

PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Held In Room #318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512
Members: Chairman
Chairman Albano & Legislators Gross & Oliverio

Monday

June 11, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 6:35p.m. by Chairman Albano. He led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Gross and Chairman Albano were present. Legislator Oliverio was absent.

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

Item #3) Approval of Minutes-Protective Svcs Committee Mtg. May 14, 2012

Chair Albano stated that the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4) Approval/Appointment/William Edwards- Town of Carmel/Traffic Safety Board

Legislator Gross made a motion to approve the appointment of William Edwards to Traffic Safety Board; Seconded by Chair Albano. All in favor.

Item #5) Approval/District Attorney's Office/Renewal of 2009 Crime Victim Boards Grant

Legislator Gross made a motion to approve the Renewal of 2009 Crime Victim Boards Grant; Seconded by Chair Albano. All in favor.

Item #6) Approval/Fund Transfer (12T114) /Emergency Operations Ctr/Cover Dispatcher Overtime Shortfall

Deputy Commissioner Stiebeling stated that he sent correspondence to Commissioner of Finance Carlin providing an overview of this situation. In the past three years the overtime expenses have never dropped below \$65,000. In the 2012 budget the overtime was cut to \$30,000. Also in the 2012 budget the temp line was unfunded due to a fourteenth dispatcher position which was added to the Bureau of Emergency Services personnel. The plan was to utilize this new person to fill in on vacations, sick leave resulting in a reduction of overtime. In March of 2012 one of the full-time dispatchers resigned. The new-hire dispatcher immediately occupied the position, however in doing so the department lost the ability to cover open shifts without incurring overtime. There was a person hired as a full-time dispatcher on May 21, 2012. However the training for the position takes a minimum of three (3) months, as set by e-

911 standards. In the meantime there have been dispatchers who required time off for medical issues, vacation and sick leave resulting in overtime time expenses. The \$30,000 in the overtime line has been exhausted. He stated that they have requested that \$14,000 be transferred from the vacated position into the overtime line. He stated that tonight there is a request for \$30,000 to be taken out of the County's contingency fund and transferred to the 911 Center's overtime budget, allowing the 911 Center to operate through the end of the year.

County Executive Odell stated that she has requested that the Personnel Director post the test for the 911 dispatcher positions. It is a tested position and the list is dry at this time.

Legislator Gross made a motion to approve the Fund Transfer (12T114)/Bureau of Emergency Operations Ctr.; Seconded by Chair Albano. All in favor.

Item 7a) Discussion/Treatment Court Coordinator Position

County Executive Odell stated that the Treatment Court Coordinator Position is no longer going to be funded by New York State. If this position is removed, it will have a grave fiscal impact on our judicial system. The Treatment Court has proven itself to be very effective since it has begun. This was a mandated position by New York State and now they are pulling the funding.

County Court Judge James Reitz stated that New York State has stopped funding the Treatment Court Coordinator Position. He stated that what his department is left with is less staff to handle many more cases. When the program began in 2002 there were 15 cases. There are currently 90 active cases with 20 more waiting to try to get into the program. It is very difficult for himself or anyone of his staff members to turn someone away who needs help. The huge issue is the DWIs in Putnam County. In 2002 Putnam County agreed that if they were to participate in a Treatment Court it would include DWIs. He stated that 50-60% of the active cases are DWI Cases. He stated that the majority of the cases are Felony Cases. He explained the process of becoming a participant of the Treatment Court. He stated that essentially it is an opportunity for the participants to get the help that they need and to stay out of State Prison. The social benefit is of keeping a person in their home, in their job and taking care of their families also is a help to our Social Services Programs. If the person were in jail, their family may need to be on financial assistance, or there may be a need for Foster Family services, and then there is the cost associated with paying for the person in jail.

Inspector General Intry stated that Judge Reitz reported that there are 90 active cases currently in the Treatment Court Program. It costs approximately \$100 a day to keep a

person in jail. From Jan 12 – April 12 the County has paid \$110,065 in Board-out Expenses and \$120,986 in transportation costs to the other jails. Add the 90 more people into the jail system, the numbers become staggering.

County Executive Odell stated that the fiscal impact of the position that is being discussed is approximately \$45,000 plus benefits totaling approximately \$60,000 for the position. She stated compare that amount, \$60,000, to the \$600,000 of potential jail expenses for boarding and transportation.

Judge Reitz stated that another benefit of keeping people out of the Putnam County Jail is that it allows the Sheriff's Department to take Board-Ins. Then that is revenue coming into Putnam County.

District Attorney Levy stated that if a defendant is arrested on a non-violent felony offense that involves drug or alcohol the person is given the option to participate in the Treatment Court Program. They must go through an evaluation process. If they are approved for the program then they are given the opportunity to plead guilty to their charge and waive their right to a trial. This saves the County money because the resources of the County do not need to play their parts in the trial process. He stated also serving time in jail does not address the addiction issue. The recidivism rate is very high in the cases that the people serve jail time. He stated that currently the recidivism rate calculated with the participants of the Treatment Court it is down to just over 10%.

Judge Reitz stated that the Treatment Court is not an easy program. It is hard work, but the recidivism rate proves that it is working.

Legal Aide Attorney Patrick Brophy stated that the team approach is what makes this program work. It is a very valuable program.

Judge Reitz stated that each person is reviewed on a case by case basis. He stated at the upcoming Treatment Court Graduation on June 28th there is a participant who was almost refused to be a part of the program who will be graduating. He stated that he encourages all of the Legislators to attend the graduation to witness it themselves.

Legislator Gross stated that he would like to thank Judge Reitz and District Attorney Levy for the great work that they do with this program. He supports the Treatment Court Program completely.

Director of Probation Funicelli stated that this is a team concept. The Probation Department Staff participates in this program as well. The payoff is good, because as District Attorney Levy said the recidivism rate is evidence that it works.

County Executive Odell stated that tonight is only about discussion. The financials for this matter will be presented at the Personnel Committee meeting on June 13th. The hope is that there is a seamless continuation of this program.

Chair Albano stated that it is a pay it forward type of program.

Judge Reitz stated that the only program that has a better success rate is the Putnam County Youth Court, which has a 95% success rate.

Item #7 Adjournment

There being no further business at 8:50p.m. Legislator Oliverio made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Othmer. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature – *Diane E. Trabulsy*