

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Addonizio and LoBue

Thursday

6:00 P.M.

July 21, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator LoBue and Chairwoman Scuccimarra were present. Legislator Addonizio was absent. Chairwoman Scuccimarra requested that Legislator Gouldman sit on the committee in her absence.

Item #3 – Approval of Minutes – June 22, 2016

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment (16A039)/To Modify the 2016 Adopted Budget to reflect the planned spending of the BIP Grant/Office for Senior Resources

Chairwoman Scuccimarra requested that Office for Senior Resources Director Patricia Sheehy come up to speak about the BIP Grant. She questioned if there was a fiscal impact with this grant.

Director Sheehy stated that BIP stands for the Balance of Incentive Program which is tied in with the New York State Department of Health and the Federal Government. She stated that it ties into the award for having to reduce Medicaid spending over the past couple of years. She stated that the original grant spans from April 1, 2014 through December 2016. She stated that they need to ascertain what the money can be expended for, however, she stated that it is 100% reimbursable. She stated that last year Commissioner of Finance William Carlin had placed the BIP funding in a separate line in the 2016 budget so that it wouldn't get interwoven with other funds. She added that they are trying to spend the money before the grant period is up because if it isn't spent, the money could be lost. She stated that the State would allocate approximately the same amount of money next year.

Legislator LoBue questioned if it was an additional \$13,610.

Director Sheehy stated that is what they want to put in. She added that they are moving money around for different lines because they haven't brought staff in for it yet. She stated that they will probably be hiring people by the end of August or the beginning of September. She added that the programs are not yet up and running. She explained that she needed State approval for how the funds can be spent. She stated that she may have to come back to a future Health Committee Meeting to revise the budget.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned if a resolution was needed every time the budget was modified.

Director Sheehy stated that it was, and State approval was also needed.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that it seemed the Office for Senior Resources was using the grant for great things such as public education and technology.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to move Budgetary Amendment (16A039) to the Audit and Administration meeting; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #5 - Update/Zika Virus – Putnam County/Acting Commissioner of Health Nesheiwat

Chairwoman Scuccimarra requested that Acting Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael Nesheiwat come to give an update on Zika Virus in Putnam County.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat introduced Richard Carano from the Environmental Health Department and Senior Public Health Nurse Rachel Gressel from the Health Department to assist in this update.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat commended the Health Department on their efforts against the Zika Virus. He explained the details of the Virus, such as it being mosquito borne. He noted the symptoms to look for, such as; a rash, fever and conjunctivitis. He stated that if anyone has these symptoms they should go to their local doctor because the Health Department has been working to educate doctors on the virus. He added that there have been two (2) cases in Putnam County. He stated that both patients are doing well and contracted the virus outside of the country. He stressed that this virus is a big risk to pregnant women because it can cause Microcephaly. He added that they should not travel to the regions associated with Zika. He then showed an informational video on the Virus. He stated that they have prepared “Zika Bags,” that include information and various tools to help educate and combat the Virus. He stated that everyone should remove standing water around their house because it is a breeding ground for mosquito larvae.

Legislator Gouldman asked if this video was available on the County’s website.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that it was available on the County website, Health Department website, and YouTube.

Ms. Gressel stated that the mosquito that transmits Zika is not found in Putnam County or New York State because it likes very hot weather. She stated that the symptoms can be very mild and that 70%-80% of people do not have any symptoms. She stated that Brazil has over 1,000 confirmed cases of Microcephaly. She stated that it has recently been found out that it can be sexually transmitted. She added that blood transfusions are now a cause for concern. She stated that Putnam along with other counties have drafted “Zika Action Plans” which had to be approved by New York State. She stated that more adults are getting a neurologic syndrome called Guillain–Barré. She added that this syndrome causes paralysis starting at the feet and moves up. She stated that most patients fully recover from it. She stated that any women who have traveled can get tested for free, but men have to show symptoms in order to be tested.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra asked if a blood test was used.

Ms. Gressel stated that it is a blood or urine test. She stated that it depends on how long it has been since the person was out of the country.

Legislator Gouldman stated that since up to 80% of people don't have symptoms, there could be many people that don't know they have the virus.

Ms. Gressel stated that that is why it is important that any woman who has traveled gets tested.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if men can get tested for free.

Ms. Gressel stated only if they have symptoms. She added that they are asked to use condoms for 6 months after traveling.

Legislator Albano questioned how long the Virus stays in the system.

Ms. Gressel stated that most viruses pass after one (1) to two (2) weeks but it can stay in semen for three (3) months. She added that women are asked to stay protected for eight (8) weeks, if they're looking to have children.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra questioned how long it takes for the test results.

Ms. Gressel stated that it depends how long it's been since the patient has been out of the country. She added that could be days or weeks, depending on the test. She stated that she and Mr. Carano have gone around working to educate the public. She added that some of their presentations have been aired on television.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if the Olympics happening in Brazil will cause an increase in Zika cases.

Ms. Gressel stated that it is believed that there won't be an issue due to the precautionary measures taken at the Olympic sites. She then gave many statistics in regards to the Virus. She stated that in the United States there have been 1,306 cases of Zika contracted outside the country. She added that there is one (1) case that originated here. She stated that in the United States' territories there are 2,905 cases which are all locally acquired. She stated that Brazil has 1,709 cases of Microcephaly and 354 suspected deaths.

Legislator Gouldman asked if the ease of travel between the US and Puerto Rico should be cause for concern.

Ms. Gressel stated that the bigger issue is the fact that the mosquito which carries the Virus is in southern states.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that the County has twenty-two (22) traps out to catch the virus carrying mosquitoes.

Mr. Carano addressed some of the Legislator's previous questions. He stated that the fact that where the Olympics will be held, is currently in their Winter season, which works in our favor as that means there less mosquitos. He commended Fordham University for helping the Health Department train for this new virus. He added that the Zika Mosquito hasn't made its way north of Washington D.C. He stated that the State Health Department has provided new traps, geared toward the Zika Mosquito, to use in addition to the old traps. He added that they have two (2) certified pesticide applicators going around and treating the County with pesticides.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra and Legislators LoBue and Albano thanked the Health Department for their efforts.

Legislator Castellano questioned if one contracts the Zika Virus, if they are then immune to it.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat says that it's self-limiting because it's a virus.

Item # 6 - Discussion/Erie County Proposed Local Law/Concussion Law/Acting Commissioner of Health Nesheiwat

Chairwoman Scuccimarra read the legislative intent of the proposed concussion law.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that this is a very simple local law. He stated that it is a great law and it will have a significant impact on the long term health of athletes. He stated that this law mandates that supervisors and coaches will have to take a one (1) hour course on traumatic brain injury and concussion safety. He stated that this will help educate them on the head traumas and to identify the symptoms of concussions. He stated that the statistics show an increase in head trauma over the years, which is concerning. He expressed his desire to put together an educational course for the county, but showed uncertainty in how to implement and enforce its teachings.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra noted Legislator Nacerino's point from the last Health Meeting that the high schools already have something in place, so the concern lies in the 26 camps and recreations in the County. She questioned how they will deal with this.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat agreed with the concern regarding the camps and noted that most contact sports have an EMT or some other medical professional on site.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she submitted comprehensive backup material for last month's Committee meeting which applied to School Districts. She was informed that they are mandated by law to have every coach or personnel that deals with children in any facet of sports to take a course on concussion safety and prevention. She believed that any sports association may fall under the same law.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that he supports creating this course but there needs to be more research and due diligence. He questioned if it is a state mandate or a law. He added that he would like to get the new Health Commissioner involved in the decision making.

Legislator Nacerino stated that we need to find out where the gaps are and identify what organizations or camps are not in compliance. She stated that we do not know who this law is intended for at this point in time.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that at the Board of Health meeting last evening it was discussed that there are 26 camps in Putnam County. She stated that we do not know if there are certified coaches.

Legislator LoBue stated that we needed to find out if they are accredited.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that we need to find out if they are compliant with this mandate and/or State law, if they have certification for their coaches and supervisors.

Reporter Eric Gross stated that when the Environmental Health Inspectors go to inspect these camps, he questioned if they can find out if they are accredited.

Acting Commissioner Nesheiwat stated that could be a question asked as part of their inspection process. He stated that he wants to find out first if this is mandatory or not. He stated that if it is mandatory then it would be something that the Health Department needs to inspect to make sure they are in compliance. He stated that if it is not mandatory, then a decision needs to be made if the County wants to make it mandatory or do we want to make a strong recommendation.

Legislator Nacerino stated that it has been mandatory for the schools and it has been done for years.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if we could also find out if clubs and schools have the same rules with respect to the type of equipment that is utilized.

Item # 7 - Verbal Update/Synthetic Cannabinoids/Chairwoman Scuccimarra

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that after reading an article about many people being affected by “K2” she had a meeting with the Sherriff Smith, Undersheriff Convery, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Social Services Joe DeMarzo and Captain Vincent Martin. She explained how they stated it is almost impossible to enforce a ban because the compounds constantly change. She stated that Captain Martin informed her that when he checks whether or not stores are selling alcohol or cigarettes to minors, he will also keep an eye out for this substance. She stated that Captain Martin claimed that no K2 is being sold in Putnam County right now.

Commissioner of Social Services Michael Piazza cited the previous week’s press conference by Governor Cuomo in which he detailed the State’s fight against K2.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra expressed her concern over how easy it is to just change the name and packaging and put K2 back in stores. She added that the effects of K2 are awful.

Commissioner Piazza stated that the drug makes people psychotic. He added that it can cause seizures, increased anxiety and heart rate, and even suicidal thoughts.

Legislator LoBue questioned how people are tested for K2.

Commissioner Piazza stated that it takes time for it to clear out of a person. He added that blood tests can be done but they won't necessarily pick up the drug.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that you should call the poison control center if you know someone who is under the effects. She added that Sherriff Smith said that heroin is still the biggest threat to Putnam County.

Legislator Gouldman question if Commissioner Piazza was familiar with the Federal Law that U.S. Senator Charles Schumer has talked about.

Commissioner Piazza stated that he is not, but the chart he had with the information was from the Federal Government.

Legislator Nacerino stated that awareness and education are key. She added that parents may not be aware of the drug and questioned if information could be handed out at open houses when school starts again.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that many store owners didn't know that they were selling a drug. Legislator LoBue agreed that there isn't enough awareness of the drug. She stated that she hopes the Health Department will help educate the business owners.

Commissioner Piazza stated that the CDC will train both the SROs and schools.

Item #8 – FYI/ProAct Report

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated that she would like to have someone from ProAct come in to refresh everyone on the program and detail and discuss exactly what ProAct is.

Item #9 - Other Business

a) FYI/Budgetary Amendment (16A038)/Youth Bureau/2016 Runaway & Homeless Youth Funding/Arbor House

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to waive the rules and accept the other business; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to move Budgetary Amendment 16A038 to the Audit and Administration Committee Meeting; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

b) Request to Discuss Safety of Cell Towers – Legislator LoBue

Legislator LoBue stated that she would like to add a discussion to the next agenda and have a professional come in to talk about the health effects of the proposed cell towers.

Item #10 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:00 p.m. Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn;
Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Ed Gordon.