

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Held In The**  
**PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING**  
**ROOM 318**  
**CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**  
**Members: Chairman Oliverio, Legislators LoBue and Scuccimarra**

**Wednesday**

**September 10, 2014**

**The meeting was called to order at 5:00 P.M. by Chairman Oliverio who requested Legislator Scuccimarra lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Scuccimarra, and Chairman Oliverio were present. Legislator LoBue was absent. Legislator LoBue arrived at 5:30.**

**Item #3 – Approval of Minutes – August 12, 2014**

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

**Item #6 – Discussion/Algonquin Gas Transmission**

**a. SPECTRA/Notification of Blowdowns/Director IT/GIS Tom Lannon/Commissioner of Emergency Services Adam Stiebeling**

Chairman Oliverio stated Resolution #182 was passed, which states when the Algonquin Pipeline Transmission has a blowdown, they need to notify the County. He stated after Resolution #182 passed a group of constituents then questioned how the County will notify the public.

Director of IT/GIS Tom Lannon stated before Resolution #182 was passed he would have recommended having language state that it would be the responsibility of Spectra Energy Corporation to notify the public of the blowdowns.

Chairman Oliverio questioned if Director Lannon recommends Resolution #182 be amended to state it is the responsibility of the Spectra Energy Corporation to notify the public of a blowdown.

Director Lannon stated that is correct. He stated having the County notify the public can become challenging.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to amend Resolution #182; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

**b. AIM Project/FYI- Duly Noted**

**c. Public Comment Period/Cortlandt Manor, NY/FYI**

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned when the Public Hearing will occur.

Chairman Oliverio stated the Public Hearing will be in regards to the expansion of the Algonquin Pipeline and it will be taking place on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Item #4 – Peers Influence Peers/New Program/President Frank Reale**

Chairman Oliverio stated the Peers Influence Peers Program (“Peers Program”) came to the Putnam Valley High School to show their newest film “Chasing It”. He stated the County funds the Peers Program annually and the work they do is very important. He stated the Peers Program was approved of a grant for \$60,000 from the State to present the film to all of the schools in Putnam County.

Peers Influence Peers President Frank Reale stated the Peers Program has children working on films that involve various social issues that they are faced with today such as domestic violence or drug use. He displayed the trailer of “Chasing It” to the Committee. He stated the Peers Program has been around for 22 years and he has seen the positive impact it has on the children as the films are created.

Vice President Stephen Velichko stated he started being involved with the Peers Program his junior year of high school. He stated he originally became involved with the Peers Program because he desired to be an actor. He stated after being involved, the Peers Program wanted him to become more involved and he began to learn the production side of creating a film. He stated the Peers Program was the only program that was nationally broadcasted. He stated since 2011 he has had four (4) friends pass away from a heroin overdose. He stated the United States has 90% of the Heroin possession in the world and New York contains 20% of all Heroin in the United States. He stated the Peers Program wanted to be proactive, which resulted in the creation of the film “Chasing It”. He stated it would be beneficial to establish another program on the Eastern side of the County to further the awareness of serious issues such as the Heroin Crisis.

President Reale stated the Peers Program in the Town of Putnam Valley meets every Thursday night. He stated the children that live outside of the Town of Putnam Valley become involved with the Peers Program generally through a “back door” such as children attending B.O.C.E.S School for video production. He stated it is challenging for the children who live in areas like the Village of Brewster to travel 45 minutes to the Town of Putnam Valley to attend the Peers Program, especially in bad weather. He stated it would be beneficial to have the Peers Program on the Eastern side of the County especially after the film “Chasing It” being viewed by all of the

schools. He stated he was planning to rent out a room from Cornerstone Park where it is a 15 mile radius from all of the other high schools on the Eastern side of Putnam County.

Executive Vice President Buck Heller stated the film is the result of the youth participating in the Peers Program; however, the process of creating the film is what he is most interested in. He stated he works with some of the biggest executives, actors and political figures as a life and speech coach. He stated the children that participate in the Peers Program receive the same training as a client would. He stated the children that participate in the Peers Program learn how to interview well, learn about theater management, writing and every aspect of production. He stated there is a lot of interest from the children that live in the Eastern side of the County to join the Peers Program.

President Reale stated he truly wants to have the Peers Program on the Eastern side of the County, however to do so the Peers Program needs more funding.

Chairman Oliverio questioned how often would the Peers Program meet at the proposed Cornerstone Park location?

President Reale stated about once a week the Peers Program would meet on the Eastern side of the County so the group can conduct training and then have filming sessions. He stated he was a basketball coach for a long time. He stated he uses the analogy that basketball was the “carrot”, the reason children wanted to join the team. He stated as a coach the important lessons learned was not about shooting a basketball it was about learning how to interact with the team. He stated in the case of the Peers Program the “carrot” is the technology but the real message is the research done on the various social issues. He stated the information learned about the various social issues is very valuable. He gave the example of a girl working on a film regarding domestic violence and after creating the film she realized her mother and herself were subjected to verbal abuse by her father.

Chairman Oliverio questioned what type of financial assistance the Peers Program is looking for.

President Reale stated the new Peers Program would cost \$125,000. He stated the Peers Program receives grant money from others, for instance \$60,000 from the State. He stated the Peers Program is requesting an additional \$15,000 from the County to help run the program in the Eastern side of the County.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned how much money does the County already give to the Peers Program.

President Reale stated the County gives the Peers Program \$21,000.

Chairman Oliverio stated the Peers Program is requesting a total of \$36,000 which will include the requested additional money. He stated the request is something the Legislature can bring to the attention of the Administration. He stated he understands the worth of the Peers Program.

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

Legislator Nacerino stated she understands the County is under budget constraints and there are no promises given to the Peers Program; however the message the Peers Program gives and the lessons the children learn are very compelling.

Chairman Oliverio encouraged the Legislators to watch the film “Chasing It”. He stated a father from the Town of Putnam Valley is interviewed and talks about losing his son to a Heroin overdose.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Peers Program is a great way to reach out to children before problems arise.

Executive Vice President Heller stated there is a lot of wasted revenue that is dedicated towards helping children through various programs. He stated the money in the Peers Program goes directly to the children.

Vice President Velichko stated participating in the Peers Program is a lot of work. He stated the goal of the Peers Program is to have a strong impact on the children.

**Item #5 – Discussion/Putnam County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (“SPCA”)/ Funding/ President Kenneth Ross**

Chairman Oliverio stated the SPCA was discussed at the June Health Committee Meeting. He stated the Committee wanted to assist the SPCA in terms of funding.

SPCA President Kenneth Ross stated the SPCA is an anomaly in the law which causes a problem for funding. He stated although the SPCA is considered law enforcement the grants are written for government agencies and not for non-for-profit organizations. Therefore, the SPCA does not qualify for any State funding or Federal funding. He stated the SPCA will hold fundraisers and other events to raise money. He stated the issue with fundraising is if the SPCA Officers receive a call they have to stop fundraising and answer the complaint. He stated it becomes challenging to do their job and come up with the needed funding at the same time. He stated every year the Putnam SPCA is able to raise approximately \$70,000. He stated the SPCA will also look to their yearly budget and see what can be cut from their budget like salary, or uniforms. He stated the

services the SPCA provides is greatly needed. He stated there are many circumstances where an animal crime is linked to a human crime. He stated any assistance the County can provide would help the SPCA greatly.

Chairman Oliverio stated he appreciated the budget breakdown that President Ross provided to the Committee. He stated the County could assist with funding the essentials which would cost approximately \$50,000. He stated this will be discussed during the budget process and stated any help in funding would benefit the SPCA. He stated it is his understanding that the SPCA does a lot of work in the Town of Putnam Valley.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if any other towns have requested the SPCA's services.

President Ross stated the Town of Putnam Valley had a unique problem and requested assistance from the SPCA. He stated having the SPCA being written into the town code, like the Town of Putnam Valley, the SPCA Officers can assist with more issues. He stated it is his understanding that the Town of Patterson is going to discuss the potential of having the SPCA being written in their town code. He stated there is more the SPCA can do for the County.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if the SPCA has any affiliation with the Putnam Humane Society.

President Ross stated no, the Putnam Humane Society is a separate entity.

Legislator Nacerino stated the SPCA does important work and after the SPCA attended the June Health Committee meeting she reached out to the Town of Patterson asking for the SPCA to be on the Town Board Agenda. She stated the SPCA conducts different work than a dog patrol officer.

Legislator Albano questioned if there is a charge for the SPCA's service or a fine given to the people who violate such animal laws. He stated if there is such a fine or charge, it can cover some of the expenses for the SPCA.

President Ross stated 99% of the time the SPCA Officers will make an arrest. He stated there are fines for circumstances like a dog being left in the car on a hot day; however the money from the fines will go back into the town. He stated when the SPCA writes citations it creates revenue for the town where the violation occurred. He stated to be proactive; the SPCA patrolled the whole County during the hot days to ensure an animal was not suffering in the car from the heat. He stated the SPCA Officers would get a hold of the owner on those hot days before the SPCA could write a citation to educate the community. He stated the SPCA does not charge for their services.

Legislator Albano stated the SPCA should be paid for what they do.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated every town contributes a certain amount to the Putnam Humane Society.

President Ross stated in order to use the Putnam Humane Society the towns will contract them out. He stated the SPCA has County jurisdiction. He stated the SPCA will not say that they will not come to a town because they do not pay a fee. He stated under State law the SPCA has jurisdiction within the County to enforce the animal cruelty laws and he stated the SPCA does not need a contract to enforce those laws. He stated town code dictates dangerous dogs and nuisance complaints which are civil penalties. He stated the SPCA enforces criminal penalties and therefore to enforce both criminal and civil penalties the SPCA needs to be written into a town's town code.

Legislator LoBue stated it is her understanding the SPCA will be talking to the Town of Patterson and the Town of Carmel. She questioned when the SPCA meets with both of these towns will the SPCA ask to be written into the town's code and also ask for funding.

President Ross stated the Town of Patterson requested for the SPCA to come and discuss the additional services that the SPCA can provide by being written into their town code. He stated in the Town of Carmel the SPCA will be discussing the possibility of being written into their town code as well as request for funding. He stated any assistance in regards to funding would be of great help; although their service is not contingent upon funding from the towns.

Legislator LoBue stated the SPCA is similar to calling the police. She continued to explain that the public is not charged when the police are called for service.

President Ross stated he agreed with Legislator LoBue's statement.

Legislator LoBue questioned what type of financial entity the SPCA is.

President Ross stated the SPCA is a non-for-profit, 501C3 and any donations received are tax deductible. He restated that since the SPCA is an anomaly in the law, they are not eligible for law enforcement grants because they are a nongovernment agency.

Legislator LoBue stated on the SPCA Officer's badge it says police. She questioned who grants the SPCA police authority.

President Ross stated the SPCA is in the Criminal Procedure Law and are Peace Officers under State Law. He stated the SPCA Officers go through the same training that other police officers go through. He stated the SPCA is on the roster of Division of Criminal Justice Services.

Legislator LoBue questioned why the SPCA is not eligible for State grants when the SPCA is recognized as law enforcement in the State.

President Ross stated SPCA is not a government agency.

Chairman Oliverio stated he would like to forward the SPCA's 2015 Budget to the Administration requesting for this matter to be included in the budget process.

Legislator Albano questioned if the County can include a small fee in the violation ticket that can assist in funding the SPCA.

Chairman Oliverio stated a law would need to be written to include a fee. He stated he believes that direct funding would also assist the SPCA. He stated the County funds various agencies; however this is a law enforcement agency that is utilized for our animals.

President Ross stated including a fee within the violation ticket would taint the work of the SPCA.

Legislator LoBue stated the town's town codes in Putnam County need to be changed.

President Ross stated having the SPCA be written into the town's code enables the SPCA to handle civil violations as well as criminal violations

Legislator Scuccimarra stated it is the recognition of the SPCA that is important.

**Item #7 – Approval/Budgetary Amendment (14A085)/Department of Social Services/Child Advocacy Center**

Chairman Oliverio stated this budgetary amendment is requesting for new equipment for the Child Advocacy Center. He stated there is no fiscal impact.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the total amount of the budgetary amendment request is.

Chairman Oliverio stated the total amount is \$39,402.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve the Budgetary Amendment (14A085); Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

**Item #8 – Budgetary Amendment (14A081)/Health Department/Revise Resolution #148/FYI- Duly Noted**

**Item #9 – Budgetary Amendment (14A084)/Department of Social Services/Child Fatality Review Team/FYI- Duly Noted**

**Item #10 – Correspondence/Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)/Budget/Sheriff's Department/Department of Social Services/FYI**

Chairman Oliverio stated after the August Health Committee meeting as Chairman of the Health Committee, he requested for Sheriff Smith and Commissioner of Social Services Mike Piazza to consider adding \$25,000 to their budget for the CIT Training. He stated the CIT Training will allow law enforcement agencies to be trained in how to handle those with a mental illness. He stated the Legislative Office received a letter from Sheriff Smith who stated the Putnam County Sheriff's Department is going to utilize an \$11,500 grant from the New York State Office of Mental Health. He stated he understands that Commissioner Piazza co-signed the letter sent from Sheriff Smith however; he would like Commissioner Piazza's thoughts on this matter.

Commissioner Piazza stated the Department of Social Services has been working on a plan to move forward with bringing training to the all of the law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of an emotionally disturbed individual. He stated the CIT Training is 40 hours and therefore, there was a concern of the cost of the CIT Training due to the overtime for the law enforcement. He stated to train the Putnam County Sheriff Deputies it would cost approximately \$180,000 due to the 40 hours of overtime for each Sheriff Deputy.

Chairman Oliverio stated he understands the County Jail is becoming a mental health center for the County. He stated the idea of training the law enforcement to understand how to handle an individual with a mental illness is paramount. He stated he is afraid that this matter will not move forward.

Commissioner Piazza stated he understands Chairman Oliverio's concern. He stated the Sheriff's Department is aware that there is someone from the Department of Social Services available to talk to during a case, which is part of the training for the Sheriff's Department Deputies. He stated a colleague in Rochester County suggested beginning a system mapping exercise. He stated there is some Federal funding coming from the State Office of Mental Health to help pay for the overtime to train the law enforcement for certain police departments in Westchester County, Monroe County, Schenectady County, Onodaga County and Nassau County but, not for Putnam County.

Legislator LoBue questioned what a system mapping exercise is.

Commissioner Piazza stated a system mapping involves law enforcement and mental health providers. He stated the system mapping was created by Chief Johnson from the Carmel Police Department to help establish the process of a law enforcement officer bringing an emotionally disturbed person (“EDP”) to the hospital. He stated the system mapping system is a document that illustrates why the emotionally disturbed person is there, and the level of concern for that person.

Putnam County Undersheriff Peter Convery stated the Sheriff’s Department has a very good relationship with the emergency room staff and with the Department of Social Services. He stated the Sheriff’s Department is becoming “self” experts in dealing with those of a mental illness because there is an increase in calls the Sheriff’s Department receives regarding an EDP. He stated the Sheriff’s Department’s protocol in handling an EDP works well.

Commissioner Piazza stated the Department of Social Services will make the hospital aware that an EDP is coming to provide the hospital staff background of that individual. He stated a part of the systems mapping is information sharing. He stated information will be shared such as if the EDP has been violent before or if the EDP has access to a weapon. He stated the Department of Social Services will also provide this information to the Sheriff’s Department. He provided an example of how frequent that the Sheriff’s Department Deputies handle the EDPs and how the Deputies have a good rapport with the EDPs.

Chairman Oliverio stated if there is a need for funding for the CIT Training he does not want the Sheriff’s Department or the Department of Social Services to hesitate to ask for assistance in funding. He stated this matter is a priority. He stated he has seen situations in the military where the EDP will act out more violently because they are scared of police.

Commissioner Piazza stated the task force between the Sheriff’s Department of the Department of Social Services is seeing a need for more training, especially with the heroin crisis on the rise.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned if some of the EDP cases are due to drug use.

Commissioner Piazza stated a heroin overdose generally entails an individual being unconscious. He stated a PCP overdose or other drugs or especially alcohol will create a person to be aggressive. He stated there are certain drugs that will create a psychosis.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated the training will help a first responder or a police officer know what symptoms to look for in terms of drug use.

Commissioner of Bureau of Emergency Service Adam Steibeling stated the 911 Dispatch Center will receive calls and provide the information to police officers. He stated he included training

in the Bureau of Emergency Services 2015 Budget to educate the Dispatchers. He stated the Town of Kent Fire Department recently held a seminar and mainly educated the first responders on EDPs.

Commissioner Piazza stated a colleague from Broome County stated the biggest mental health provider in Broome County is the County Jail and a majority of individuals in that jail are using mental health services.

**Item #11 – Medication Take Back Day/Cold Spring/FYI**

Legislator Scuccimarra stated this event is very important. She stated her motivation for a Medication Take Back Day originated to keep the water clean. She stated now this issue has expanded on the notion of getting the prescription drugs off the streets.

**Item #12 – ProAct/ Putnam County Discount Card/ FYI**

Chairman Oliverio stated this is a successful program. He stated he wanted to thank Legislator Albano for bringing the ProAct program to the attention of the Health Committee. He stated it is one of the most successful programs in the County.

**Item #13 – Other Business**

**a. Anti-Bullying Awareness Month/Proclamation**

Chairman Oliverio stated in Rensselaer County there is a movement to proclaim October Anti-Bullying Awareness month. He stated in New York State the schools are already legally bound to document if a child makes fun of another for various things such as weight, sex, religion, or ethnicity. He stated bullying is taken very seriously. He stated the stigma that bullying can put on a child is tremendous. He stated he has no problem having this being proclaimed at the next Full Legislative Meeting.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to approve the Anti-Bullying Awareness Month/Proclamation for the October Full Legislature Meeting; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in Favor.

**Item #14 – Adjournment**

**There being no further business, at 6:00 p.m. Chairman Oliverio made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.