

different facets and the expertise that is relied on to make informed decisions. She stated if there is input at the Full Legislative Meetings pertaining to questions that cannot be answered at that particular time; it retards the whole process because the item would need to be tabled back to Committee in order to fact-find. She stated this speaks to the process that is currently in place. She stated outside agencies and guest speakers attend Committee Meetings to update the Legislature on topics so an informed decision can be made. She stated the agenda for the Full Legislative Meeting is comprised of action items that have gone through the Committee process and passed through to the Full for a vote of the Legislative Body as a whole. She stated this means the Full Legislative Meeting agenda items have been vetted, discussed, and voted on at the Committee level and then moved to the Full where the final vote is taken. She stated she is supportive of the current procedure. She stated having public comment outside the realm of the Committee Meetings undoes what the Legislature does and does not speak to effectiveness in the long run.

Legislator Albano agreed with Legislator Nacerino. He stated each month, Committee Meetings are held and are the appropriate venue to ask questions. He stated questions may be answered during a Committee, especially when Department Heads are present. He stated if questions cannot be answered in Committee, an answer can be obtained during the timespan between that Committee Meeting and the Full Legislative meeting. He stated when a topic is at the Full Legislative Meeting, it has been deemed worthy of a vote by the Full Legislature. He stated questions posed by the public or by Legislators should be addressed prior to the Full Meeting. He stated he would not support any changes to the current process and he welcomes public comment at any Committee Meeting.

Legislator Addonizio stated the Town of Kent allows public comment only after a vote has been taken. She stated the current process has been in place for 15 years and she is in favor of keeping it the way it is.

Legislator Castellano stated this Legislature is more transparent than ever before, especially with the ability to post information on the Internet and be reached via cell phone. He stated he has returned every email or phone call he has received. He stated any item that comes before the Legislature having to do with money goes before at least two (2) committees. He encouraged residents to contact the Legislators, and specifically their Legislative Representative to discuss their opinion on topics that are before the Legislature. He stated the current process has been followed for 15 years and he sees no reason to change it.

Legislator Scuccimarra agreed with Legislator Nacerino's comments. She stated there is a lot of work to be done within the month and the Committee Meetings is where most of the work is done. She stated all of the information pertaining to a certain topic is included in the backup material and published with the Committee Meeting agenda. She stated many times when comments are made at the Full Legislative Meeting, the individuals are misinformed and do not have all the facts. She stated if a discussion were to be opened at the Full Meetings, it would get chaotic, as has been represented

in the past when discussion has been opened. She stated each Town has different procedures and at its most recent meeting, the Philipstown Town Board did not allow any public comment. She stated the information is out there and questions are welcomed. She stated the current process is effective and she would like it to remain the same.

Chairwoman LoBue stated she welcomes having the public comment before the vote. She stated the meetings should not be chaotic as long as the Chair of the Legislature utilized their ability to maintain order. She stated in the past, not all Legislators attended the Committee Meetings; only those who sat on the Committee. Therefore at the Full Meeting, a discussion was had on the topic to be voted on. She stated if a big item was being discussed and the public attended the meeting, the Legislature would make the decision to allow public comment prior to the vote taking place.

Legislator Albano stated he believes it is a mistake that in the past Legislators did not attend Committee Meetings if they were not on the Committee. He stated a Legislator cannot make an informed decision based on the information solely obtained during discussion at a Full Legislative Meeting. He stated being a Legislator is a job and to go to just a few Committee Meetings a month is wrong. He stated he personally believes that each Legislator should attend as many Committee Meetings as they can so they are well informed by the time a topic reaches the Full Legislative Meeting. He stated if Legislators are not attending Committee Meetings, they are taking a short cut and not doing their job. He stated he tries not to miss meetings because he believes it is important to be informed.

Lynne Eckardt, Town of Southeast Councilwoman, read two (2) letters into the record, both from Brewster residents; Bradley D. Schwartz and James & Linda Borkowski. She thanked Chairwoman LoBue for researching the procedures of surrounding counties. She stated she did some research as well and found that the Westchester County Legislature limits public comment to 30 minutes prior to their Full Meetings and they usually allow three (3) minutes per person. She stated a problem with limiting comment to Committee Meetings is that the calendar is not on a set schedule. She stated some meetings have varying start times and she does not find this conducive to the public getting to the meetings. She stated she does not think the average person understands the system, which she believes has too much government and is too confusing. She stated she spoke to the Town of Kent Supervisor and was under the impression that they do allow public comment. She also stated she believes it was disingenuous to state that Philipstown did not allow public comment as they announced before their meeting that due to the topic, it would be a work session and therefore would not allow public comment. She stated she believes they will allow public comment in the future on that topic. She stated she has been serving in the Town of Southeast for five (5) years and there is not a lot of public comment. She stated at times, residents from other towns have come to speak. She stated they had a member of the public recommend that they look into food trucks. She stated they looked into it and enacted a law, and although it did not prove to be very successful, the public input was greatly appreciated. She stated public ideas are both wanted and needed. She stated she

believes it is vital for this matter to be taken very seriously. She stated she believes it is specious to say discussion may be had at a Committee Meeting because it is a difficult path for people to find them and get to them. She stated through allowing public comment at the Full Legislative Meetings, the Legislature may be surprised how gracious and polite people are. She stated the only time the meeting may become overwhelming is when a controversial issue was being voted on, and when a controversial issue is being addressed, it is important to listen to the public.

Challen Armstrong, resident, questioned where the meeting agendas are published.

Chairwoman LoBue stated they are posted on the County website under the Legislative tab. She stated the agendas are posted five (5) days before the meeting. She stated during the summer months, the County runs on summer hours (8:00am – 4:00pm) and therefore the Committee Meetings are held a little earlier. She stated everything is listed on the website under the Legislature. She also encouraged those having trouble navigating the website to call the Legislative Office for assistance. She stated the issues addressed by the Legislature that have been controversial have been local issues, not State or Federal issues. She stated she believes it is important to be as transparent as possible and welcomes as much public comment as possible.

Ms. Armstrong stated she appreciates the interest in getting expert opinions for consideration of topics that come before the Legislature. She questioned however, why the public is not given the opportunity to know that. She stated she has increasingly felt that there is not enough information available and not many people know how to work the system. She stated therefore, not many people attend the meetings. She stated if she did not have someone apprise her of this topic on the agenda tonight, she would not have known the discussion was taking place.

Legislator Albano encouraged residents to call the Legislative Office with questions. He stated there are different Committee Meetings that handle particular matters; therefore if a resident has an issue they would like to bring forward, it can go to the Committee where time will be devoted to it. He stated he has never received a complaint about the start time of meetings. He stated the Full Legislative Meetings are always at 7:00pm. He stated a lot of time is spent on a subject before it is sent to the Full Meeting. He stated questions that come up at the Full cannot be addressed at that point. He stated public comment and questions are welcomed at the Committee Meetings, where they are more likely to be answered. He stated the Full Meeting is the final stage that an item goes through. He stated the Full Meeting is not a work session; the seven (7) Committee Meetings held during the month are. He stated if in a Committee Meeting there is not enough information to answer a question, the matter can be held off until the information is obtained. He stated he is willing to spend all the time it will take to get an item to the final vote. He stated the whole month is spent gradually addressing each topic that comes before the Legislature. He restated Legislator Castellano's earlier comment that any item involving money goes through at least two (2) Committees; meaning before money is spent two (2) discussions take place. He stated public

comment is welcomed and the time to have it is at Committee Meetings where a two-way conversation can take place.

Ms. Armstrong stated the system that is in place does not make it easy for people to find the information.

Chairwoman LoBue stated having consultants at the Committee Meetings is for the purpose of the Legislators to address them, not the public. She stated at the Full Legislative Meetings, the public wants to address the Legislature. She stated the previous Legislature understood that and the public were heard.

Legislator Nacerino stated she understands and appreciates the comments made; however she feels very strongly that the current process is in place for a reason. She encouraged residents to attend Committee Meetings. She stated she does not believe that by changing the procedure there will be an influx of residents attending meetings. She stated based on what she has heard from her constituents, they stay up to date on what is going on in the County by reading the newspapers. She stated for example, the Brewster Board of Education only entertains items on their agenda. She stated there is a reason for that: to maintain decorum and professionalism. She stated when she was on the Town Board, if a letter or email came in from a constituent with an idea, it was placed on the agenda and the individual was invited to come to the meeting; similar to what is done on the County level. She stated she is concerned about the perception of how or why the Legislature operates by this procedure; it is not to shun the public. She stated the seven (7) Committee Meetings held each month are an example of the Legislature's transparency. She stated each resident has the opportunity to call the Legislature to ask any question they may have or to be put in contact with their Legislative Representative. She stated input from the public is welcome. She stated there are Committees, vetting, and public input for a reason. She stated once items are passed out of Committee and sent to the Full Meeting, they are ready for the cumulative action of the Legislature for the month. She deferred to Legislative Counsel.

Legislative Counsel Clement Van Ross stated 15 years ago this procedure was decided upon by then-Chairperson of the Legislature, Bob Pozzi, and then-Deputy County Executive, Donald Smith.

Liz Hudak, Town of Southeast Councilwoman, requested clarification on the process followed by the Legislature. She stated as she understands it, a topic arises, it is sent to a Committee Meeting, where it is possibly voted on. She questioned if the topic then goes to a work session.

Chairwoman LoBue stated no.

Councilwoman Hudak clarified that the public is welcome to attend Committee Meetings where they can voice their opinion.

Legislator Nacerino stated that is correct.

Councilwoman Hudak questioned how much of the public knows, or has the ability to know, that the Committee Meetings are taking place and that they are welcome to attend.

Legislator Nacerino stated the County Legislature makes the same overtures as the Town Boards. She stated the website has postings about the meetings and Officials are invited.

Councilwoman Hudak stated the Town Board is simpler because they only need to reach their Town. She stated more of the public must be aware of the Legislative Meetings.

Legislator Nacerino questioned what the attendance is like at the town of Southeast Town Board Meetings.

Councilwoman Hudak stated very few residents attend the meetings.

Legislator Nacerino stated the light attendance may not be due to a lack of knowledge about the scheduling of the meetings.

Councilwoman Hudak questioned what happens after an item has been addressed in Committee.

Chairwoman LoBue stated no action will be taken on this specific topic. She stated if there were, an item would be moved out of Committee to be addressed at the Full Legislative Meeting.

Councilwoman Hudak questioned if a meeting is held before the Full to hear public comment on the items to be voted on at the Full Meeting.

Legislator Nacerino stated no, the Committee Meeting is the venue for public input, meaningful dialogue, questions, and vetting of issues.

Councilwoman Hudak clarified that items go to Committee and when they are passed through, they then go to the Full Legislative Meeting to be voted on. She stated at that point, the public is not permitted to comment on the topics to be voted on.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the public can comment at the end of the Full Legislative Meeting.

Legislator Addonizio stated the public has the opportunity to contact their Legislator to voice their opinion.

Legislator Albano stated that if money is involved, the item will go to the Audit & Administration Committee before going to the Full Legislative Meeting.

Councilwoman Hudak clarified that a Committee Meeting is the only forum where the public can voice their opinion and have dialogue with the members of the Committee and other Legislators in attendance. She stated the Legislators who are not on the Committee are not required to attend the Committee Meetings; however she has noticed that many are consistently in attendance. She questioned what happens when people are unable to attend the Committee Meetings to voice their opinion.

Legislator Nacerino stated that resident can send an email or call their Legislator. She stated on the Town Board level, the agenda items are put forth and the constituents may or may not attend the meeting; but a vote is taken that same night.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the websites for the Towns are much simpler than the website for the County. She suggested placing the Legislative Meeting Calendar on the front page of the website so residents do not have to go through multiple webpages to see it. She also suggested having the Legislative calendar published in the three (3) official newspapers of the County.

Legislator Addonizio stated an issue may arise if a meeting is cancelled after it is published in the newspapers. She stated such changes are posted on the website.

Councilwoman Hudak questioned if the comment period at the end of the Full Legislative Meetings is to discuss what had just been voted on.

Chairwoman LoBue stated only items on the agenda may be commented on.

Legislator Nacerino stated this procedure it not unique to Putnam County, it is followed in some towns and cities as well.

Councilwoman Hudak questioned how those in the public who are interested in a topic can speak to the Full Legislature on a topic prior to being voted on.

Legislator Nacerino stated members of the public can attend Committee Meetings to voice their opinions. She stated she is not convinced that a change in the procedure would lead to an influx of public attendance. She agreed with Chairwoman LoBue's suggestion of placing the Legislative calendar on the front page of the website. She encouraged residents to contact the Legislative Office with questions. She stated in regards to meeting attendance, it begs the question if the Legislature is advertising enough or if it is incumbent on those who are interested to find information about and attend the meetings. She stated the process speaks to the Legislature doing their due diligence and no rash decisions are being made. She stated sometimes there are weeks between a Committee Meeting and the Full Meeting, which allows time for the Legislature to be contacted by their constituents.

Councilwoman Hudak stated perhaps, there would be more interest if the residents understood the process. She agreed that the Legislative calendar should be posted on the front page of the website.

Legislator Nacerino stated it is her understanding that residents are cognizant of what is going on in the local Government. She stated her constituents reach out to her about current issues; however that is different than them actually attending the meeting. She stated it is not that they are not apprised of the issues; it's that they are choosing not to attend the meetings. She stated the lack of attendance does not mean the residents are not interested or that they do not have an opinion. She stated due to busy schedules, it can be difficult for residents to attend the Committee Meetings.

Councilwoman Hudak stated her concern is that the residents who are unable to attend the Committee Meetings have no opportunity to voice their opinion.

Legislator Nacerino stated that residents have the opportunity to contact the Legislative Office or listen to the meeting audio posted on the website. She stated a lot of time is invested in the process of vetting items throughout the month.

Councilwoman Hudak stated perhaps more information should be provided to the public, specifically the fact that the audio is posted on the website.

Legislator Addonizio stated that the website lists the audio from the meetings by month for the whole year.

County Attorney Jennifer Bumgarner stated the Legislative webpage is very user friendly. She stated the way that audio is posted allows the listener to simply click on the agenda item they are interested in and listen to only that part of the meeting.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the County website can be overwhelming. She again suggested placing the Legislative calendar on the front page of the website.

Legislator Nacerino agreed.

Legislator Castellano stated there is nothing stopping anybody from calling the Legislative Office with a question they may have regarding a subject that was discussed at a Committee Meeting. He stated items are either sent to the Full Legislative Meeting or tabled to be addressed the following month. He stated there is time for questions to be answered. He stated he has always returned phone calls and responded to emails. He stated conversations about an item may take place from the time it is in Committee to the time it is voted on at the Full Legislative Meeting. He stated there are rules in place that when an item is at the Full, it is discussed amongst the Legislature and it is not open to public comment. He stated if the Full Legislative Meeting allowed public comment, there would be no need for Committee Meetings. He stated the Legislators in Westchester County are full-time, therefore they work and have meetings during the day. He stated the procedures vary between Westchester and Putnam because the

dynamics are so different. He stated the Legislature is very transparent. He stated rules need to be in place to have organization and order.

Ms. Armstrong stated both sides of this discussion have been presented and heard, however there has been no resolve or compromise between the views of the Legislators and the public who have spoken tonight. She questioned the point of attending a Committee Meeting.

Legislator Castellano stated the point is to have the discussion.

Ms. Armstrong stated she feels as though the Legislators do not care what she thinks.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Legislators have provided a rationale as to why they believe the current process should stay in place. She stated her appreciation for the comments made thanked Ms. Armstrong for coming to the meeting. She stated it is her prerogative to have her own opinion and to explain why her opinion is what it is. She stated this is what democracy is.

Alexandra Ballantine, resident, thanked her representative, Legislator Castellano for helping her to get involved at the Meetings. She stated she believes that Councilwoman Eckardt's suggestions have some validity as far as a way to introduce comments more openly and efficiently. She stated the system in place works and she understands why efficiency is important; however everything is improvable. She stated small steps could be taken to make the Legislative proceedings more transparent. She stated for example, she has always had trouble understanding the budget as it is posted on the website. She stated she would like to see the budget broken down more carefully, which would allow residents to be better informed. She suggested there be more outbound communication. She stated nothing is set in stone, these things could be tried and if they do not work, they can be changed. She stated in reference to what was said earlier regarding each email being responded to, in her experience that is not the case. She stated it is her understanding that the audio minutes from the Meetings would be transcribed to print.

Chairwoman LoBue stated each Meeting is transcribed to print.

Ms. Ballantine questioned if the minutes are posted on the website.

Chairwoman LoBue stated yes, they are.

Legislator Nacerino added that the minutes are included on each meeting agenda to be approved.

Ms. Ballantine stated finding these resources posted on the website is incumbent on the residents. She suggested putting out more information in regards to how to navigate the website. She again suggested taking small steps to possibly improve the process.

Councilwoman Eckardt questioned when to request a possible correction to the transcribed minutes.

Legislator Albano stated the request can be made at the meeting before the minutes are accepted.

Legislator Nacerino stated similarly to the Town Board minutes, if anyone wanted to request an amendment, they would make the request prior to the minutes being accepted.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated she is referring to Full Legislative Meeting minutes.

Legislative Clerk Diane Schonfeld stated the minutes to the prior month's meeting are included in the agenda backup material and posted online. She stated if there is a concern, anyone is welcome to call the Legislative Office.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated a resident could also contact their Legislator with their concern that the minutes do not reflect what was stated. He stated at the meeting, that Legislator could make the proper amendment.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated the process is difficult for people.

Legislator Nacerino stated the County Legislature operates on a larger scale than the Town Board and is more complex.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated the Legislature thinks it is accommodating to the public, and in many ways it is, however the Legislature could be more accommodating.

Legislator Albano stated when a topic is on the Full Legislative Meeting agenda, it has already been discussed for a great deal of time. He stated he is willing to spend the appropriate amount of time on each topic at the Committee level. He stated many of the big topics are written about in the newspapers, which makes the information readily available to the public. He stated a resident can always call the Legislative Office for more information.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated the way she understands Legislator Albano's comments is that it would take too much time.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned for clarity, if Legislator Albano is speaking to having public comment prior to the vote at the Full Legislative Meeting, and thus taking up time.

Legislator Albano stated in light of the public comment made at the past few Full Legislative Meetings, it would not be productive to have this be the permanent process. He stated time is spent in Committee, therefore to revisit the discussion at the Full would not be efficient. He restated that he is willing to spend as much time as an item

may take in Committee, however when that item has been approved out of Committee and is before the Full Legislature, that is the time to vote in a productive manor.

Chairwoman LoBue stated toward the end of the Full Legislative Meeting, there is time allowed for public comment to be heard. She stated hypothetically, if there was a time frame of 40 minutes where public comment was allowed, there is no difference if that 40 minute period is at the beginning of the meeting or at the end of the meeting. She stated having such a structured public comment period at the beginning of the meeting may satisfy the public and make them feel confident that the Legislators have heard them.

Legislator Albano stated he is respectful of the handful of residents who have expressed having an issue with the current process. He stated having the residents present at the meeting allowed the Legislators to listen and decide how to move forward as a group. He stated this is the venue to have such a deliberation and where questions can be answered.

Councilwoman Eckardt questioned how many residents would have to come forward on an issue to make an impact on the Legislature.

Legislator Albano stated the point he was trying to make is that only a few residents have voiced their concern with the current process. He stated if there were a large number of residents voicing their concerns, he may rethink his opinion on the matter.

Councilwoman Eckardt stated her original request was to have the ability to address items that are not on the agenda. She also stated her concern with the placement of the podium at the Full Legislative Meeting because when people get up to speak, their back is to the camera.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the podium placement has been discussed in the past and will be addressed moving forward. She stated the Historic Courthouse is a difficult space to arrange because of its historic value.

Phyllis Honig, resident, stated there are many residents who take issue with having the public comment period after the vote has been taken. She stated if the public was allowed to comment prior to the vote, it would make a big difference to the public. She stated even if it may not change the outcome, speaking before the vote would make residents feel as though they are given the chance to express their view, and maybe even change the minds of the Legislators.

Legislator Nacerino stated that is why the public is here at the meeting tonight. She stated the Committee Meetings are the venue for this type of discussion and comment.

Ms. Honig stated she is aware that rules are in place, however rules can be bent. She stated at Town meetings, when there is a controversial issue that residents feel very strongly about, the rules are bent and the Supervisor will allow public comment before a

vote is taken. She stated she believes that if the public had the ability to speak before a vote was taken, the residents would feel like they were a part of the democratic process.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Legislature exercises that ability when necessary as well. She stated even if public comment was entertained at the beginning of the Full Meeting, she believes it would still infuse frustration because there is no exchange. She stated in the past, people have commented on erroneous information and asked questions although there is no dialogue between the public and the Legislators at that time. She stated the public would still come away frustrated that their questions could not be answered and the Legislators would be frustrated that they are not able to address the erroneous information spoken about.

Councilwoman Hudak stated she understands the viewpoints put forward. She stated she has also found that at Town Board meetings, there are extraneous comments made before the Board. She stated if the comment period is held at the beginning, the entire process will be attenuated. She questioned if there is a rule that limits the time of the Full Legislative Meetings.

Chairwoman LoBue stated yes, in order for a Full Meeting to go past 11:00pm the rules must be waived.

Councilwoman Hudak stated the rules can be waived at the Chair's discretion.

Legislator Nacerino stated that is correct, and that has been done.

Councilwoman Hudak stated her concern is for residents who are unable to attend the Committee Meetings. She stated listening to the audio is much different than attending the meeting and having the opportunity to comment. She suggested waiving the rules when controversial topics are to be voted on so the public may speak and also suggested having a time limit for each person.

Legislator Nacerino stated the rules have been waived in the past to allow public comment prior to the vote being taken. She stated in her opinion, this has not proven to be successful and there is pandemonium that takes place. She stated the hot topic issues are discussed for many months and sometimes years. She stated when the final vote is being taken on a controversial issue at a Full Legislative Meeting and the public attends wanting to voice their opinion, it begs the question "Where has the public been?"

Chairwoman LoBue stated many times the details surrounding a topic change over time, which is why the public may be confused when it comes time for a vote to be taken. She questioned if Legislator Nacerino feels that she is flexible in her role as Chairwoman of the Legislature.

Legislator Nacerino stated yes, she does. She stated she has exercised that flexibility by allowing letters from those who could not attend to be read into the record and by allowing public comment on the Butterfield project before the vote was taken.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what would be lost by having a trial run of allowing public comment before the votes.

Legislator Nacerino stated she would like to respect the Legislative Manual and the policy and procedure that are in place. She stated it is not a matter of not being flexible, it is a matter of policy and procedure and how business is conducted in Putnam County. She restated the options residents have to be involved and to be heard.

Item #5 - Discussion/ Local Law Amending Chapter 95 of the Putnam County Code by Creating the Putnam County Animal Cruelty Registry Law

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what the cost would be to maintain this registry.

Chief of the Putnam County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCSPCA) Kenneth Ross stated the Putnam County registry would follow the pattern of the other registries that are currently in place. He stated the registry would be on the PCSPCA website and would list the individuals who have been convicted of the crimes in the registry. He stated the individual would pay \$50 per year which would support the registry; there would be no cost to the County and no involvement of other agencies. He stated the Sheriff will have oversight of the registry; however it is the court that would send the documents for the individuals. He stated if someone is unable to check the registry they can always call the PCSPCA 24/7. He stated in the past, he has brought pictures and no one wants to see them because they are horrific. He stated if the picture is enough to make someone uncomfortable, it speaks to what role the registry will play. He stated the registry will stop people who have caused those pictures to exist from adopting an animal for a certain period of time. He stated the FBI has recently started tracking animal cruelty crimes, the reason being that they are often precursors to crimes against humans. He stated the registry will prevent cruelty to animals and will stop those convicted of animal abuse crimes from obtaining an animal. He stated recidivism is a major issue with these cases. He stated of lot situations are not publicized in the newspaper, especially if children are involved. He stated animal abuse happens all over Putnam County. He stated the Legislature has the ability to enact a law and stop animal abuse from happening.

Chairwoman LoBue clarified that this registry would be on the PCSPCA website.

Chief Ross stated that is correct.

Chairwoman LoBue stated she did some research and looked into the registry in Dutchess County. She stated when you click on the registry; the user is prompted with the choice to sign up for email alerts, which she believes is a great idea. She stated the costs associated with the registry seem to be minimal.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated she is in favor of moving this forward. She stated this proposal was brought forward by Legislator Gouldman in the beginning of 2015 and it has been a long journey. She commended Chief Ross for taking this registry on and believes it will help the PCSPCA do their job even better.

Legislator Castellano requested further clarification on how an individual is placed on the registry.

Chief Ross stated once the individual is convicted, the court will then mandate that they have to submit a picture of their face to the PCSPCA. He stated that information is then scanned onto the PCSPCA website and remains on the registry for 10 years. He stated anyone who is on the registry cannot own or live with an animal. He stated the individual pays an annual \$50 fee. He stated it is also mandated that an updated picture and address be submitted.

Legislator Castellano questioned what happens if the individual moves out of the State.

Chief Ross stated the individual would remain on the registry because it would still be available for people out of State to search. He stated this law will allow them to possibly link to animal abuse registries in other Counties; allowing the person performing the search to search multiple registries at once.

Legislator Castellano questioned in a hypothetical case that someone were to give away an animal, if that person would be required by this law to check the registry before giving the animal to an individual.

Chief Ross stated yes, they are required to check.

Legislator Castellano questioned what the penalty would be if perhaps, someone had a litter of kittens and gave a kitten away to the wrong person.

Chief Ross stated checking the registry will be a simple task that should be done by anyone selling or giving away an animal. He stated any individual with an animal is responsible for that animal's life. He stated it is important to hold people accountable.

Legislator Castellano stated he understands the severity of animal abuse cases. He stated his concern is not with the professional person who is selling or adopting out animals. He stated his concern is with a family whose animal has a litter and they accidentally give an animal to the wrong person. He questioned how this law would affect those people.

Chief Ross stated that family should check the registry before giving the animal away.

Legislator Castellano questioned how they would know about the registry or that this law is in place.

Legislator Addonizio stated some people do not have access to the Internet.

Chief Ross stated the PCSPCA answers the phone 24/7.

Legislator Addonizio questioned how the person would know to call or check the registry.

Chairwoman LoBue stated this registry and law would be advertised through the press.

Legislator Albano stated the courts should use discretion on a case by case basis and take into consideration that the person may not have known about this law.

Chief Ross stated the judge can rule that there are extenuating circumstances. He restated the importance of the responsibility of having an animal.

Legislator Castellano stated it is important to get the message out there.

Chief Ross stated last time the PCSPCA discussed the registry with the Committee, they posted the proposal on their website and they had about 8,000 people in favor of it and it was shared hundreds of times. He stated the registry is something people want to have. He stated this registry is not geared toward "good people." He stated this year, the PCSPCA has made four (4) arrests and worked with thousands of people to help fix their situations. He stated their intent is to help people.

Legislator Castellano questioned if the PCSPCA will check on those individuals who are on the registry.

Chief Ross stated checks will not be performed.

Legislator Castellano questioned what happens when the PCSPCA becomes aware that an individual on the registry has an animal.

Chief Ross stated the animal cannot be taken away until an arrest is made because the animal is still property. He stated for example, if the PCSPCA was called to check on a situation where an animal looked emaciated, they would go to the location and request vet records. He stated if the vet records are not available, the animal would be brought to the vet. He stated if the vet determines that the animal is emaciated due to a lack of food, the PCSPCA will go back to the home and make an arrest. He stated the case then goes to the District Attorney's Office. He stated many times, the cases will get knocked down to a lesser charge. He stated if an individual gets convicted, the PCSPCA receives their information and it will be put on the registry. He stated usually when an arrest is made the neighbors are the ones who contact the PCSPCA. He stated the purpose is to prevent further animal abuse.

Legislator Castellano stated he is in favor of this. He restated his concern about the person who may have found an animal and is trying to do the right thing by finding the animal a home, but accidentally giving the animal to the wrong person.

PCSPCA Detective Kenneth Ross, Jr. stated in that situation where the person was unaware that the individual they gave the animal to was not supposed to have animals; the PCSPCA would request a sworn statement from that person without charging them.

Legislator Castellano stated that explanation addresses his concern.

Legislator Addonizio stated she is in favor of this law and would like to see it move forward.

Legislator Nacerino stated pets are considered family members and she also supports this law.

Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to move Local Law Amending Chapter 95 of the Putnam County Code by Creating the Putnam County Animal Cruelty Registry Law to the Full Legislative Meeting; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated the Chapter number will need to be amended prior to the Full Meeting; it will be after Section 100.

Item #6 - FYI/ Possible Inquiry to Attorney General – Duly Noted

- a. **Use of County Buses**
- b. **Influence of Constituency by County Department Head**

Item #7 - Discussion/ Litigation Report

- a. **Litigation/ John Doe Number 1, John Doe Number 2, and New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, Inc. v. Putnam County & Michael Bartolotti as Putnam County Clerk**
- b. **Litigation/ Westchester Disabled on the Move, Inc. and Michael Hellmann v. Putnam County and Putnam Golf, Inc.**

At 8:11pm Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to go into Executive Session to address agenda items #7a., #7b., and #8; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

At 8:59pm Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to come out of Executive Session; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Litigation Settlement/ Halebian v. Putnam County

Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #9 - Other Business

a. Approval/ Proclamation Request/ Cullen Malzo

Legislator Albano made a motion to approve the proclamation request; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Item #10 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 9:01pm Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Beth Green.