a constituent who is appalled at the amount of litter in Putnam County. She believed awareness regarding littering needs be made. She stated it is the Legislature's responsibility to raise cognizance of this issue and have people take pride in their community.

Director of Environmental Health Morris conquered that awareness about litter needs to be made. He stated the Health Department still lends out the equipment needed to clean the litter, such as vests and grabbers. He stated there is the Adopt-a-Highway Program in place.

Legislator Nacerino stated that Program did not work. She believed there needs to be a more grassroots effort regarding this matter.

Legislator LoBue stated the topic of littering needs to be discussed in the schools.

Legislator Nacerino believed it is important to celebrate Earth Day in the community.

Town of Southeast Councilwoman Lynne Eckardt commended the press coverage received when the Town of Southeast holds their Earth Day event. She believed the County needs to be more involved to resolve this issue; such as make April a designated cleanup month. She stated she previously reached out to an individual from the Health Department regarding the loan of cleaning supplies and never heard back. She received assistance regarding this matter from Legislator Gouldman.

Director of Environmental Health Morris stated he will work with Councilwoman Eckardt regarding this matter.

Legislator Albano facilitated the discussion further with examples of litter near his house. He requested that Director Funicelli notify the Legislative Office on the feedback that he receives from the Towns.

Legislator Gouldman stated last year he held a town cleanup day and it was very successful. He commended the Health Department for providing the necessary tools for that event.

Legislator Addonizio stated she no longer sees signs that state if you litter there is a fine. She believed that this system should be imposed again.

Health Department Recycling Coordinator Victoria DiLonardo stated the Carmel Police, Kent Police, and the Sheriff's Department have a "See Something Say Something" program; an individual can report a person who littered and the alleged perpetrator will receive a letter. She stated if an officer sees someone litter they will receive a summons.

Legislator Addonizio stated she would like more littering signs to be put up.

Legislator LoBue stated volunteerism is one (1) way to resolve this matter; however she concurred with Legislator Addonizio that there needs to be enforcement.

Director Funicelli stated although they are not affiliated with ATI, the Jail also has road cleanup done by the inmates.

Item #5 – Discussion/Food Waste/Home Composting

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

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she read information that states approximately 25% of all food in a home is wasted.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated that is correct and about one (1) pound of food per person per day ends up in the garbage. She stated the garbage creates methane gas in a landfill and is a factor in the greenhouse gas issue. She stated the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("NYS DEC") is focusing on food waste diversion and home composting. She stated home composting is easy, however there are rules. She stated fruit scraps, vegetable scraps, and breads can be composted. She stated a home composting container can be purchased at the Health Department.

Director Morris stated the next focus of NYS DEC is to remove food waste from landfills because it is compostable. He stated this issue is even more apparent in a restaurant.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated there are a couple of places that collect food scraps from restaurants and then compost them.

Director Morris stated there is an economic benefit for restaurants to participate in such collection because it reduces their trash pickup.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she has a vision of Tilly Foster Farm to have a composting area on premise. She stated there are several places in upstate New York that collect food waste.

Legislator LoBue stated last week's flyer from Hannaford's had a notice in it that they are composting.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if they transport the food waste themselves. Legislator LoBue stated the flyer did not go into much detail.

Legislator Gouldman stated as a restaurant owner, he can personally attest that a lot of food waste comes from restaurants. He stated if there is a regulation or a not-for-profit organization to help collect the food waste, this issue may disappear.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated there is a program called City Harvest in New York City that helps collect the food waste.

Legislator Gouldman stated one (1) program alone cannot undertake this task.

Director Morris stated he understands Legislator Gouldman's concerns. He stated there are the concerns of sanitary and food safety issues. He stated City Harvest is an amazing program as their drivers are trained in food safety.

Legislator Gouldman stated there is also the concern of expired food.

Director Morris stated in New York there is an exemption for expired food for charitable organizations. He stated if one believes that the food is safe, you can continue to use the food.

Legislator Addonizio requested clarification on the phrase "believe to be safe."

Director Morris stated in reading the guidelines of food safety, he feels comfortable for charitable organizations giving food that is expired.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra believed home composting is something important to carry forward.

Item #6 – Discussion/Awareness/Plastic Bag Reuse & Recycling

Chairwoman Scuccimarra began the discussion of this item by displaying a YouTube video provided by Director Morris. She stated as illustrated in the video clip there is a floating mass amount of plastic in the ocean. She stated it is estimated that each household uses about 1,500 plastic bags a year.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated plastic bags are recyclable, but they need to be recycled properly in order for the program to work. She stated the plastic bags need to be brought back to the store. She stated less than 10% of the bags are being recycled; therefore to remedy this there is the three (3) "R's" which are reduce, reuse, and recycle. She believed that education regarding this matter is a critical component of fixing the issue of plastic bags.

Director Morris believed that when one considers the harm plastic bags have on the environment, they should not be used. He stated plastic bags create problems at recycling facilities because they clog up the machines. He stated in certain areas of the United States and other countries have either banned plastic bags or taxed them. He stated if the plastic bags are taxed an individual may think twice before using the bag and will remember to bring their reusable shopping bags.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated it is not the goal of this Committee to ban plastic shopping bags; but to educate the community and store owners on this matter. She stated due to the New York State Environmental Conservation Law Article 27 Title 26 (“Article 27 Title 26”), “stores” that are over 10,000 sq. ft. in retail space or part of a chain store must establish an at-store recycling program. She stated it would be beneficial to request to have plastic shopping bag containers placed in areas other than grocery stores. She stated it also may be beneficial for cashiers and store owners to ask if the customer brought their reusable shopping bags.

Legislator Albano suggested having the plastic bag state “return to store” on them.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated Article 27 Title 26 requires stores fit under their “store” definition must state that it is compostable bag and that they should not be placed in a recycling bin.

Legislator LoBue stated perhaps a recycling fee can be made similar to recycling cans and bottles. She stated statistics show that volunteerism does not work. She stated some stores have been going back to using paper bags, so perhaps that is an option to explore.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated in 2002 Ireland imposed a tax on plastic bags and in five (5) months the usage dropped by 90%. She stated currently there has been a whole culture change in terms of the use of plastic bags in Ireland.

Legislator Addonizio questioned the cost of the tax imposed on plastic bags in Ireland.

Coordinator DiLonardo stated it began as 15 cents and it is now up to 33 cents per bag.

Legislator Gouldman believed education is the best approach. He stated approximately 20 years ago the stores went from using paper bags to plastic bags because the impact it had on the trees. He stated since Putnam County is a small county and a fee is imposed people will shop outside the County again.

Legislator Addonizio believed this issue goes hand in hand with the roadside trash issue.

Carmel-Kent Chamber of Commerce President Bill Nulk questioned if one has looked into a price per pound for recycling plastic bags.

Director Morris stressed that plastic bags cannot be put in with the other recyclables.

Item #8 – Discussion/New York State Electronic Equipment Recycling & Reuse Act

- a. **Memorandum/Fr. Joe Castellano SUB: Town of Southeast E-Scrap Containers**
- b. **NYSAC News Release/Reimbursement to Counties for Electronic Waste Recycling**
- c. **2016 NYSAC Legislative Conference Resolution/Amendments to New York State Electronic Equipment Recycling & Reuse Act and Urging Department of Environmental Conservation to Expedite the Promulgation of Related Regulations**
- d. **Putnam County Legislature Resolution #202 of 2015/Memorialization/Urging State Representatives to Amend the New York State Electronic Equipment Recycling & Reuse Act**

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the Legislature has already sent a resolution (*Resolution #202 of 2015*) to the State regarding this matter. She stated some Towns have their e-scrap containers picked up and some do not.

Legislator LoBue questioned if this company is no longer interested in pick-up of the e-scrap, why they would pick up only in certain Towns.

Director Morris stated the current carting company is very challenging to get a hold of.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated eventually the County will have to pay for the collection of the e-scrap waste because it is not profitable for our current company to pick it up. She questioned if Director Morris can elaborate more on the profit of the e-waste.

Director Morris stated the commodity market fluctuates. He stated the last two (2) companies the County utilized backed out because of the cathode-ray tubes (“CRTs”) in the electronics that are being picked up. He stated it is expensive to recycle the old electronics. He stated he is surprised that the old electronics, such as old televisions, are finally being recycled; it is anticipated they will be around for approximately ten (10) more years.

Legislator Castellano stated most people buy electronics to replace an old one. He questioned what the store’s obligation is to take the old electronic, such as a television, back.

Director Morris stated he stated the manufacture is obligated to take the electronics; however according to State Law only a certain amount of the electronics are required to be taken. He stated many stores are charging to take back the electronic.

Legislator LoBue questioned how long there has been an issue with the e-scrap containers not being picked up in the Town of Southeast.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated it has been an issue for a while.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she has the same issue in the Town of Philipstown, sometimes the container is overflowing and sometimes it is empty.

Legislator Castellano stated there is a great setup in Valhalla for Westchester County’s e-waste.

Legislator LoBue stated Westchester County has a much larger budget than Putnam County. She stated this issue needs to be resolves to prevent roadside trash.

Item #9 – Approval/Memorialization/Urging New York State to Provide Technical & Financial Assistance to Assist Counties in Complying with Federal Child Care Law Changes

Commissioner of Social Services Michael Piazza stated the Governor’s Budget proposes \$10 million allocated for inspections. He stated this is an example of an unfunded mandate put on the counties.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if Commissioner Piazza believed the Legislature should pass a memorandum of support regarding this matter.

Commissioner Piazza stated yes. He believed it is important to say on record that this mandate will create a fiscal impact.

Legislator LoBue made a motion to approve the memorandum of support urging New York State to provide technical & financial assistance with the Federal Child Care Law changes; Seconded by Chairwoman Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #10 – Approval/Office for Senior Resources/Elder Abuse Grant

Director of Office for Senior Resources Patricia Sheehy stated this is a mini grant for \$6,500 for prevention and education on elder abuse. She stated the Office for Senior Resources (“OSR”) is proposing to create a brochure and mail it out to approximately 20,000 seniors in Putnam County. She stated she would like to have a training event on the signs of elder abuse, especially financial exploitation. She stated OSR just received notification that they were awarded the grant. She stated there is no County match with this grant. She stated OSR has \$5,000 in their budget to use for the mailing of the brochures.

Legislative Counsel Clem Van Ross stated a budgetary amendment needs to be created by the Finance Department.

Item #11 – FYI/Climate Smart Community Pledge

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she spoke with the Health Department regarding the Climate Smart Community Pledge (“Pledge”). She believed the County has already been implementing some of the commitments stated in the Pledge. She stated Carmel High School students reached out to her and wanted to create a recycling program for their school. She questioned if Director Morris has met with the students.

Director Morris stated he has not met with the Carmel High School Students yet. He stated the County is implementing some of the items listed on the Pledge.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she read on the DEC website that there is approximately \$14 million in grant money available; therefore the County may be eligible to apply for some of this allotted money. She stated perhaps this matter can be a task for the Fiscal Vision & Accountability Commission. She stated she would also like to reach out to the Towns and see if they would be interested in the Pledge.

Item #12 – FYI/ProAct/Utilization Report- Duly Noted

Item #13 – Other Business - None

Item #14 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:50 p.m. Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.