

**PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING
HELD IN ROOM 318 OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Albano, Legislators Othmer & Scuccimarra

Friday **5:30 PM** **October 4, 2013**
(Economic Development Budget Mtg. will Immediately Follow)

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Albano who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Othmer and Scuccimarra and Chairman Albano were present.

Item # 3 - 2014 Budget Review

All 01 General Fund

**Planning and Development Department – Account 8020
Part Bus System – Account 5630**

Chairman Albano questioned the line **54647 Sub-Contractors**.

Transportation Manager Vincent Tamagna stated the sub-contractor right now is Jack Reilly. He stated the next phase is to develop a marketing plan to get the sub-contractor in. He also stated the Planning Department is looking to re-brand and get more ridership for the buses.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated re-branding the buses is a great idea.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated a goal he has set is to increase ridership by 20% within the next year.

Chairman Albano stated he had some constituents who were unaware the buses were open to the public.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated due to a recommendation from the Task Force one PART bus now has a destination sign on the front and more have been ordered, which cost them no money.

Legislator Oliverio stated last year the actual for line **54371 Gasoline and Motor Oil** was almost \$479,000, the requested for 2014 is \$402,000 and it was reduced to \$262,000. He questioned if this was because of the addition of diesel vehicles.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated this is due to a split in the numbers. In line **54371 Gasoline and Motor Oil** \$402,000 was requested and that number was split, giving said line \$262,000 while putting the other \$140,000 into line **54373 Diesel**; it is a gas/diesel split.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned why there was nothing in line **54631 Electric**.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated that line is in the Highway Department's budget.

Legislator LoBue stated in 2013, there was \$50,000 in line **54682 Special Services** to hire a consultant. She questioned what the \$25,000 in the same line would be used for in 2014.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated this is a consulting line and it is important to have money in the line in case a consultant needs to be hired. He stated one thing he is aware of is the marketing campaign that was mentioned earlier since it is not part of the RFP right now.

Legislator LoBue stated the \$50,000 from last year and the \$25,000 from this year makes a total of \$75,000 which is money that could be put toward a new Commissioner of Planning, which should be priority.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated he is currently managing Transportation and it is running smoothly. He stated he feels no need to stop and wait for a Commissioner.

Legislator LoBue stated in the absence of the Commissioner, positions were created such as Deputy Commissioner and the two consultants for a total of \$75,000 and it does not make sense.

Deputy County Executive Bruce Walker stated the bus system is very complicated and includes Putnam Transit and ParaTransit. He stated this system costs the County about \$5 million per year, which mainly comes from the taxpayers. Within the government, there is no one with the expertise to run this bus system. The consultant was hired to help prepare an RFP to hire a bus company and assist in managing the \$5 million that goes into the bus system. He stated the money spent on bringing in the contractor was 1% of the total cost of one year and will produce an RFP lasting for five years. He also stated marketing the bus, lowering the fare and increasing ridership will increase the State reimbursement.

Legislator LoBue stressed her concern that there is still no Commissioner of Planning.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated he has worked with the Director of Personnel Paul Eldridge and they are in the final stage of interviews for this position.

Legislator LoBue stated updating the bus system is not a priority as she is unaware of any transit system that operates on a profit.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated in the absence of a Commissioner, the programs such as the bus system do not stop and it is an obligation to run the system as efficiently as possible. He stated money has been saved through the recommendations of the Task Force. He stated the best way to save money is to lower the price of each ride and in turn have more riders. Within the next five years, which is how long the RFP lasts, the County will spend \$25 million on the bus system, so spending \$50,000 now is nickels and dimes compared to the bigger picture.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Transportation Department and Planning Department are two separate departments and should be attended to as such.

Legislator LoBue stated the two departments are under one umbrella; the Planning Department.

Legislator Oliverio stated last year the Task Force was established due to a lot of hard work. He agreed with Deputy County Executive Walker in that money was saved, and it is documented. He stated transportation is vital to the County's senior citizens, disabled citizens, and those who cannot afford a car. He stated money put into transportation, especially after all the work that went into the department is well spent.

Legislator LoBue stated the money spent on new positions is an overload because the Commissioner of Planning position is still vacant.

Chairman Albano stated he had a relative who drove the buses and they reported driving about five riders at a time. He stated the positions that were added are vital to the smooth running of the department.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated the line in the budget for 2014 is \$25,000, not \$75,000. He clarified the extra \$50,000 that is being discussed was from the same line, but in 2013.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the RFP went out to find a Bus company and what the cutoff date was.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated the RFP went out and the cutoff date is November 15th.

Highway and Facilities Department – Account 1490

Legislator Othmer stated Farmers Mills Road was recently paved and the County did a great job.

Highway Commissioner Fred Pena stated keeping the roads in good condition is a priority and they are looking into extending the life of the pavement. He stated doing patchwork prior to paving will make the overlay of pavement last longer.

Chairman Albano questioned if Commissioner Pena uses the machines that lift the road, reprocess it and put it back down.

Commissioner Pena stated these machines are used with the hot mix. He stated this grinds the surface three inches down on the roadway base, collects the millings, and puts it back down and this takes care of surface deficiencies. He stated other products can be added to get a new mixture. He also stated this takes care of only the top four inches and he would like to begin addressing the lower layers. Doing this will make the top surface last longer.

Chairman Albano questioned if the County had a contract for this.

Commissioner Pena stated it is on State Bid and different mixes are being tested to find the best. He stated the base deep down must be stable.

Legislator Othmer stated a machine that does this is something to think about buying as the filings from the road are extremely valuable.

Commissioner Pena stated rather than layering blacktop onto existent blacktop, first milling the road is extremely useful. Not only does this keep the road the same height so it is level at intersections, but the millings that are collected can be used elsewhere, thus saving material and money.

Chairman Albano questioned what the line **54682 Special Services** was used for.

Commissioner Pena stated it is to cover work that cannot be done in house.

Legislator LoBue questioned what type of work Commissioner Pena was referring to.

Commissioner Pena stated things such as a parking deck or the project done on Snake Hill Road are covered in the funds in this budget line.

Legislator LoBue questioned if it is only used for contractual work.

Commissioner Pena stated yes, it is used for contractual work.

Legislator Gross questioned why line **54753 Rubbish Removal** and line **54755 Janitorial Services** were empty.

Commissioner Pena stated the contract is up and there were more things they wanted to include within these services. He stated an RFP went out and the current janitorial company took offense and ended up breaching their contract.

Legislator LoBue suggested that the next company that comes in should have an English speaking employee as in the past, the language barrier made communicating difficult.

Legislator Nacerino questioned why there are no estimated funds in the janitorial line.

Chairman Albano stated the funds were moved to facilities.

Legislator Nacerino stated the line **54311 Printing and Forms** in 2013 has only used a fraction of the allowance. She questioned why \$2,000 was requested for 2014 when it doesn't seem to be needed based on expenditures in 2013. She stated the same goes for line **54313 Books and Supplements**, line **54385 Uniforms** and line **54321 Bottled Water**.

Commissioner Pena stated we are only three quarters through the year.

Legislator Oliverio questioned if the Highway Department gets the uniforms at a certain time each year, making it plausible that the funds were not yet spent.

Commissioner Pena stated this is true. He also stated as far as the bottled water line goes, there are more facilities that will now require more bottled water.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if Commissioner Pena expected to need the requested amount in line **54311 Printing and Forms**.

Commissioner Pena stated the usage of that money is dependent upon the number of drawings and plans; however he does expect it to increase. He stated he expects the uniforms to remain the same.

Legislator Nacerino questioned since the department now has a more efficient way of printing if there was any way to cut the amount of money down.

Commissioner Pena stated they have a plotter that allows them to print drawings and move from paper copies to electronic copies. He stated this allows them to zero in and print only what they need.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the line **54989 Miscellaneous** is used for.

Commissioner Pena stated it is used for unplanned factors.

Legislator Oliverio thanked Commissioner Pena for the notice regarding the janitorial company quitting.

Commissioner Pena stated a highlight he would like to bring up is the reduction in electricity, which decreased by 3%.

Legislator Scuccimarra questioned how this was done.

Commissioner Pena stated they got a new contract for electricity and they also fine-tuned some material purchases. He also stated they are expecting to save money on salt by using the brine mixture in the winter.

Legislator Oliverio stated Highway and Facilities reduced their overall budget from the previous year. He stated his disagreement with nickel and diming as previous Legislators tended to do. He also stated the job of the Legislature is to look at the big picture and ensure it is fiscally sound.

Chairman Albano agreed with Legislator Oliverio's comments.

Legislator LoBue stated in defense of previous Legislators, small amounts of money add up and any amount of savings is a positive thing.

Chairman Albano questioned if the Highway Department was still working on the LED lighting.

Commissioner Pena stated the department is looking at reducing energy and researching how to do so.

Legislator Othmer stated the parapets and brickwork on the County Office Building must be addressed.

Commissioner Pena stated the money for projects such as these is in Capital Projects.

Legislator Othmer stated the ladies room on the third floor of the County Office Building, which is a handicap bathroom, must be addressed. He stated Commissioner Pena was going to look for a grant for all the restrooms in the County Building.

Commissioner Pena stated they need to do an inventory of all publicly accessed facilities and those that are required to have ADA compliant bathrooms. He stated they will start with the bathroom mentioned by Legislator Othmer, however if they were to do it with every bathroom it would get very expensive. He stated opening up the bathrooms in the County Office Building would be difficult due to the bearing walls. He stated there is a bathroom on the ground level that seems to be the best to convert to handicap accessible and finding a restroom such as this is what needs to be done in all buildings.

Veteran's Home – Account 6511

Legislator Oliverio questioned if this was under Veteran's Affairs and no longer Office for the Aging.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that is correct.

All 02 County Road Fund Accounts

Maintenance Roads and Bridges – Account 5110

Legislator Oliverio questioned if there was a separate budget for signage for maintenance of roads and bridges, specifically asking about weight restriction signage on Peekskill Hollow Road.

Commissioner Pena stated notifications have been put out through newspapers regarding the restriction. He also stated the signage is part of their materials budget and special signage is done by a sub-contractor, which is more efficient and cost effective.

Legislator Oliverio questioned if fixing bridges in the County is a long range plan.

Commissioner Pena stated the New York State Department of Transportation inspects bridges over twenty feet long.

Legislator Oliverio stated specifically the bridge on Peekskill Hollow Road is a hazard.

Commissioner Pena stated this is a State inspected bridge and it has been included in the Peekskill Hollow Road project.

Legislator Castellano questioned the status on Morningthorpe Bridge.

Commissioner Pena stated Morningthorpe Bridge was put in for a Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) Grant, which did not score as high as was hoped. However, there is a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant that the department is planning to resubmit the bridge for, which is also a larger pool of money than the TEP Grant.

Legislator Castellano stated his concern for constituents walking on the bridge, which is often the case.

Commissioner Pena stated a fence was placed across the bridge after the report from the State inspection indicated the bridge was to be closed to both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. He also stated if the bridge was to reopen to pedestrians, there are some hazards that must be addressed. He stated the bridge was inspected by the State and the report stated the bridge was to be closed to vehicles and pedestrian traffic due to the rust. He stated in order to reopen the bridge to pedestrians there are some hazards that must be addressed.

Chairman Albano questioned if Bike Path safety markers were budgeted.

Commissioner Pena stated that was budgeted in Bureau of Emergency Services.

Snow Removal – Account 5142

Legislator Oliverio questioned if there was any way for the County to partner with the Town to avoid plow up/plow down.

Commissioner Pena stated this has been reviewed, however funds would need to be shifted to accomplish this. He stated there are many other factors that go into the plow up/ plow down issue as well.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated plow up/plow down was discussed through Fiscal Vision a few years ago. She stated the issues were not having the proper equipment or manpower. She stated it is a great idea, but it is complicated.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if there is a liability issue.

Commissioner Pena stated yes, this is a concern.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Town of Patterson uses a brine mixture for their roads and questioned if the County uses all salt.

Legislators Oliverio and LoBue stated Putnam Valley and Mahopac also use the brine mixture.

Commissioner Pena stated the County uses the brine, however they do not use a sand mixture that some tend to use.

Legislator Othmer stated as he learned in an Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) class at the NYSAC conference that the plow up/plow down issue is such a problem because the equipment is not interchangeable. He also stated this issue is not just in regard to snow removal, but for placement of black top as well.

Commissioner Pena stated this takes a lot of cooperation between municipalities.

Legislator LoBue stated there is an issue with parking on the streets in the winter time because the cars get in the way of the snow plow. She suggested going to the Town Board meetings to discuss this with the Elected Officials and residents directly.

Legislator Nacerino suggested placing signs with a time period of when cars can and cannot park.

Capital Projects

Chairman Albano stated Minor Facility Renovations could be an even higher number as there is a lot of work to be done.

Commissioner Pena stated there are projects that are repair while others are moving walls and things of that matter. He stated a list must be comprised of projects to be done before moving forward.

Commissioner of Finance Bill Carlin stated old projects that were unfunded but still on the books will be removed and a new rating system has been developed. He stated projects will be reviewed and rated along with the Chairperson of the Physical Services Committee; the information will then be presented to the committee.

Chairman Albano stated liability exposure should be included within the rating system as well.

Commissioner Carlin stated nothing would be approved until presented to the Legislature.

Legislator Othmer questioned if the County Office Building - Façade Renovation was in reference to the parapets.

Commissioner Pena stated this did refer to the parapets as well as the masonry exterior.

Legislator Othmer stated the Courthouse has a steel roof and he would like to see this on the County Office Building, however the footings will not support a steel roof.

Chairman Albano stated the top section is the biggest concern.

Legislator Othmer questioned what equipment could be purchased with Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) money.

Commissioner Carlin stated there are some restrictions on the equipment such as having to have a 10 year life.

Legislator Othmer questioned if trucks could be bought with CHIPS money.

Commissioner Carlin stated there are guidelines of what can and cannot be purchased. He stated equipment and material can be mixed and matched.

Item # 4 - Other Business - None

Item # 5 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:55 p.m. Chairman Albano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Green, Administrative Assistant.