

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

Members: Chairwoman Nacerino, Legislators Castellano and Wright

Tuesday

November 22, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:15p.m. by Chairwoman Nacerino. She requested that Legislator Wright lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairwoman Nacerino and Legislators Castellano and Wright were present.

Item #3 Approval/Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes/Sept. 2016

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that the meeting minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4) Approval/Fund Transfer (16T306)/Temporary assignment to a higher grade position retroactive to 08/31/2016/Reclassification of position to Accountant/Office for Senior Resources (OSR)/Director Sheehy

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that there was a very thorough correspondence that detailed the activities that precipitated this request, sent to the Legislature from Personnel Director Eldridge, dated November 15, 2016 Re: Accountant, Budget #677210117. She stated that she would invite OSR Director Sheehy and Personnel Director Eldridge to speak to this matter.

Office for Senior Resources Director Patricia Sheehy stated there was an employee in the position of Fiscal Manager from 2015 into 2016. She stated in August of 2016 the position was vacated. She stated an employee has stepped in and has been heading up the fiscal team of the OSR Department. She stated that employee is currently a member of the CSEA Union and wants to remain in the Union. She stated therefore, the request in front of this committee is to reclassify the position of Fiscal Manager to Accountant, effective December 1, 2016. She stated then the employee could take their STEP increase in January 2017.

Chairwoman Nacerino questioned Personnel Director Eldridge if the position has been already reclassified; in accordance with CSEA agreement after 20 days working in that title she is assumed to be eligible to receive that compensation, as stated in Director Eldridge's memo, which was referenced earlier.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that is correct. The position is subject to an exam that will occur sometime in 2017.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the employee, being discussed this evening, has the qualification of the position.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that the eligibility requirements must be met in order to sit for the test. She stated without the requirements, a person is not allowed to sit for a test.

Legislator Castellano questioned if it is a promotional exam.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that it is promotional.

Legislator Castellano made a motion to Approval/Fund Transfer (16T306)/Temporary assignment to a higher grade position retroactive to 08/31/2016/Reclassification of position to Accountant/Office for Senior Resources (OSR); Seconded by Chairwoman Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #5) Approval/Request to Move Matter to 2017 Organization Meeting/Personnel Department Personnel Lines- Reallocation/Director Eldridge

Personnel Director Eldridge stated unfortunately due to some illnesses in the Personnel Department, one of the employees was reduced down to 25 hours per week. He stated the individual is fortunately on the mend and has requested that they go back to working 30 hours a week as of January 2017. He stated that he was not aware this would be the case when he submitted the Personnel Department's 2017 Budget. He stated the request tonight is to move money back into the line that had been taken out. He stated there will be no fiscal impact.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that it is good news that the individual is on the mend.

Legislator Castellano questioned how long was the 25 hours in place.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated for the most part of 2016. He stated for clarification this matter would need to be approved to the 2017 Organizational Meeting.

Legislator Castellano made a motion to approve Request to Move Matter to 2017 Organization Meeting/Personnel Department Personnel Lines- Reallocation; Seconded by Chairwoman Nacerino. All in favor.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she will be going out of order, due to the fact that agenda item #6 will require an executive session.

Item #7) FYI/2016 Accident Report – Duly Noted

Item #8) Other Business

b) Discussion/Use of Technology –Communication to the Public

Alexandra Ballantine, Resident, suggested that there be use of technology by the County Employees to communicate with the citizens better. She recommended that every Putnam County Employee register on LinkedIn. She stated that she would like each employees' LinkedIn page to include the salary, benefits, pensions, the number of years worked for Putnam County and job responsibilities. She stated as a taxpayer she would appreciate having that information readily available. She stated she understands that Director of Veterans' Services

makes a yearly salary of \$60,000. She stated in an article on *Good Day Hudson Valley*, the employee was asked what they did. The employee stated that he refers Veterans for counselling and helps with housing if they are need of that. She stated and this employee has an assistant. She stated that she believes that an application could handle all of that; also she thought that Putnam County had an outpatient facility for Veterans. She stated that it is her opinion that the salary is quite high to refer people to council. She stated that Frank Smith, currently the Acting Deputy for the Visitors Bureau. She stated that she understands he has made \$50,000 so far this year. She stated that the questioned was presented to Mr. Smith at last month's meeting and he would not answer the question. She stated that he is on LinkedIn. She stated that she would really like to know more about what people do, and their employment history. She stated that she would like to know if there is an employee who was retired and already has a government pension, and is currently working for the County. She stated taxpayers deserve to know and have this information available to them. She stated that she would like to see streamlined and standardized hiring procedures in place. She stated still there has not been an appointment to the position of Visitors Bureau Director.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that Frank Smith is the Interim Visitors Bureau Director, and has received approval from the State.

Alexandra Ballantine, Resident, stated last Spring there was a listing on the website for a permanent Director of the Visitors Bureau. She questioned if that was a different position, it seems confusing.

Legislator LoBue stated the Visitors Bureau Board is looking for a permanent Director.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the selection and process will be conducted by the Visitors Bureau Board. She stated that is somewhat of an outside agency.

Alexandra Ballantine, Resident, stated that the not-for profit organizations are another topic. She stated that she believes there has been discussion about bringing the Visitors Bureau in as a County Department, which she believes makes sense. She stated she believes it was Legislator Gross who suggested that last winter. She stated that she hopes all of these topics will be brought up for discussion. She stated that she would like to hear the Legislators feedback and thoughts regarding them. She stated lastly she would like to suggest that a policy be put into place that would state people who currently work for the media, especially the media that covers Putnam County, not also work for the County simultaneously either as contractors or full-time employees. She stated that it is her opinion that it is a conflict of interest. She stated as an example, on November 10, 2016 there was an article in *The Putnam County Courier* written by Eric Gross. She stated it was an article covering the Legislator's debate over the purchase of an EMS Vehicle. She stated that Mr. Gross does work or volunteer in the County's EMS departments. She stated that was not disclosed in the article. She believes that there is at least one other contractor of the County that also works as a reporter for a local newspaper. She stated she would like feedback from the Legislators, as to whether they believe this is appropriate. She stated that she hopes this can be looked into. She stated she believes it is fair to say that a reporter has the ability to influence public opinion. She stated her hope is to articulate a way to manage this situation going forward.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she would not belabor the point at this time. She stated the comments and concerns of Ms. Ballantine will be taken forward and have a meaningful dialogue through the committee meeting process. However she stated she felt compelled to state that Eric Gross is a man of high integrity, we are a County of volunteers and first responders. She stated a lot of the roles in the County overlap due to the fact that this is a small County. She stated the residents care very much about their quality of life. She stated that she personally does not believe that Mr. Gross as a reporter would compromise his integrity or that of the reader by projecting his own personal opinion. She stated she finds him to be very objective and actually is one of the finest residents in the County.

Alexandra Ballantine, Resident, stated that is great, and appreciates that. However, she believes and would ask that a full disclosure be made available. She stated a full disclosure would provide each reader the opportunity to judge for themselves what his dual roles might mean.

Legislator Roger Gross stated there are in fact currently some restrictions in place regarding employees who are in the State Pension System.

Alexandra Ballantine, Resident, stated then let's help educate each other.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated again she welcomes Ms. Ballantine's comments and concerns and looks forward to engaging in further dialogue. She stated that she looks forward to providing clarification and perspective on some of the points that were brought forward this evening.

Item #8) Other Business

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Waive the Rules and Accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

a) Approval/Fund Transfer (16T358)/Election Day Related Overtime/Board of Elections

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve Fund Transfer (16T358) /Election Day Related Overtime/Board of Elections; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Item #6) Discussion/Commissioned Officer Union/County Executive Odell

7:30p.m.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Commissioned Officer Union; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

9:05p.m.

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

Chairwoman Nacerino stated there was no action taken in executive session.

Item #9) Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:55P.M. Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to adjourn;
Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Diane Trabulsy.