

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD VIA AUDIO WEBINAR  
PURSUANT TO TEMPORARY EMERGENCY ORDERS**

**Chairwoman Sayegh, Legislators Addonizio & Albano**

**Tuesday**

**6:00PM**

**May 12, 2020**

The meeting was called to order via audio webinar at 6:01 P.M. by Chairwoman Sayegh who lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Committee Members Addonizio, Albano, and Chairwoman Sayegh were present. Also present via audio webinar were Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Nacerino, Jonke, Castellano, and Sullivan as well as Legislative Council Firriolo.

**Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – February 18, 2020 & April 14, 2020**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Item #4 - Update/COVID-19 Response Measures**

**a. Health Department Commissioner Dr. Michael Nesheiwat**

Chairwoman Sayegh stated she would move on to Bureau of Emergency Services (BES) Commissioner Ken Clair while waiting for Dr. Nesheiwat to get on the audio conference.

**b. Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Ken Clair**

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Commissioner Clair for all him and the BES are doing during this pandemic. She stated she is looking for an update on how the BES is responding, the current PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) situation, and how we are moving forward to the next phase.

Commissioner Clair stated to date BES has received and processed many orders for general PPE. He stated all departments in the County have received cloth masks. He stated they have also handed out over 14,517 N95 masks, almost 20,000 surgical masks, and 10,895 cloth masks. He stated BES has also handed out approximately 3,000 each of face/eye protection and two (2) ounce hand sanitizers, as well as almost 4,000 isolation gowns. He stated the good news is that the orders have slowed down. He stated New York State is dealing directly with nursing homes. He stated BES received another 1,008 testing kits today for the Health Department. He stated as far as the next phase of the County's reopening, BES is working with County Executive MaryEllen Odell and Safety Officer John O'Connor. He stated fire departments are still on lockdown but hope to be back to normalcy soon. He stated they are currently doing virtual trainings and classes.

Chairwoman Sayegh requested clarification that the received test kits are going to the Health Department.

Commissioner Clair stated that is current.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned if BES typically orders the test kits.

Commissioner Clair stated yes it goes through BES. He stated that is how the State has mandated the process. He stated it is frustrating to have the State just sending the supplies and dictating where they are going. He stated there is currently confusion on if these test kits are for testing everyone in nursing homes. He stated most orders put in to the State are never filled.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated part of the metrics for reopening is that 30% of the population must be tested every 30 days, which would be about 3,000 people in Putnam County. She questioned if those test kits go through BES and is the County able to receive that many test kits.

Commissioner Clair stated the County only receives what it can get from the State. He stated Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael Nesheiwat can speak better about the metric testing throughout the County, but he knows there is testing at CareMount Medical and Nuvance at Putnam Hospital.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated she will follow up with Dr. Nesheiwat on that question.

Commissioner Clair stated Putnam County is not receiving close to the number of test kits other counties are receiving. He stated for example Dutchess County received 7,000 the other day.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned if the BES has any responsibility for the hospitals to have at least 90 days of PPE on hand in order to advance to the next phase.

Commissioner Clair stated the hospitals have dealt directly with their own suppliers. He stated he believes the hospitals are in good shape with their PPE supplies.

Legislator Albano thanked Commissioner Clair for all the he and the BES are doing.

Legislator Gouldman stated the BES is doing a great job. He questioned if Commissioner Clair is aware of any fire department and/or ambulance corps throughout the County having issues with the number of first responders who are positive for COVID-19.

Commissioner Clair stated is not aware of any issues. He stated in his fire department in Brewster, three (3) members tested positive but they went through quarantine and are now back at work. He stated many first responders have been tested.

Legislator Gouldman stated that is good to hear.

Legislator Montgomery requested clarification that the BES orders the test kits for the County, not the Health Department.

Commissioner Clair stated BES orders the test kits based off of requests from the Health Department.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how many orders have been placed since this the beginning of the pandemic.

Commissioner Clair stated at least nine (9).

Legislator Montgomery questioned how many test kits are ordered at a time.

Commissioner Clair stated BES always have ordered over 1,000, but they only receive about 100. He stated it has been very poor.

Legislator Montgomery stated she has heard some county agencies or agencies that are funded by the County are without PPE. She questioned if a list can be compiled and a survey can be sent to them for their PPE needs.

Commissioner Clair stated if he is given the list he will send the survey. He stated BES has processed 206 orders to date.

Legislator Montgomery stated she is hoping this is a list the County already has. She stated she is surprised to hear agencies such as The Prevention Council, Putnam CAP (Community Action Partnership), and the Women's Resource Center are looking for PPE. She stated she will compile the list.

Commissioner Clair stated the BES is ready to provide PPE.

Legislator Sullivan requested clarification on exactly what PPE is.

Commissioner Clair stated PPE is Personal Protective Equipment and includes gloves, isolation gowns, masks, face shields, goggles, and hand sanitizer.

Legislator Sullivan stated he was under the impression PPE was only the white suits.

Commissioner Clair stated it is any of the previously stated items.

Legislator Sullivan stated requests for agencies to receive PPE need to be specific in what is needed.

Commissioner Clair stated that is correct and is why they have been using a survey. He stated it helps with accountability and who is getting what. He stated isolation gowns and N95 masks are reserved for first responders.

Legislator Sullivan stated he appreciates the explanation. He questioned if BES will determine whether people are asking for more than what they need and have a conversation about what is actually needed.

Commissioner Clair stated they do educate people on what they need to wear. He stated he has seen workers outside in N95 masks and that is not good because it could cause them to pass out.

Legislator Sullivan stated he is glad Commissioner Clair understands exactly what different services need and it is clearly not a one-size-fits-all matter. He thanked Commissioner Clair for the explanation.

Commissioner Clair thanked the Legislators for helping distribute masks and for compiling the list of places who needed supplies with the Health Department. He stated the BES has more supplies, so to let them know if any are needed.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Commissioner Clair for speaking this evening.

Commissioner Clair commended Chairwoman Sayegh for her work on food drives during this pandemic.

#### **Item #4a. Continued**

Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael Nesheiwat thanked Chairwoman Sayegh for the opportunity to speak this evening. He thanked all the elected officials for their strong support during these challenging times. He applauded the nurses, especially those in the Health Department for their tremendous care and compassion. He stated so far there have been 1,290 COVID-19 cases in Putnam County, with 53% being males and 47% females. He stated there are currently 11 patients hospitalized. He added that over 5,700 tests have been given. He stated he speaks with President of Putnam Hospital Peter Kelly on a regular basis. He stated there are currently four (4) patients under investigation for COVID and 109 patients have been discharged because they recovered from COVID. He stated there have been no deaths over the last 72 hours. He stated the Department of Health held six (6) drive-through diagnostic clinics. He stated the last one held tests 141 people and that first responders and healthcare workers are prioritized. He stated the testing is open to any Putnam resident who is symptomatic. He stated testing is now widely available in Putnam County, such as through private doctors and Putnam Hospital. He stated the focus has shifted to contact tracing. He stated Johns Hopkins has online training and New York State will help hire and train contact tracers for local health departments. He spoke about the State's reopening metrics and four (4) phased opening. He stated that the hope is to move towards reopening within the next week. He stated there is also more focus on the antibody testing. He added there will be more drive-through testing days. He stated a resident asked about having the testing on the western side of the county, but having it at the health department is much easier considering the equipment and personnel needed. He mentioned that the timeline for county receiving test results has improved. He noted that the State is having local health departments get more involved with nursing homes and wants every staff member tested twice a week as well as every patient transferred from the local hospital back to the nursing home to test negative before they return to the nursing home. He stated the Health Department received a total of 1,080 field test kits from the State of New York through the BES, which are dedicated for the nursing homes. He stated the County Correctional Facility is not as full as usual due to bail reform and they are practicing distancing and wearing masks. He stated everyone is tested equally, there is no discrimination in testing. He stated the Health Department does not have enough people to do contact tracing, but the State will help supplement. He stated the Health Department notifies people of a positive test within 24 hours. He stated the Health

Department is happy to answer any questions emailed to them at [COVID19@PutnamCountyNY.gov](mailto:COVID19@PutnamCountyNY.gov).

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned where the metric reporting comes from.

Dr. Nesheiwat explained the different metrics and how the various healthcare providers work together to report the data.

Chairwoman Sayegh requested more information on how nursing homes are being handled.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated there are two nursing homes in Putnam County; Putnam Ridge Nursing Facility which has a total of 160 beds of which 121 are being occupied and Putnam Nursing and Rehab, which has 140 beds of which 84 are occupied. He explained again the State's focus on testing in nursing homes.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned if the required testing is feasible for the county.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated as of now, the State is helping to supply the tests.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated 3,000 tests per month would be needed for Putnam County.

Dr. Nesheiwat clarified that the testing statistics needed for the metrics are collaborative for the region.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated the State needs to send more tests to Putnam County.

Dr. Nesheiwat agreed but added that people are not coming out to be tested in Putnam County. He stated the last drive through clinic did not use all the tests.

Legislator Albano stated half of his family had COVID-19 and the testing is very important.

Legislator Addonizio thanked Dr. Nesheiwat and the Health Department for their efforts.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated it is teamwork.

Legislator Montgomery questioned why the daily updates are not more frequent. She questioned why data from nearby hospitals is not compiled, only from Putnam Hospital.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated the updates are dependent on the New York State system and sometimes there are hangups with getting the information. He stated he communicates directly with Putnam Hospital because they are in our county. He stated they do receive information from the State for Putnam residents who go to other hospitals. He stated he can certainly look into it and we can get back to the legislative body and I can find out if we can call local hospitals. He questioned which hospitals Legislator Montgomery was referring to.

Legislator Montgomery stated New York Presbyterian, Hudson Valley, and Vassar in Poughkeepsie.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated he will look into it.

Legislator Montgomery requested clarification on the timeline for which contact tracing is going to be up and running.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated it is his understanding that the State will help hire and train contact tracers and that it is already ongoing.

Legislator Montgomery stated she believes contact tracing is more important than testing right now and questioned if the County is currently doing contact tracing.

Dr. Nesheiwat agreed and stated the County is already doing contact tracing.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there are guidelines for employee testing and if Dr. Nesheiwat would write a prescription for an employee to be tested.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated he is unsure of the legalities for writing prescriptions for employees. He stated tests are widely available through private doctors and the hospitals.

Legislator Montgomery stated she just wants employees to feel comfortable going back to work.

Dr. Nesheiwat agreed and reiterated that any questions can be directed to [COVID19@PutnamCountyNY.gov](mailto:COVID19@PutnamCountyNY.gov) and the Health Department will respond to them as soon as possible.

Legislator Jonke questioned if employees are going to Legislator Montgomery instead of the Health Department with their concerns. He questioned if Dr. Nesheiwat has heard of any employees concerned with coming back to work.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated he has not. He stated the Safety Committee is working hard for a safe plan.

Legislator Sullivan stated the Safety Committee which is made up of the Department Heads in the County, which includes the Union Heads, have all been discussing how to protect employees and make sure employees are safe. He stated if any employee has a concern they should contact the correct channels.

Chairwoman Sayegh noted that Safety Officer John O'Connor is next on the agenda.

Legislator Nacerino thanked Dr. Nesheiwat for his comprehensive overview.

### **c. Safety Officer John O'Connor**

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned how the County is preserving the safety of our employees, safety of the public and how we go about opening up our office buildings and what are the procedures.

Safety Officer O'Connor stated many employees are still working and the Safety Committee, which he chairs, the Safety Committee has come up with measures to keep everyone safe. He stated they consulted with OSHA and CDC, with their COVID 19 control and prevention documents. He stated the Safety Committee came up with a five (5) page document and talked about bringing back in phased operation. He stated for example Consumer Affairs does interface with the public and moved a lot of that online, so the employees are still working, but they are protected. He stated there are no longer waiting rooms that do not meet social distancing requirements. He stated Plexi Glass will be installed where in person interfacing is required. He stated all business with the public will be appointment based. He added that entry into the facilities is prohibited without the use of face masks or face covering at all times. He stated employees will be given PPE and there will be hand sanitizer stations made available for all the offices. He stated they are making sure there is a minimal risk to everyone involved.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned the occupancy for each of these departments and public spaces. She questioned if that is determined by the Safety Committee or is that something that is determined by the Department Heads to ensure social distancing guidelines.

Safety Officer O'Connor stated the department heads know their departments best, so there will be consultation on what is necessary for operation and what can be done with a minimum of public interaction.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned where the cleaning guidelines come from.

Safety Officer O'Connor stated it is what CDC and OSHA recommends. He stated the County is doing all it can with the resources that are available. He stated Plexi Glass and like products are very hard to find.

Legislator Addonizio questioned what will be done for the County locations/offices where the Plexi Glass is not available.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated the Plexi Glass has been put in all the public places in the County facilities. He stated people should be wearing their own protective gear. He stated the Plexi Glass is just another layer.

Legislator Albano stated he had no questions. He stated that he believes the County has a good plan in place and it is moving forward.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if the Plexi Glass is mandatory for Retail Business.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated he is not aware of the requirements for Retail Business. He stated his job focuses on the safety and welfare of the County Employees. He stated with that said, now that the Governor requires everyone over the age of two (2) wear a face mask, everyone has their own sneeze guard on. He stated a mask is not so much to protect the wearer, it is to protect you from those near you.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if there has been discussion about how the DMV will be able to manage crowd control once they reopen.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated the New York State directive is to take a combination approach limiting the number of people allowed in the office at a time and making sure those people are respecting the social distancing.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if the DMV will be taking appointments.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated right, that is now part of the reopening plan.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if the Safety Committee is a new committee formed since the onset of COVID-19.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated the Safety Committee was established in 2010 or 2011.

Legislator Montgomery questioned who the members of the Committee are.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated he is the Chairman of the Committee, Sean Rogan from the Health Department, Mike Cunningham from Office for Senior Resources, Jane Meunier from the Health Department and the local president of the CSEA, Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton, Adriene Iasoni from the Personnel Department PUMA he stated there are also members from DSS and the Sheriff's Department.

Legislator Montgomery requested confirmation that representatives from the County's Unions are members of the Safety Committee.

Safety Officer John O'Connor he confirmed that is correct.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if this is a committee that the Legislature appoints to or is it a committee that the County Executive appoints to.



Safety Officer John O'Connor stated it is not a standing committee that is appointed through election process. He stated it is not like the Traffic Safety Board, as an example.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if a Legislator is a liaison or do they ever attend the meetings.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated in the six (6) years he has been a member of the Board, there has not been a Legislative Liaison. He stated possibly a Legislator may have attended as a guest.

Legislator Montgomery requested a copy of the presentation be sent to the Legislature Office that Safety Officer John O'Connor will be giving to the Department Heads on Thursday.

Safety Officer John O'Connor confirmed he would do that.

Legislator Sullivan stated as a follow up to an earlier question. He stated that he believes the Safety Committee was formed by the County Executive many years ago. He questioned the status of the thermometers the County Executive wants used at each county location.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated some of the remote handheld thermometers have been acquired by the Bureau of Emergency Services (BES). He stated they are trying to get more of them. He stated they are also looking at employees taking their own temperatures.

Legislator Sullivan stated that the BES has in the area of 20 -30 of the handheld thermometers.

Safety Officer John O'Connor stated they have about 20. He stated the County is working to get more.

#### **Item #4 - Discussion/Disaster Mental Health Resources/American Red Cross/Hudson Valley Chapter Executive Director Kelly Formoso**

Chairwoman Sayegh welcomed American Red Cross member/Hudson Valley Chapter Executive Director Kelly Formoso & Board Member Dr. James Halpern.

American Red Cross/Hudson Valley Chapter Executive Director Kelly Formoso stated they provide services and support to communities every day. She stated their work never stops, even during this Corona Virus crisis. She stated they have been collecting plasma from individuals who have fully recovered from the COVID-19, to help with treatment of the seriously ill patients in coordination with the FDA and their additional partners. She stated they offer families a safe place to stay and food to eat after disasters. She stated there are essential courses offered such as

Resuscitation Training, CPR and First Aid which helps medical workers stay current on their certifications. She stated that they also support military families and veterans with emergency communication messages and online workshops. She stated the American Red Cross has also started operating a Virtual Family Assistance Center. She stated the purpose is to offer comfort, support and provide information and referral for New York State families who have lost loved ones to the COVID-19 Corona Virus. She provided more detail on the Virtual Family Assistance Center. She stated at this point she will have Dr. James Halpern speak to what a Crisis Counselor is and would do at the Virtual Family Assistance Center.

Dr. James Halpern stated the American Red Cross has been doing disaster mental health since the 1990s and is the forefront of this effort. He stated there are some major things to focus on in terms of what people are facing in terms of loss of family and friends during this time. He explained the crisis counselors and spiritual care workers are available to offer grief counseling. He stated there is advice available for parents in terms of what to say and how to help their children deal with their emotions. He stated studies show that helping survivors to get in touch with their emotions, help them to deal with their emotions and provide guidance in terms of teaching healthy coping skills are all very beneficial for individuals as they move forward. He stated for those who may be more comfortable with speaking to a spiritual care worker, their Chaplains are equipped to deal with people of all faiths or no faith.

Executive Director Formoso stated services are provided virtually and is confidential. She stated families who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 can fill out an on-line intake form, available in English and Spanish at [www.RedCross.org/nyscovidfamilysupport](http://www.RedCross.org/nyscovidfamilysupport) the website in Spanish [www.RedCross.org/nyscovidapoyofamiliar](http://www.RedCross.org/nyscovidapoyofamiliar). She stated for people who do not have access to a computer they can call 585- 957- 8187. She stated intake forms can be filled out by a friend who thinks someone needs help, may need assistance or an agency working on behalf of a family. She stated they are working with Putnam Hospital Health Care Professionals and have shared Dr. Halpern's Healthcare Professional video with them. She stated the American Red Cross will be doing an appreciation event next week.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated it was discussed on a Social Services Provider Conference Call that there will be a tremendous need to assist those who have been on the front line during the COVID-19 Pandemic. She questioned if the American Red Cross Services are free.

Executive Director Formoso stated the services are free.

Dr. Halpern stated he would expect that many of the health care workers may need support, professional help beyond the crisis counseling that the American Red Cross has available. He stated at this time there is no long-term counseling offered by the American Red Cross.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned if the American Red Cross would offer referrals.

Dr. Halpern stated they would. He stated the long-term treatment, such as what veterans receive, is what he believes may be valuable to the COVID-19 front line workers. He stated evidence shows the long-term treatment works.

Executive Director Formoso expressed her gratitude for allowing her and Dr. Halpern to speak about the American Red Cross programs and asked that each Legislator please share the information with their constituents.

Chairwoman Sayegh facilitated the expression of hers and her colleagues' gratitude and appreciation for all that they do, and that the American Red Cross offers. She stated a respected member of our Putnam County Community, Greg Amato, recently passed. She stated he was a very active volunteer for the American Red Cross, and at any opportunity sang his praises of the work that is done by the organization.

#### **Item #6 - Approval/Proclamation Request/Putnam Hospital Staff/Legislator Nacerino**

(Please see minutes under Item #7, as both agenda Items #6 & 7 were addressed together.)

#### **Item #7 - Approval/Proclamation Request/Essential Workers Countywide/Legislator Nacerino**

Chairwoman Sayegh stated agenda items #6 & #7 were requested by Legislator Nacerino. She requested that Legislator Nacerino speak to them.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she would like to address agenda items #6 & #7 in concert. She stated although it is not necessary that she seek approval at the Committee level to bring these Proclamations to the Full Legislature she found them to be special. She stated given the unprecedented circumstances thrust upon these workers. She stated these proclamations express sentiments that she believes all her colleagues individually and collectively agree with. She stated that when she first requested that they be drafted, she thought that they could be presented at the June Full Meeting. She stated however that is not the case, due to the COVID-19. She stated she believed it to be important to convey the Legislature's gratitude, appreciation and respect to our healthcare workers, our grocery store workers, pharmacy workers, nursing home workers, childcare personnel, postal carriers, UPS carriers, etc. She stated these workers, of all trades, have truly been our lifeline, heroes and our earth angels. Respectfully she requested that the Committee members move these proclamations to the Full Mtg.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated that she agrees this is a wonderful gesture to put forth to express the Legislators collective appreciation.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve the two (2) Proclamations: 1. Putnam Hospital Staff 2. Essential Workers Countywide; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

#### **Item #8 - Other Business**

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional to hear from Commissioner of Social Services Michael Piazza; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

**a. Update/COVID-19 Response Measures/Department of Social Services  
Michael Piazza**

Commissioner Piazza stated he will speak to the Mental Health and Department of Social Services matters. He stated he will begin with Mental Health. He stated there have been weekly meetings with the providers. He explained the purpose of the weekly meeting is to offer them support and to hear how they are doing and offer whatever support possible in order for them to meet the mission of providing support of services to people in the County. He stated there are a number of elements to the service that is provided. He stated the 24/7 Crisis Hot Line, which has received 180 calls from March 1, 2020 to May 4, 2020. He stated that is a 32% increase over the same period last year. He stated on the general 211 phone number there were 1,851 calls. He explained 1,400 were related to COVID -19. He stated the majority of the 211 calls are about food insufficiency, inquiring as to where food pantries are and where they can get access to food. He stated the emergency room visits are down for psychiatric crisis and the psychiatric admissions to the in-patient unit are down. He stated at the same time the fatal unintentional overdoses are significantly lower in the first four (4) months of 2020 as compared to last year. He stated the suicides are low, and they were low last year as well. He stated as the American Red Cross presentation expressed there is a great deal of concern for the mental health of people moving forward. He stated in many parts of the Country there are increases of overdoses and suicides that we are not seeing in our area. He stated that there is a concern that there may be a time lag. He stated so that is why they are taking actions to be prepared. He stated in addition to the normal stress of a virus there is the financial stress that is present. He stated people feel a lot of shame when they are not working and when they cannot support themselves or their families. He stated that can lead to depression and thoughts of suicide. He stated Dr. Halpern raised the concern of people who have lost loved ones, and due to the current conditions could not be with that person in the hospital. He stated the natural behavior and ritual of a wake, funeral and burial assist to lead people to a closure and help people to grieve and mourn. He stated there is a lot of concern about PTSD among health care workers. He stated the agencies that serve outpatient programs they are open and are meeting with people via Skype and WhatsApp. He stated there are discussions ongoing about how to reopen. He stated the outpatient providers will not reopen as long as they have waivers that permit them to get paid for telephone/video conferencing. He stated they will try to keep the sessions out of the office as long as it is feasible. He stated the major concern is the potential financial cuts coming down from the State of New York. He stated the guidance they are getting is that it will be a major cut even with Federal help to the State and local governments. He stated the Governor's Executive Order allowing the telephone/video and email applications goes until June 6, 2020. He stated

his office has not closed at all. He stated they had to reduce the number of staff members in the office, however they were never closed. He stated applications for public assistance, food stamps, Medicaid, temporary assistance and HEAP are available online. He stated the online option increases the ability of the clients not to have to come into the office to get the services they need. He stated the efforts and work of the food pantries have made a huge impact. He stated Legislator Addonizio has been working with Martha Elder. He stated they work to have pre-cooked meals brought to some homeless families and individuals that have been in motels.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Commissioner Piazza for his update.

#### **b. Approval/ Opposition to Cuts in State Mental Health Funding**

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

Chairwoman Sayegh requested that Commissioner Piazza speak to the resolution, Opposition to Cuts in State Mental Health Funding, being considered tonight by this Committee.

Commissioner Piazza stated it is projected that the number of people needing mental health assistance is going to increase. He stated this is no time to be cutting funding. He stated additionally the co-pays during this have been forgiven, which is fine. He explained the agencies use the co-pays to make up the financial gaps that they face. He stated the proposed resolution documents requests that the State pay attention to the needs they articulated that the community has in regards to substance abuse and mental health treatment.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve the resolution Opposition to Cuts in State Mental funding; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

#### **c.Approval/Resolution Calling on New York State to Release Enhanced Federal Medicaid Matching Funds to Counties and New York City**

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to waive the rules and accept the other business, resolution Calling on New York State to Release Enhanced Federal Medicaid Matching Funds to Counties and New York City; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated this resolution was brought forward by Legislator Sullivan. She stated this is a resolution in response to COVID-19 Pandemic. She read from the resolution. She stated in summary throughout New York and New York City due to the extensive loss of revenue due to the shut down there is financial struggle.

Commissioner Piazza stated this is part of the Counties being held harmless for the increase in Medicaid that New York State had implemented in the Medicaid law. He stated the Federal Government provided the funds to share with the Counties and this proposed resolution is asking that it continue to be the case. He stated the passing of this resolution will communicate that the

Putnam County's Medicaid cost not increase based upon things Putnam County has no control over.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Resolution Calling on New York State to Release Enhanced Federal Medicaid Matching Funds to Counties and New York City; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Legislator Gouldman made an announcement that on May 23, 2020 the Putnam Valley Food Pantry will be open. He stated for more details please email: [PutnamValleyFoodPantry@gmail.com](mailto:PutnamValleyFoodPantry@gmail.com).

Chairwoman Sayegh announced there will be a Countywide Food Drive.

Legislator Montgomery stated she had sent a request to Chairwoman Sayegh to accept as additional a proposed resolution, "Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to The Disaster Emergency". She stated the topic of expanding services and temporary facilities for Health and Human Service Providers was of great concern today on the Behavioral Health conference call.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated her appreciation and confirmed her receipt of Legislator Montgomery's request. She stated she received said request shortly before this meeting began. She stated she took a quick review and it appears very broad based. She stated she believes it may be a matter better suited for review by the Rules, enactments & Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

Legislator Montgomery stated it is basically the Governor's Executive Order, already in place, restated, requesting the continuation of what is already in place. She stated for the record this is the third item in two (2) months that she has requested be addressed by this committee, that has been ignored by the Chair.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated that is not true. She stated the proposed resolution Legislator Montgomery is referring to talks about election law, the officers' law none of which the Health Committee would address. She suggested that Legislator Montgomery forward her matter to the Rules, Enactments & Intergovernmental Relations Committee. She stated additionally it is a seven (7) page document, she believes it will be beneficial to have more time for the Legislators to review the material.

#### **Item #7 - Adjournment**

There being no further business at 8:39PM Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.