

**RULES, ENACTMENTS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING
Held In Room 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman LoBue, Legislators Tartaro & Wright

Tuesday October 14, 2014
(Immediately Following Eco Dev Budget Mtg. @ 6:00pm)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairwoman LoBue who requested that Legislator Wright lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Tartaro, Wright, and Chairwoman LoBue were present.

Item #3 – 2015 Budget Review

Chairwoman LoBue stated she would like to address the budget pertaining to the outside agencies first.

Libraries – Account 7410 (page 143)

Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; seconded by Legislator Tartaro. All in favor.

Chairwoman LoBue stated for 2015, all outside agencies were given a 2% increase, with the exception of libraries who received a 3% increase.

President of the Putnam County Libraries Association Carol Donnack stated the increase they received was a 2.6% increase. She stated libraries are doing more and more for the members of the community because more is being asked of them. She stated we live in an information age and aside from books, the libraries are providing a large amount of information on the Internet. She stated the libraries help people apply for jobs and improve their job skills. She stated there has been an increase in the demand for e-books. She stated the use of the library as a whole is increasing. She stated she is grateful to the County for their support of the libraries.

Chairwoman LoBue stated she is happy to see the increase of use of libraries. She stated the Mahopac Library is always packed. She stated with the downturn in the economy, people are becoming more reliant on libraries. She stated the libraries assist people on a spectrum of needs. She stated their services include child care, education for both children and adults, and they are there during times of crisis.

Ms. Donnack stated the Patterson Library has just gotten a generator and Kent Library has a generator as well. She stated during times of emergency it is important for people to have somewhere to go to be able to charge their devices and get warm free of charge.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that is a great service.

Legislator Oliverio stated the Library is the one (1) true intergenerational agency. He stated they serve the entire population. He stated he would like to see the increase given to the libraries be at 5% rather than 3%. He stated the Putnam Valley Library closed for construction and it was devastating to the community. He stated it is a burden not to have the library up and running. He stated it is an obstacle for High School students as well. He stated there were many years where no increases were given and he would like to make up for that.

Chairwoman LoBue stated as it stands, the libraries are receiving a \$10,500 increase.

Ms. Donnick stated the money would certainly be put to good use.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the funding will be put to good use. He stated there were two (2) days over the summer when the Mahopac Library had lost electricity and people were greatly affected. She stated people who do not have air conditioning in their homes often go to the library to get some cool air. She stated it is a hub of information.

Legislator Nacerino stated libraries are essential to our quality of life. She stated they have evolved from years ago. She stated many people do not have a home computer and they rely on the library to utilize their resources. She stated it is now a comfort station.

Legislator Albano stated he understands the points everyone has made thus far and he supports the libraries, however he is concerned with raising the budget.

County Auditor Michele Sharkey stated the extra 2% would come out to \$7,250.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated the libraries are very important to their communities. She stated before jumping to 5%, she would like to have a better understanding of all the numbers. She stated she is not saying no to the increase.

Legislator Nacerino stated the extra money is not a huge impact on the County, but it is a big impact on the libraries.

Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to increase line 54950, County Contribution to the libraries from 3% to 5%; Seconded by Legislator Tartaro. By roll call vote: Two ayes, Chairwoman LoBue and Legislator Tartaro. One Nay, Legislator Wright.

Putnam Arts Council – Account 7560 (page 145)

Chairwoman LoBue stated the funding for the Putnam Arts Council is in two (2) pieces. She stated one is for the Arts Council themselves and the other is for projects. She stated the Putnam Arts Council requested a \$15,000 County contribution. She stated the tentative budget shows \$14,000. She stated she would like to match the \$15,000

request. She stated the Arts Council serves a broad audience. She provided some examples of art throughout the County.

Legislator Nacerino stated looking at the 2014 actuals, the Putnam Arts Council has used less than \$14,000.

Legislator Tartaro stated the number Legislator Nacerino was looking at was year to date and there is more time in the year.

Chairwoman LoBue stated the Putnam Arts Council does a lot with a little.

Legislator Tartaro stated they have done a phenomenal job with the money they are provided.

Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to increase line 54950 County Contribution; Seconded by Legislator Tartaro. By roll call vote: Two Ayes: Chairwoman LoBue and Legislator Tartaro. One Nay: Legislator Wright. Motion Carries.

Cornell Cooperative Extension – Account 8750 (page 156)

Legislator Oliverio questioned if the 2% increase was adequate.

Executive Director of Putnam County Cornell Cooperative Extension Marjorie Keith stated they requested a 2.5% increase, however they will make due with 2%. She stated they appreciate the support they receive.

Legislator Wright questioned why the 2.5% increase is not shown in the budget.

Executive Director Keith stated the 2% for all outside agencies was included instead. She stated it is included in the amount for the 2015 requested budget on page 156.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what the \$10,000 in line 54555, Tilly Foster Agriculture Program was for.

Executive Director Keith stated Cornell Cooperative Extension was part of the Tilly Foster Farm comprehensive planning process. She stated they found agriculture was an important piece of Tilly Foster Farm. She also stated Keep Farming is an initiative going on in the County as well. She stated they can have a big impact on the agriculture in Putnam County with a small amount of resources. She stated their staff is well credentialed, but where they fall short is in commercial horticulture. She stated this includes vegetables, fruits, tree fruits, weed management, and business management. She stated they can buy into the regional horticulture team for \$5,000. She stated this would allow them access to ten (10) faculty members who are versed in the areas mentioned earlier, which is a cost effective solution without having to expand staff. She stated the other \$5,000 will be used for the animal side of Cornell Cooperative Extension. She stated there are many questions they could not answer; therefore they

are looking into contracting with neighboring Cooperative Extensions in Dutchess and Orange Counties for that expertise. She stated the plan is to utilize Tilly Foster Farm.

Chairwoman LoBue stated there has been no discussion with the Legislature regarding funding for Tilly Foster Farm. She stated whether Cornell Cooperative Extension moves to the Farm or not, there is an interest in farming and gardening among the residents.

Executive Director Keith stated they can conduct workshops anywhere. She stated Tilly Foster Farm is a good site to do this. She stated they have held programs in meeting rooms of libraries around the County as well.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that is the direction that people wanted Tilly Foster Farm to go in so it is a win-win.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is another example of pulling resources together to fill in the gaps. She stated this is a proactive approach. She stated people are interested in going back to basics.

Legislator Wright questioned if there are dues associated with the outside group.

Executive Director Keith stated the Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program is Cornell University driven and is a regional program. She stated there are ten (10) other Counties involved in the assessment and it is based on the amount of acreage of commercial agricultural production. She stated Ulster County paid about \$150,000 per year to be part of the team. She stated since Putnam County does not have a lot of acreage, it will pay only \$5,000 and have the same access to the people and program that Ulster County does.

Legislature – Account 1010 (page 1)

Legislator Gross questioned what the Overtime, line 51093 was for.

Auditor Sharkey stated it is for the IT Department when they video tape the Full Legislative meetings.

County Clerk – Account 1410 (page 17)

Deputy County Clerk Michael Bartolotti stated the County Clerk's 2015 budget is tight compared to past years.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned why Overtime, line 51093 was increased.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated the budgeted overtime amount was kept the same as the 2014 budget. He stated it is difficult to predict when they will have to stay open. He stated if the County closes early, they stay open. He stated it depends on how the holidays fall as well. He stated when the Courts are open, they are open as well and they keep the skeleton crew on.

Legislator Tartaro stated the County Clerk has only spent \$1,500 in overtime to date.

Deputy County Clerk stated there are many factors that may affect their overtime budget and they do not want their skeleton staff to become overwhelmed.

Legislator Gross questioned why a decrease was anticipated in Clerk Fees, line 412551.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated the majority of the money comes in through land recordings. He stated real estate has been dreadful and he would rather err on the side of caution and hope the revenue will be exceeded in 2015. He stated foreclosures are beginning to level off.

Department of Motor Vehicles – Account 1411 (page18)

Legislator Gross questioned if implementing the use of television screens has improved service.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated absolutely. He stated revenue is generated from the DMV from the 12.7% the County receives for each transaction done in the office. He stated the State gets the rest. He stated the State is trying to box out the County so they can receive all the revenue. He stated because of this, the County must come up with ways to keep the DMV viable and it has been successful. He stated the staff is very busy.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what the process with the lockboxes is.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated there are lockboxes at the DMV which has been successful and they have done localized campaigns in the Towns and Villages reminding people to use the local DMV. He stated labels with the Brewster address were sent out as well so people would mail into the local DMV rather than the State. He stated letters were sent to dealers as well.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned how it would work if the dealer was in Mount Kisco.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated it will be driven or overnighted up to the office. He stated there is a dealership in the Albany area that sends once a week to the Brewster office.

Legislator Gross questioned if the State would make an initiative to close the County DMV down.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated he is not sure if the State would do that. He stated in vehicle traffic law, the County Clerk is designated the DMV Commissioner. He stated the State is trying to push their online initiatives. He stated it would be great if the County was able to take ownership of some online initiatives as well. He stated the

County does a better job than Albany. He stated when an online transaction is conducted, there is no follow up. He stated those people then end up in their local DMV because Albany has poor customer service.

Legislator Wright questioned if it is possible to allow Putnam County residents to do their transactions online through the County DMV.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated it is not possible. He stated Albany would not allow it.

Legislator Wright questioned if there is any prohibition in regards to sending out advertisements to remind residents that the local DMV is there.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated as far as he knows, sending out such an advertisement is not prohibited. He stated he would like to have something on the western side of the County as well.

Records Management – Account 1460 (page 24)

Chairwoman LoBue questioned why line 52610, Furniture and Furnishings, was increased so greatly.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated he realizes the amount is very high, however it is for the remainder of the shelving that is needed in the Records Center.

Legislator Oliverio questioned if the line amount was for both the records center and the Clerk's Office.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated it is for the Records Center only. He stated the goal is to have all the shelving in place in one shot, rather than over time like they have been doing. He stated through July of 2014, the Records Center has taken in 20% more boxes than they had in all of 2013.

Legislator Oliverio questioned if the Records Center has begun digitizing the records.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated they have begun scanning records that are widely accessed. He provided an example where Probation had about eight (8) to ten (10) filing cabinets worth of documents and they were scanned onto two (2) DVDs and given back to the Probation Department. He stated they then destroyed the physical records. He stated they are now looking into software that can manage the records. He stated the records will be scanned and cataloged. He stated there is the possibility of outside confidential access, where a department can sign into the server using an ID and password and view the documents they are trying to access. He stated they are attempting to secure a S.A.R.A. (State Archives and Records Administration) grant for the software, however the grant has gotten extremely competitive.

Legislator Wright questioned what the difference was between budget lines 52110 and 52610, both titled Furniture and Furnishings.

Commissioner Carlin stated the difference is in the amount of money. He stated one is for equipment that costs less than \$5,000 and the other is more than \$5,000. He stated this is for asset tracking purposes.

Legislator Wright questioned how much space is left in the records center.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated if they were going to stick with just having the boxes on the shelf without scanning there is about seven (7) to nine (9) years left.

Legislator Wright questioned if any service was done for the towns.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated no digitizing has yet been done for the towns. He stated the records are transported back and forth to the towns and they are stored and cataloged for \$1.25 per box per month.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned if there is any way to increase the amount of per box per month.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated he could look into increasing the price. He stated beginning to digitize for the towns may be a good revenue stream as well.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned if there were any records that need to be kept indefinitely.

Deputy County Clerk Bartolotti stated yes there are. He stated if those records are going to be scanned and digitized, it would be best to purchase a microfilm machine which would also write them onto film. He stated it must be in a format that can be read. He stated today, a machine can read a DVD, but there is no promise that in the future that will be the case.

Law Department – Account 1420 (page 19)

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what falls under Special Services, line 54682.

County Attorney Jennifer Bumgarner stated anything other than legal services, such as appraisal work, survey work, and private investigators. She stated they have not included money in this line in years past as they would pay for these services from the legal services line.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned if the surveys are for the foreclosures.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated surveys are done when the County is selling a piece of property, with a lot line adjustment, with a donation, or a straight forward purchaser sale.

Board of Elections – Account 1450 (pages 22-23)

Chairwoman LoBue questioned why the contract line, 54646 was decreased from 2014.

Commissioner Catherine Croft stated this year there were three (3) elections and next year there will be two (2).

Legislator Gross, referencing the Motor Vehicles line 52650, questioned if a car was sold.

Commissioner Scannapieco stated they got a van and applied to HAVA (Help Americans Vote Act) to get the money back, however it is difficult to collect.

Commissioner Croft stated there is about \$200,000 outstanding.

Commissioner Scannapieco stated they now have a small van to transport the voting machines to the voting sites.

Chairwoman LoBue stated she preferred the old way of voting.

Commissioner Scannapieco stated the electronic machine is able to cater to disabled voters by offering the choice of “sip and puff” or reading aloud the choices to the legally blind.

Commissioner Croft stated the election districts can be larger with the electronic machines. She stated the old machines could only tally a maximum of 999 votes.

Chairwoman LoBue stated there is a lack of privacy with the new machines.

Commissioner Croft stated privacy folders are provided to increase confidentiality.

Legislator Nacerino stated in an age that is trying to become more environmentally friendly, a lot of paper is being wasted.

Commissioner Scannapieco stated there is a digital machine available that looked just like the lever machine, but it had a touch screen. He stated there were people who preferred to have a paper trail.

Veterans Services Agency – Account 6510 (pages 122-123)

Chairwoman LoBue questioned what was involved in Loyalty Day, line 54512 on page 122.

Director of Veteran’s Affairs Karl Rohde stated the money will go toward food and prizes for the day.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned if the Leased Transportation, line 54678 and Chargeback Gasoline, line 55371 was adding up to the \$80,000 from the 2014 total Leased Transportation line.

Director Rohde stated that is correct and it is his hope to spend less in these areas with the help of volunteer drivers. He stated the money left will go back to the Office for Senior Resources.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned if the drivers needed a special license.

Director Rohde stated the size of the van they purchased was just below the necessity of requiring a special license.

Consumer Affairs – Account 6610 (pages 125-126)

Director of Consumer Affairs Jean Noel stated there is a step increase for some employees in her department.

Chairwoman LoBue questioned the increase in Personnel Services, line 51000.

Director Noel stated there was an increase in the position of Director of Code Enforcement from 2013 to 2014. She stated this year they should be about \$100,000 under the salary budget and that money will go into vacancy control.

There being no further business, at 8:18 P.M., Chairwoman LoBue made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Wright. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Beth Green.