

**Physical Services Committee Meeting  
Held in Room #318  
Putnam County Office Building  
Members: Chairman Albano & Legislators Nacerino and Scuccimarra**

**Thursday**

**March 10, 2014**

**The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Chairman Albano who requested that Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairman Albano and Legislators Nacerino and Scuccimarra were present.**

**Item #3) Approval/Physical Services meeting Minutes/January 22, 2014**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Item #4) Presentation/Putnam County Golf Course 2013 Year in Review/General Manager Putnam County Golf Course M. McCall**

Acting Planning Commissioner John Tully stated he would like to say a few words before General Manager McCall begins his presentation. He stated that 2013 was a transition year for the golf course. The function of the golf course facility falls under the purview of the Highway & Facilities Department. He stated that he and Commissioner Pena worked hand in hand with General Manager McCall. He stated that there was a tremendous amount of support during 2013 from the Administration and the Legislature and they look forward to continuing in that manner. He stated the hope is that after reviewing the presentation this evening it will help to build trust in what they have been working towards at the course. He stated the Parks & Recreation Department under the management of Chris Ruthven has played a big role at the course. He introduced: General Manager of the Putnam County Golf Course Mike McCall, President and Owner of Appliedgolf Dave Wassenda, Owner and Manager of the Homestyle Catering Inc., Al Ciufetelli. He stated that with all of these folks present tonight he is confident that all questions can be answered. He stated the presentation will address the financial facts, the environmental benefits that they have accomplished and continue to work towards and the community and social benefits that the golf course brings to Putnam County.

General Manager Mike McCall stated that tonight there will be comparisons made between 2011 and 2012. He stated that after tonight his hope is to move forward and use 2013 as the baseline. He stated that there are different business models from how things were done in 2011, 2012 in comparison to how things are being done as of 2013 forward. He stated that they look at the Putnam County Golf Course as a benefit to the entire community. He stated that he has broken his presentation down into four (4) categories: Financial, Environmental, Community/Social and Historical. He stated that as we address this asset it must be remembered that it is a community facility where discounts are offered to the residents. He stated that this has been a transition period and to change the path that this facility was on has taken time and resources. He began his presentation by addressing the topic of Financials. He stated that they contract with a company called Pellucid. He stated that they are an independent analysis company that measure "Golf Playable Hours" (GPH); how many hours in a day are golf playable. He stated that their satellite station is in Danbury, CT. He stated that they measured that the 2013 GPH were down 8% from 2012. He stated that there final

numbers in 2013 of Rounds Played was 30,088 as compared to that of 31,335 in 2012. The 2013 numbers were very impressive especially in relation to the poor weather that this area had in 2013, as reflected in the decrease of 8% GPH from 2012. He stated that it was a 4% decrease in Rounds Played in 2013 from 2012.

Dave Wasenda, President Applied Golf, stated 2013 was their first year with the new system. He stated that prior to that time there was a significant amount of cost cutting at the golf course that led to an erosion of quality and services. He stated that was identified immediately as being a priority; the day to day maintenance as well as the facility level of quality needed to be improved. In 2012 it was a large year in the industry, actually probably the best year in the past ten (10) years. Then 2013 was the worst year, in ten (10) years. He stated that however Putnam Golf in 2013 almost matched the 2012 numbers. He provided an overview of the golf business in 2013. He stated that the word did get out to folks that the course had been re-established and re-branded and re-equipped with the proper care and service that a golf course should have. He stated that they saw it in the amount of players that came to the course and in the level of satisfaction. He stated that over the past years the outing golf course business had been lost. He stated that began to re-establish that side of the golf course business in 2013. He stated that in 2014, this year, the business is looking very good. He stated that the necessary staffing changes had been made in 2013, new training and new systems were all put in place. He stated that shows in the increase in expenses; however these changes needed to be made. He stated that the results and positive benefits to the changes are already beginning to be seen.

Legislator LoBue questioned the price rates to play. She stated that she has had constituents approach her asking her this question, and some of the folks who asked want to walk the course.

General Manager McCall stated that there are all different rates. He stated that they are all on-line and he will send a copy of the Golf Rates for 2014 to the Legislature. He stated that they do have new carts now. He stated that the option to walk is available as well. He stated that you may hear negative feedback on the issue that the previous golf manager in 2012 offered passes from \$300 -\$400. He and Mr. Wasenda agreed that amount was ridiculously low. He stated that money was collected in 2012, and was honored in 2013. He stated that the season pass has been increased to \$799. He continued with the review of his presentation. He stated that before he turns it over to, Al Ciuffetelli President of Homestyle Catering, he would like to point out the acronym COGS stands for "Cost of Goods Sold". He stated that under the old model, the company was buying the food and alcohol and figuring that out. He explained under the new model that is completely at the discretion of the food and beverage vendor (Homestyle Catering).

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated that the improvements that have been made to the facility has had a positive impact on the catering side of the Putnam County Golf Course. He stated that there has been a lot of support from the Putnam County businesses and the schools. He stated that there have been over 125,000 catered guests, since they took over

in April of 2013. He stated that so far this year there are four (4) weddings booked. He stated that he believes a lot of positive things are happening.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the cost is of the all you can eat Friday night barbeque.

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated it is \$15.00.

Legislator LoBue questioned if that is a sufficient price.

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated that the money is made on the bar. The traffic of people attending the barbeques has been great for showcasing the facility. He stated that they have booked events with people who after attending one the barbeques decided to book the facility. He stated that he is involved with coaching his children's teams. He stated that some of those events have been held at the golf course.

Legislator LoBue questioned if he lives in Putnam County.

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated that he lives in Yorktown. It is approximately a six (6) minute drive from his house to the Putnam County Golf Course. He stated that some of the Yorktown sports teams play Mahopac teams and Carmel, teams and other surrounding towns. As earlier stated the community has been great in their support and use of the facility. He stated that they have had several sold out events, comedy night for example. He stated that on July 11, 2014 they have the Nerds coming to perform. He stated that they anticipate 500- 600 people for that event. He stated that he believes once the bathrooms are renovated that will add to the aesthetics and attract even more bookings.

General Manager McCall stated the County Chargeback Line entails (*in presentation packet on page entitled: Financials 2014 Budget vs 2013 Actual*), insurance, the County pays for the insurance, and any materials that the County Highway & Facilities Department uses to fix/address day to day issues. In summary, as reflected in the PowerPoint, the 2013 Revenue was \$1,708,669.00 and the deduction of the COGS Golf, Payroll Expenses, Operating Expenses and County Chargebacks left the County with a Gross operating Profit of \$79,026.00.

Legislator Oliverio questioned who pays for the events that the County has hosted at the Putnam County Golf Course.

General Manager McCall stated that the Budget Address Meeting held in 2013 at the course, all of the food was donated by Mr. Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering, he believed it was a positive marketing opportunity for his business. He stated that the 2014 State of the County, which will be held there on March 13, 2014, will host the "Market Place" theme that they had in 2013. Therefore there will be independent vendors and Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering does plan on participating and having a booth. He stated that the Putnam County Office of the Aging pays the normal price for the food when they host an event at the course.

Legislator LoBue stated for clarity that the "County Chargeback" expense line does not include expenses of County events that are held at the course.

General Manager McCall stated that is correct.

Legislator LoBue stated that she has a problem with the donation of the food, due to the fact that there is a 70-30 split. She continued to explain that her issue is with the "donation" theory. She stated that it looks inappropriate for the County to use its own facility for events. She stated that taxpayers are subsidizing this facility. When there is a party at the course the County is supposed to be receiving 30% of the split. However when Mr. Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering decides to donate to an event, the County is not receiving their 30%. She stated she respects his generosity, however the County is losing out. The County taxpayers are responsible for paying for the taxes, the insurance and the maintenance.

General Manager McCall stated there is no question that there is an opportunity cost, however there has never been a date conflict with a paying event.

Legislator LoBue stated that she is not looking for validation. She stated she is trying to find out how this is handled, because the County handles the money. She stated the decisions of a donated event should be brought to the County for approval. She stated she does not see that a determination like a donated event should be done without Legislative input. She stated as far as she is concerned there should not be any events donated.

General Manager McCall stated the County facility does not buy the food, Homestyle Catering purchases the food.

Legislator LoBue stated however this is a County Facility that is being used and there is supposed to be a 70-30 split on events held at the facility. She stated with the donations, the County and taxpayers are losing out on the 70-30 split, that is her concern.

Legislator Albano stated that he finds that theory to be totally inaccurate and not even close to correct. He stated the County is not suffering from this. As it was explained, we are not taking over the facility at a loss of booking an event. It is a good business move. The Putnam Golf Course is a County owned facility. Every event held there gives the facility exposure and promotes the facility. In his opinion an empty catering facility would not be serving the County or the taxpayers. He stated that he has no problem with this practice. If the County did not host the event there they would have to bring the event somewhere else. He stated he believes using the non-booked County facility is a chance to spotlight our County owned asset.

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated that he exercises this same practice at the Westchester County Facilities that he works with and it proves to be a positive business move.

General Manager McCall stated that there were Capital Improvements done in 2013. He stated that they did them very cost effectively. He stated in order to be competitive, improvements and maintenance needs to be done to the facility. He stated in reference to the Environmental

Stewardship, the, East of Hudson Projects (EOH) have taken the facility a long way. He stated there is an intricate drainage system that has been put in. He stated that Legislator Oliverio brought up a valid point at the last meeting that the Legislature was not informed on the details associated with the decisions that were made pertaining to the parking lot project and how the installed drainage system was going to achieve meeting the environmental requirements of the EOH. He will take the responsibility on not providing the information better. He will work to improve that. The bottom line is that there is a very intricate system. He stated that there will be landscaping done around the columns at the entrance of the course. He stated that another EOH project is the Water Quality Basin. He stated it is supposed to collect virtually 85% of the surface run-off. He continued his presentation by going over the Certified Golf Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Cooperative. He stated that the audience coming to the Putnam Golf Course is becoming diversified. It used to be mainly golfers. Today, with all of the different events being hosted there, that has changed. He stated that Applied Golf and Homestyle Catering are working very well together and the result is a facility that serves the community, with a diversified approach. He continued with his presentation. He stated that they did conduct a survey, which they are using as a guideline for future action.

Dave Wasenda, President Applied Golf, stated that he finds conducting the surveys as a really useful tool. He stated his business conducts an annual survey, it is an opportunity to improve their "Report Card" from year to year. He stated that it was not a surprise that the feedback on the Golf Pro and the Private Lessons came back more negative than they would like. He stated that last year it was more of an administrative year. This year they have taxed the Golf Pro to be public and out with the people, therefore they anticipate seeing that greatly improve in the next survey. He stated other than that, there is tweaking they can do, but that is to always be expected and a good business practice to do. He stated that he is very excited about this season and believes great things are to come. He stated that he believes the changes in the facility have been positive and it is now a model that can sustain itself. He stated that it has been a collaborative effort.

Al Ciuffetelli, President of Homestyle Catering stated that he has transferred some of his experienced personnel from his other sites to the Putnam Golf Course and they have some new equipment and he too is very optimistic and excited for the upcoming season.

General Manager McCall stated that the "Employee Courtesy and Friendliness" question on the survey received extremely positive responses as did the question, "Would you recommend Putnam Golf Course to a friend". He stated receiving positive responses to the questions, provide the approval ratings that he believes every business and business owner wants to receive. He stated that there were some comments provided regarding the Carts. The good news on that is the lease on the carts was up and they have just received the new carts. He stated that they will be addressing feedback "slow play". He stated the culture of golf is not what it used to be, so they will have more Rangers on the course that will keep the rate of play moving. He stated that the bunkers (sand traps) have been worked on and will be ready for the season. He stated that he and Mr. Wasenda participated in the Westchester County Golf Show. He stated in closing he would like to say, he is looking forward to the 2014 season.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she would like to commend all of these people who have come together in this collaborative effort to improve this facility. She stated that she is proud to be a part of this transition and recognizes all of these efforts and changes to result in a domino effect for success. She stated that she is glad that the Legislature along with the County Executive had the foresight along with the County Executive to make this County asset work to its maximum and peak efficiency.

General Manager McCall stated that there was some discussion about doing this style of report quarterly. However there is not a lot to report in January, February and March. He stated that he would like to propose that he come back in August and cover the activity at the facility beginning with January through June.

Chair Albano stated that he and his committee would be fine with that.

**Item #5) Approval/Resolution Establishes the Putnam County Legislature as Lead Agency For Purpose of the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) Review**

Legislator Oliverio questioned if the work that was done; was it done prior to the permitting process.

Chair Albano stated that there was a permitting process in place, however then there were changes made which required a new SEQRA.

Acting Commissioner of Planning John Tully stated that there are several items on the agenda tonight regarding the SEQRA . He stated that he will provide comments that should address them all. Back in approximately 2006, 2007 when the Legislature authorized the golf course project it was considered a "Type II" action. He stated they have since hired a person in the Planning Department who has a great deal of knowledge of the SEQRA process, Barbara Barosa. He stated that he asked her to review the SEQRA, she recommended, to be on the safe side, the SEQRA should be done.

Legislator Oliverio stated the project has already been completed. He questioned how can a SEQRA be done on a project that has already been completed, that concerns him.

Acting Commissioner of Planning John Tully stated all of the actual dates will be listed in the SEQRA . The main focus is that the County is covered by the SEQRA perspective.

Legislator LoBue stated a few months back she asked if there was going to be a SEQRA or permit for the parking lot project.

Acting Commission Planning John Tully stated that is a good point. There was another complicating factor that Deputy County Executive can address in more detail. He explained that when the EOH Corporation was formed they did not have a SEQRA Policy.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that this is an administrative issue. He stated that the DEP and DEC worked with the County throughout this entire project. He explained how the County had to work with the DEP, who does not recognize the "Pervious Pavers" and the DEC does recognize "Pervious Pavers"; so this matter had to be solved. He explained that the DEP stated in the meetings that the County did not need to do a SEQRA, with the reason being that the County would be below the required amount (40,000 Square Feet). He stated as the project progressed and they further developed the filtration system and the DEP and DEC wanted to add to the filtration system the debate came up as to whether a SEQRA was required or not.

Legislator Oliverio stated his concern is that the question would be raised down the road that the project was done without a SEQRA; and then the SEQRA was completed after the project was completed. He stated that he wants this clear and transparent.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that he believes that he recollects that the County received comments back from the DEP in terms of them stating, "the work has already been done, but they (DEP) will recognize the SEQRA".

Legislator Oliverio stated if the County has received the approval from the DEP on this process of doing the SEQRA after the job has been completed, can that correspondence be used as part of the backup to this matter.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that would be fine.

Legislator Oliverio stated that he would like the back up before the April Full Legislature meeting.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she would like to state through the Chair, that she signed the SEQRA on January 28, 2014, in Chairman Albano's absence at the advice of Legislative Counsel Clem VanRoss.

Chair Albano made a motion to approval/Resolution Establishes the Putnam County Legislature as Lead Agency For Purpose of the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) Review; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

**Item #6) Approval/Resolution Authorizing County Executive Odell to Sign the DEC Grant Agreement for the County Golf Course Paving Project**

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to approve Authorizing County Executive Odell to Sign the DEC Grant Agreement for the County Golf Course Paving Project; Seconded by Legislator Scuccimarra. All in favor.

**Item #7) Update/East of Hudson Corporation/Deputy County Executive B. Walker**

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that the County operates under the 2010 SPDES Permit Program (State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permit. He explained that it

controlled the MS4 for the 19 municipalities in the EOH Watershed. He stated that the EOH Corporation formed the "Bubble Compliance", which means all of the requirements have been aggregated for the 19 municipalities in the EOH Watershed into one group and then anyone of those municipalities that makes a retrofit and deals with MS4 they aggregate the compliance. He stated in a five (5) year window there was a total of 459.5 kilograms of phosphorous that were due for the 19 municipalities in the EOH Watershed; 30.9 kilograms were assigned to Putnam County. He continued to provide an overview of the creation of the Corporation, which was formed in 2011 and funded in 2012. He stated that they just submitted their year four (4) at the end of 2013; he stated 2014 will be the fifth (5) and final year of the 1-5 years. He stated of the 459.5 Kilograms we are credited or they are on paper in the queue 444 kilograms, so there are about 15.5 kilograms that are still remaining that will need to be done this year. He stated that all indications are that we will meet the 459.5 kilograms. He stated that some of the projects that begin in 2014 will be completed in 2015. He stated that the "Bubble Compliance" has fundamentally has worked.

Legislator LoBue questioned regarding the paving project and the basin project (pc1 & pc1a) what is the total phosphorus credits.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that the two (2) of them combined totaled approximately 10 kilograms.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the final total costs was of the paving and basin projects.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that it was approximately \$1.3 million, offset by the \$266 thousand that will come in from the grant.

Legislator LoBue questioned where does the funding come from to pay for the project.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that the EOH Corporation is responsible for putting out the RFPs, for engineering and construction work, they award and manage the work done and they pay for the work.

Legislator LoBue stated for clarification, none of the money comes through the County.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that is correct. He stated that if the "Bubble Compliance" ever broke up, Putnam County would bear the responsibility to meet their SPDES requirement of the 30.9 kilograms.

Legislator LoBue questioned how long would it take for the vendors to be paid by the EOH Corporation with respect to the County's project.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that he does know exactly the amount of the total costs that have been or still need to be paid. He stated that there is an entire executive process that is followed.

Legislator LoBue stated it is her understanding that the County could not be held liable in relation to the cost correct.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that there is no contract directly between the County and the businesses they assigned the work to.

Chair Albano questioned if there is a process in place to do a post evaluation of the retrofits, for example five (5) years from now.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that currently they have been reviewing past projects and allocating based on a formula basis the O&M Costs associated with it. There is a discussion currently going on between the board members as to whether the Corporation will end up owning the O&M Costs. Some of the members believe that the individual Towns should not bear the O&M Costs when everyone benefits from the projects. He stated that the DEP is not in full agreement with this proposed philosophy. This is still in the discussion phase. He stated that they have begun discussion on the "years 6 through 10" issue. He stated that another SPDES is supposed to be issued with another kilogram phosphorus requirement. The EOH Corporation has proposed that they would like to finish up the work that has been begun and identified for "years 4 through 5", and then conduct a comprehensive review of the projects to see what works best in terms of moving forward with future projects. He stated that there are some obstacles today to get on some of the best pieces of property, because they are privately owned, and there is no requirement for privately owned property to allow municipalities or EOH to come and use the privately owned property as a filtration site. He stated that he and members of the EOH have met DEC and DEP about doing a 12 to 18 month review of the projects done and gather pertinent information that will serve as valuable information for future projects and actions taken. He stated that the coalition has been ramped up, the organization that negotiated with the DEP and DEC to figure out what the funding mechanisms would be. The County is acting as the aggregator of the funds for that. He stated what is done is an outside law firm is hired to act as the facilitator/negotiator with the DEC and DEP and the law firms cost is divided between the 19 municipalities. He stated that once those numbers are finalized he will bring that information back to this committee. He stated that he anticipates that it will be somewhere in the range of \$2,000 - \$3,000.

Legislator LoBue questioned what has happened with the cart paths at the golf course in terms of impervious surface credits.

Deputy County Executive Walker explained that the resources have been put into the parking lot project.

Chair Albano stated that he supports taking the time to review the projects that have been implemented and evaluate their success. He stated that is valuable information.

Legislator Tartaro stated that there are areas in the County that are not located in watershed areas. He questioned if the EOH only deals with property in the watershed area.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that is correct. He stated that the MS4 requirements that need to be addressed are in the East of Hudson Watershed, that is where the money is to be spent.

Legislator Tartaro requested that a list of EOH projects please be provided to the Legislature.

Deputy County Executive Walker stated that he would provide a copy.

#### **Item #8) Discussion/SEQRA Putnam National Golf Course Paving Project**

Chair Albano stated that this was discussed already under agenda item #5.

#### **Item #9) Discussion/2014 Proposed Putnam County Capital Projects**

Commissioner Pena stated that he had planned to discuss 2014 Capital Projects, however he decided that they are still being developed and more information is needed. However there is one capital project that he would like to discuss tonight. He stated that there is a design that the Administration would like to be considered by the Legislature. It is a preliminary presentation for the Smith Campus with a focus on the Office for The Aging (OFA) Building #1 & #3. He stated that years back there was a proposed Senior Center Project in the Town of Kent that never happened; it was the "Drew Lake Project". He stated the needs to provided services for our Seniors remains. Therefore at the direction of the County Executive he has a preliminary plan that he believes would satisfy all of the needs. He provided a PowerPoint with an overview of the preliminary plans (copy of the PowerPoint is attached to the minutes). He stated that Director of OFA Patricia Sheehy took an active role in the development of these plans. During the presentation matters of improved, safety, security, energy efficiency, and stream lined layout of office space were highlighted. He concluded by stating that the rough estimation cost of this project would be in the area of \$750,000.

Chair Albano requested that Commissioner Pena provide the Legislature with a copy of his presentation.

Director Sheehy stated this is in the discussion phase only. This entire proposal has not yet been vetted out with the entire staff yet. She stated that she will be presenting this to her Advisory Board at the upcoming meeting. However, she wanted to give the Legislature an opportunity to offer their input.

Legislator Oliverio stated that he agrees with Director Sheehy that the County needs to take their time on this, and go step by step.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that there is no way she could say yes to this project when the Seniors in her district are in a very inadequate space. She stated that the current Center being considered here is four (4) times the size of her Senior Center.

Legislator Nacerino stated that the Senior Center being proposed here tonight would be open to all Putnam County Seniors. She stated that she believes it is a great concept to maximize the County's resources while meeting the objectives for the Seniors of Putnam County. She stated that she knows that our Seniors are segregated by geography, but she thinks it is a step in the right direction. She stated that she applauds this plan. She stated the baby boomers are aging, our Senior population is going to increase and rely on the Senior Centers. She stated she does not believe anything else could be done to address the needs of our or Seniors in the County for that money.

Legislator Oliverio stated that he a strong believer and supporter of the Seniors. He stated he was so happy to see the Koehler Senior Center built and then the Putnam Valley Senior Center. He stated if we can revamp the Center referenced here tonight it seems like a logical proposal. However he understands the position that Legislator Scuccimarra is in and agrees with her, he brought it up when the Kent Senior Center was proposed, if he could figure out a way he would like to see each Town have their own Senior Center. He stated that this County needs those centers. He stated that he is not going to begrudge the people of Carmel, who have an opportunity to revamp their Senior Center.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like caution to be taken. Everyone would like their own facility. She absolutely understands the need however it is not possible or feasible. She stated in terms of the cost she would not be in favor of this. She stated that Commissioner Pena stated that he was not prepared to talk about the roadways. She stated that we are coming to the end of one of the worst winters we have had in probably 20 years. She stated that the roads are going to require massive repairs. She stated that if the County had not invested in the golf course, there are so many things that the County is working on at once. She stated that the golf course is still a work in progress. Also the project price of this renovation \$750,000, something always happens with construction projects. It would probably will end up closer to \$1million. She stated that she cannot support anymore bonding, she stated that we are putting the next generation into debt, that is her position. She stated in reference to Legislator Scuccimarra's comments she wishes her Legislative District #1 would not tie their proposed Senior Center in with the proposed Butterfield Projects because they could look for a different location.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that there is no other location for the Senior Center.

Legislator LoBue stated that there are needs that exist on the Western Side of the County and she recognizes that. However in terms of this proposal tonight, she could not vote in support of the bonding. She stated that she cannot see the County taking on another project of this size and incurring additional debt. While the golf course project is still ongoing, and we have not passed the corner in terms of the County's investment. She stated she certainly understands the need that is there.

Legislator Albano stated in his opinion he too sees the need. He stated that he sees the County taking one of their existing building's that really is in need of improvements and updates. He stated is great to revitalize property that the County already owns. He stated in terms of the concern about the bonds, he would turn to Commissioner Carlin to advise us as to whether he

as the County Commissioner of Finance believes it is advisable to do. He stated interest rates are great right now, so if there was ever a time to bond, this is the time. He stated if we are going to plan to do something with the location, let's not wait and do it when the interest rates go up. He stated he is receptive to the idea, but would like to see the entire picture.

Legislator Nacerino stated this project would be taking care of our Seniors, we would be maximizing a County owned facility. She stated that we need to have foresight. That is why we are being backed up with all of these big projects, because there was not foresight to appeal to the public needs of the future.

Director Sheehy stated that the Senior Center Facility that is being considered for renovation in the Town of Carmel serves the Seniors from the Towns of Patterson, Kent and Southeast. She stated Seniors are given transportation to the Carmel site from those towns. She stated that on the average they serve approximately 80 people there a day. She stated that another consideration is the area used for exercise, it is inadequate for the numbers of folks who are interested in participating in the classes. She stated that the space where the office staff is located is inadequate as well. She stated that the facility is not ADA Compliant. She stated that she along with her staff and the County Executive are committed to working towards the development of the Butterfield Location. She stated that she does not believe that the County should sit back and do nothing in the interim while waiting for those things to happen.

Legislator Nacerino stated that while she served on the Patterson Town Board, they moved the meeting location of their Seniors to the newly built Recreation Center in Patterson, NY. She stated this announcement was met with a great deal of resistance on the level of the Seniors. However, once they did go and utilized the area, they are now extremely pleased with the facility.

Director Sheehy stated for clarity the Patterson location is a drop- in Senior Center. She stated that the Seniors that participate daily in the nutrition program from the towns of Carmel, Kent, Patterson and Southeast utilize the Donald B. Smith Senior Center location.

Legislator Tartaro questioned if any thought has been given to grant opportunities for this type of project.

Commissioner Pena stated they are researching that currently. He stated that they will also look into philanthropic organizations as a funding opportunity as well.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that the main focus and goal of this proposed project is to improve the Senior Facility. However he would like to point out that it would also improve the security in and out of the Personnel Department's Office area. He stated also the County is now required to give the physical agility test for the Correctional Officer positions. He stated that has been included in the semantic review and consideration of this proposal. He stated that one of the conference rooms would be able to be utilized for the purpose of the agility test. It will also help in streamlining the testing process and there will be a waiting place for applicants. Also it will provide a larger testing area for the Continued Recruiting Exams. He stated currently they

have the room for 12 that would be increased to approximately 24. He stated that is a revenue generator for the County.

Chair Albano stated that he would support something across the County. He stated that he would like a plan "B" to be looked at in addition to Butterfield. He stated he liked what was presented this evening.

### **Item #10) Update/February 26, 2014 Planning the Future of Tilly Foster Farm-Public Meeting**

Chair Albano stated that at the meeting, February 26, it was announced that the County has an aggressive plan to put something in place in the next 60 days. He stated that the idea is that the County does not want to miss the season. He stated that there was announcement published that a Planning Team is in place.

Legislator Oliverio stated that the Legislative Office received an e-mail from Ms. Fanizzi today stating that the final committee members have changed radically and that one of the individuals is a person who was affiliated with the running of the farm under the old regime. He requested clarification on that.

Chair Albano stated that is correct. He stated that in his opinion they did a fine job running the farm for years. He stated that farm was left in better condition than when the County gave the control over to the previous group who ran the farm. He stated that he likes to look at this as we move forward. He stated that his view is we take this County Facility and make it even better. He stated that the person who is being referenced was a volunteer in the past and is looking to volunteer again, he stated that he does not see a problem with that.

Legislator Oliverio stated that the only problem he has, is that the County is trying to start "Fresh" on the approach to the running of this County Facility. He stated keeping members of the past group on could give the stigma, that was associated with the past facility. He stated right or wrong he is concerned with that. He stated that a fresh start should be just that a fresh start, he stated that is his opinion.

Denise Merkel, resident of Brewster, she stated that she and her family have enjoyed the Tilly Foster Farm. She read from a statement. In summary she stated that her family and grandchildren have enjoyed many visits to the farm. The farm hosted wonderful events. She continued with her family's enjoyment of the events and agricultural display of natural beauty. She recognized the positive draw it had in terms of economics for the surrounding businesses such as Applebees Restaurant, Gaetano Pizzeria, Dunkin Donuts, Home Depot, DeCiccios, Kohl's, Animal Kingdom and all of the business in the Highland Shopping area. She read a quote that was posted at the Narragansett Turkey's cage on the Tilly Foster Farm, "When the last individual of a race of living things breaths no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can begin again". She concluded by stating that the Farm is an asset that needs to be kept open, it really is just a tremendous asset for the people of Putnam County.

Chair Albano stated that nothing has been written in stone. He stated the idea is to gather the opinions of all interested parties/residents. There will be additional public meetings.

Miriam Brewster Resident, she has a local landscaping business. She offered many recommendations for the future plans of the farm, such as renting space to local artist, bring back the horses, Cornell Cooperative should be housed there, they could use the surrounding

area, the restaurant building could be rented to incoming business and let them do the renovations, she would like to see educational programs brought to the Farm, similar to what they do at Green Chimneys. She stated that this introduces the possibilities of the outside activities to younger generations. She listed a couple of organization that should be contacted to see if they have an interest in coming and partnering with Putnam County on educational initiatives: NYS Agricultural Education and NYS Farm Agricultural Society. She stated that there is focus on how to most efficiently utilize land in an environmentally safe and responsible way. For example there are many different techniques on how to catch natural water and how to utilize that water. She stated water is a big issue for farmers. Society as a whole could benefit from learning these skills. She stated it is our responsibility to teach our younger generations how to be more Green in their lives. Finally she would like to see them bring a store to the location, people love to shop.

Chair Albano stated that he hopes that Ms. Fanizzi reconsiders her involvement on the Tilly Foster Board. She has a lot of good ideas.

Legislator LoBue questioned who are the members of the board.

Chair Albano stated that he does not have the list with him.

Legislator LoBue questioned why Ms. Fanizzi dropped off the board.

Chair Albano stated that she was not happy with the members that were selected to serve on the board.

Legislator LoBue stated that Chair Albano made a reference to "some misunderstandings" she questioned what he was referencing.

Chair Albano stated that he was speaking about the assumption in the public that there were terrible things going on and things were wrong at the farm. He stated that his opinion is that the County is looking just to step things up to the next level. The people, who were there, were volunteers and he stated that he has respect for them and for the fact that they kept the farm active up to this point. He stated that he is happy with that, and that is his opinion. Now he is looking to bring the farm up to the next level. He stated that is why he wants to have these discussions and have people give their recommendations, as the ladies this evening did.

Legislator LoBue stated that this is the public's farm; it has been subsidized by tax payers' money. She stated that she is in favor of the County taking a breath and hitting the pause button, as she has said for the past five (5) months. There is nothing that needs to be done tomorrow. She stated that she wants future plans to respect the history of the farm and the agriculture that is there. She stated she is in favor of bringing horses back to the farm. It is such a beautiful entry into our County. She stated that she does not want the County to do something that is politically expedient. She stated that she worked very closely with the Whipple's in 2009 and she fought very hard for the lease. She stated that she was disappointed that things did not go in the direction that she was hoping that they would go, in terms of transparency, and asking for documentation with respect to the lease. So now that we are moving forward she would like to be involved. She stated that she has had a lot of ideas for the farm. She stated she has been approached, most recently at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Mahopac, there was a false impression given to the public. The Administration approved the posting of a "Closing" sign that was placed in the middle of the field at the farm. She stated that there is a big group of people who are under the impression that the Farm is closing. She stated that was a terrible mistake, everything in life is perception, marketing is perception and

that place, as these ladies have pointed out, is an absolute jewel. She stated the County is lucky to have it, and her hope is everything is open and transparent.

Chair Albano stated that concerned people need to go to the Public Meetings regarding Tilly Foster Farm.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she would like to thank these ladies who sat through these very lengthy meetings to have their voices heard. She stated that the Legislature cherishes the Tilly Foster Farm. It is an asset of the County that the Legislature has a vested interest in preserving, protecting and enhancing. She stated that the County is working to establish a new vision for the Farm. She stated that in sixty days or so, the goal is to have the Farm up, running and productive for all to utilize, enjoy and cherish.

Legislator LoBue stated that she would like to caution her colleague on the mention of a "sixty day" deadline.

Chair Albano and Legislator Nacerino both stated the "sixty day" reference is a target and a goal that the Tilly Foster Transition Team is working toward.

Chair Albano stated that there will probably be more to be done at the "sixty day" mark, but the hope is that the Farm will be able to be opened and enjoyed. If there is any reason that they cannot meet that target date, then they won't open it.

Legislator Oliverio stated that again he would like to caution the decision of the members on the committee. He stated that he believes that there will be push back on two (2) of the members. He stated that for the reason that two (2) of those recommended members were associated with the recent past operation of the Farm.

Legislator LoBue stated that she would like to remind everyone that they broke the lease. The County did not break the lease.

Chair Albano stated that the lease is over. The County let them out of the lease. He stated this was not a lease that involved any financial gain. He stated now the County is turning a new chapter. He stated that everyone needs to attend the Tilly Foster Transition Team meetings. The meeting dates, location and times will be provided.

Legislator Gross stated that he would like to that the two (2) ladies who came and spoke this evening. He stated that he spoke to them prior to this meeting over the phone and their enthusiasm for the Farm reflects the true feelings of many of the County residents. He stated that he sees the Farm as a gem for Putnam County.

General Manager McCall stated that there will be sub-committees formed, and he would encourage everyone to get involved.

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

#### **Item #11) Other Business**

- a. Approval/Veterans Lease Room #5**
- b. Approval/Veterans Lease Room #1**

Chair Albano made a motion to approve the Veterans Lease for Rooms #5 & #1; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

**Item #12) Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 9:35P.M., Chair Albano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Trabulsy, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature.