

**AUDIT & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN
ROOM #318 OF THE COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Castellano, Legislators Gross & Nacerino

**Monday September 28, 2015
(Immediately Following Public Hearing – PART Transportation System)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:56 P.M. by Chairman Castellano who requested Legislator Albano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Nacerino and Chairman Castellano were present. Legislator Gross was absent. Chairman Castellano requested that Legislator Albano sit on the Committee in Legislator Gross's absence.

Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – August 24, 2015

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Item #4 - Correspondence/ County Auditor

- a. **Sales Tax Report** – Duly Noted
- b. **Board In Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- c. **OTB Report** – Duly Noted
- d. **Transfer/Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- e. **Contingency/Sub-Contingency Report** – Duly Noted

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

Item #5 - Correspondence/ Commissioner of Finance

- a. **Overtime/Temporary Report** – Duly Noted

- b. **Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 15A065/ Probation/ Use Drug Testing Fees to Offset Analysis Fees (Also Reviewed in Protective Services)**

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 15A065;
Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

- c. **Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 15A067/ Finance/ Use Retirement Reserve to Avoid Entering State Comptrollers Retirement Amortization Plan**

Chairman Castellano stated this has been done for the past few years and it will be a savings for Putnam County. He stated the retirement reserve will be used rather than paying interest.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin stated the same thing was done in 2013 and 2014 and it will be continued this year. He stated this will decrease the amount borrowed.

Legislator Albano questioned what the total debt is.

Commissioner Carlin stated it started at \$8 million and by the end of this year will be down to \$6.6 million.

Legislator LoBue questioned how much money will be saved on interest.

Commissioner Carlin stated by not borrowing, the County saves about 3% or 4% on the amount that would have been borrowed. He stated if \$3 million was borrowed, about \$90,000 would be saved each year. He stated this would need to be paid back over ten (10) years.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

d. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 15A070/ Finance/ Vacancy Control/ June – August 2015

Legislator LoBue questioned what this money will be used for.

Commissioner Carlin stated right now, it will go into contingency. He stated it may be used to offset sales tax at the end of the year.

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

e. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 15A071/ Sheriff's Dept./ Cover Reimbursable Expenses

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 15A071; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

f. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 15A073/ Sheriff's Dept./ Use Federal Forfeited Asset Reserve to Purchase Polygraph Equipment

Legislator LoBue questioned if Putnam County ever had polygraph equipment. She stated there may be liability issues associated with it.

Chairman Castellano stated he spoke with Undersheriff Convery who stated this had been outsourced and it is something he believes Putnam County needs. He stated using the Federal Forfeited Asset Reserve funds will save Putnam County money.

Legislator LoBue questioned if people will need to be trained to utilize this equipment and how much that would cost.

Chairman Castellano stated he was not sure.

Legislator Albano stated he would like to have more information from the Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to table Budgetary Amendment 15A073; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #6 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 15T173/ Emergency Services/ Complete Ongoing Generator Projects (Also Reviewed in Protective Services)

Legislator LoBue questioned if this was part of a previous grant.

Commissioner Carlin stated it is part of a grant. He stated it is being moved from a contract to an equipment line so it can be accounted for properly.

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Chairman Castellano. All in favor.

Item #7 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 15T192/ Sheriff's Dept./ Pay Town of Kent for Officer Training Costs

Chairman Castellano stated an Officer was transferred from the Town of Kent to Putnam County. He stated part of the agreement is that the County must pay for part of the training for the new Officer that Kent will receive.

Commissioner Carlin stated the agreement is based on a law that the County must pay for the training costs. He stated if the County takes an Officer from a Town, the County must pay a prorated training cost.

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 15T192; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 15T201/ Sheriff's Dept./ Canine Stipend through Year End

Legislator LoBue stated Putnam County currently has three (3) dogs and this would be the fourth. She questioned if another vehicle would be needed since the dogs cannot travel in the same vehicle. She stated this is a duplication of services. She stated in the beginning of the year when the Sheriff's Department was getting the Explosives Detection dog, she contacted Westchester County Police, MTA, and the State Troopers Barracks and found they have a variety of dogs that could be in Putnam County in 15 minutes. She stated this Bloodhound does not need to be taken on as there is not a big issue of people

going missing in Putnam County. She stated the Bloodhound is free, however there are costs associated with having the dog. She also stated her concern with the Officer being taken off road patrol to be assigned to the dog. She stated the Officers with a dog are essentially making their own schedule.

Chairman Castellano stated there was a missing person in Brewster a few months ago.

Legislator LoBue stated Putnam County has the ability to call the other agencies who have stated that they will be able to come to Putnam County in 15 minutes.

Chairman Castellano stated the person was missing overnight and was not found until the next day.

Legislator LoBue stated this is a scare tactic used to increase the budget in the Sheriff's Department. She stated she does not see the necessity for the Bloodhound. She stated once or twice a year someone may go missing, but the other agencies are available to help Putnam County. She restated her concern with another vehicle being added to the fleet for this dog. She also restated her concern with an Officer being taken off road patrol at a time when service is being expanded in Putnam Valley and Philipstown and the Town of Carmel is requesting assistance. She stated she would like to see the amount of calls that come in for people who have gone missing to justify this fourth dog.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated at the September 9, 2015 Protective Services Meeting Undersheriff Convery gave a very good explanation as to why he thought having a Bloodhound would be beneficial to the County. She stated the costs and housing for the dog should be looked at. She stated the population of Alzheimer's patients must be taken into consideration. She also stated people are often reported missing in Philipstown as hikers go to hike up Breakneck and they get lost. She stated this happens pretty regularly and often firemen are on the mountain in the dark looking for the hikers. She stated having a dog that would be able to zone in on a missing person would be beneficial. She stated this is a free dog, but the costs going forward do need to be looked into.

Legislator LoBue stated the stipend is for the Officer who will be handling the dog and taking the dog home.

Legislator Albano stated when Undersheriff Convery spoke about the Bloodhound it seemed logical. He stated the cost does need to be looked at. He stated if one (1) life is saved, it is worth it.

Commissioner of Bureau of Emergency Services Anthony Sutton stated he was involved in the search in Brewster and he learned a lot about dogs. He stated the State Trooper that was assigned to the command post that night was a former Bloodhound handler. He stated that Officer explained to him that German Shepherds are great if there has been a sighting of a suspect and that trail needs to be picked up right away. He stated there is no substitute for a Bloodhound, especially when there has been a time lapse or if there

has been a lot of foot traffic in the area. He stated he is not familiar with the logistics as far as the cost or the removal of an Officer from road patrol.

Legislator Nacerino stated Undersheriff Convery did give a rational explanation. She agreed with Legislator Scuccimarra's concern regarding Alzheimer's patients. She stated there is a rise in the Alzheimer's population and a rise in the incidences of those patients going missing. She stated the person that was missing in Brewster is a Brewster High School Student and the whole community went into panic mode when he went missing. She stated Legislator LoBue did bring up some pertinent points that need to be addressed. She stated the Bloodhound has a specific use and questioned what happens if the dog is underused and underserviced. She stated she does not have an objection to having a Bloodhound, because as Legislator Albano stated, if a life is saved it is worth it. She stated however, a need must be demonstrated. She stated if there is a shortage of road patrol, there is a domino effect creating a shortage everywhere. She stated the monies, personnel, and dog must be used most effectively.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if a Bloodhound was brought in when the person went missing in Brewster.

Chairman Castellano stated there was no Bloodhound, only German Shepherds.

Commissioner Sutton stated there were no Bloodhounds available in this part of the State when the call came in.

Legislator Gouldman stated since there was no dog available, the 15 minute response time is not relevant to the situation. He questioned how long it took for the German Shepherd to arrive.

Commissioner Sutton stated the Sheriff's Department was there right away. He stated there was a considerable amount of time from the time he was last seen to the time when he was reported missing so the scent was cold.

Legislator LoBue stated when the call came in is when the Sheriff's Department became involved. She stated that variable cannot be controlled.

Chairman Castellano stated a Bloodhound would help in a situation where some time has passed. He stated the person who went missing was an autistic child.

Legislator LoBue stated part of the conversation had when the Sheriff's Department was requesting the other three (3) dogs was that they had dual purposes and would be able to locate missing people. She stated she would like to know which Officers handle a dog, which vehicle they drive, and what their duties are.

Legislator Albano stated Bloodhounds are very unique and serve other purposes above other dogs. He stated the other dogs are able to do specific things. He stated when the Deputy goes home with the dog he is still on call.

Legislator Albano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Chairman Castellano. By poll vote: Two Ayes: Chairman Castellano and Legislator Albano. One Nay: Legislator Nacerino. Motion Carries.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is voting no on this item because it is something that can be held over until all questions are addressed. She stated it is the responsibility of the Legislature to do their due diligence to have the outstanding questions addressed before moving forward. She stated she is not against the Bloodhound, she would just like to have the facts straight. She stated she would like there to be a memorandum sent to Undersheriff Convery requesting that he address the outstanding questions.

Chairman Castellano agreed to send a memorandum to Undersheriff Convery.

Item #9 - Approval/ Fund Transfer 15T206/ Planning/ Fund Veterans Transportation Program through Year End

Legislator LoBue questioned what the total amount was for this program.

Commissioner Carlin stated \$60,000 was budgeted and with this fund transfer, there will be a total of \$105,000 for the year.

Legislator LoBue stated \$105,000 is being spent on a specific group.

Chairman Castellano stated it is for Veterans.

Legislator LoBue stated as the Legislature was notified through the Law Department at the September 17, 2015 Rules Committee Meeting, a specific group of individuals cannot be treated differently than others.

Legislator Albano stated nobody is being denied. He stated this is for Veterans and in other areas, transportation is provided to them. He stated he had written to the State Senator requesting funding for this program, and the funds are just not available. He stated giving back to the Veterans is a “no brainer.”

Legislator LoBue stated people with disabilities have called the Transportation Office requesting to be picked up and they are being told no.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #10 - Approval/ Grant Application/ Office for Senior Resources/ Direct Care Worker Program

Director of Office for Senior Resources Pat Sheehy stated this is not a grant application. She stated traditionally, the State would approve a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) for various direct care workers, some of which would be contracted for different

services, not only through the Office for Senior Resources but through other services such as Welfare, etc. She stated in the past, the money would be allocated and then it would not necessarily be spent specifically on the salary increases for direct care workers. She stated in order to ensure that the money will go to the direct care workers, they ask that the Counties review the offer and pass a resolution stating that the funds will in fact be used for salary increases for direct care workers. She stated the first year was 2014 and the allocation was \$4,718. She stated in 2014, that money was able to be claimed because there were salary increases. She stated most of these workers are County employees. She stated if there is no increase, the money would not be accepted.

Chairman Castellano questioned if Director Sheehy is anticipating the same amount of money this year.

Director Sheehy stated she thinks it will be more money this year. She stated she believes it is closer to \$6,700 this year.

Legislator LoBue questioned if this had been done before.

Director Sheehy stated this is the first time since she has been Director of the Office for Senior Resources that the County has been offered a COLA. She stated over the past few years, there probably have not been cost of living increases offered for direct care workers through the State because budgets have been so tight.

Legislator Albano clarified that if the money is awarded to Putnam County, it can only be used for salary increases.

Commissioner Carlin stated if the money is awarded, the County has to use it. He stated if there is not an adjustment the County would not claim the money.

Legislator Nacerino questioned how this will work with CSEA union employees who receive salary increases as dictated by their contract.

Commissioner Carlin stated the resolution stated that the contracts are not affected by this. He stated this money can be used to offset the raise set forth in the contract.

Legislator Albano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #11 - Approval/ Sheriff's Dept./ Reduce Petty Cash for Corrections & Sheriff's Dept.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross questioned if both the Corrections and Sheriff's Department petty cash fund would be \$500.00 after this resolution is passed.

Commissioner Carlin stated it is a savings of \$500.00 each.

Legislative Counsel Van Ross stated one (1) fund is \$1,000 and the other is \$1,500.

Commissioner Carlin stated they will then be \$500.00 and \$1,000.

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Item #12 - Consumer Affairs/ Fines & Revenue Report/ FYI

Director of Consumer Affairs Jean Noel stated she got a letter this afternoon from Acme Supermarkets stating that as part of the purchase and bankruptcy of the A&P, they will transfer physical ownership of the Brewster and Mahopac stores. She stated they will be part of the item pricing waiver.

Commissioner Carlin questioned if A&P was a part of the item pricing waiver before.

Director Noel stated yes. She stated she notified Acme that Consumer Affairs will be available to inspect the machines to get the store up and running.

Item #13 - Other Business

a. Approval/ Fund Transfer 15T251/ Finance/ Certiorari Refunds

Commissioner Carlin stated this week he received notice of a refund pending for a condominium complex. He stated there is a time frame in which this must be paid and he wanted to take care of it before budget. He stated this was not submitted to the Legislature within the five (5) day rule because it was just received.

Legislator LoBue questioned which condominium complex this was referring to.

Commissioner Carlin stated it is Vista on the Lake.

Legislator Albano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Chairman Castellano. All in favor.

Item #14 - Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:35p.m., Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Albano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Beth Green.