

**2017 TENTATIVE BUDGET  
PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING  
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
ROOM #318  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512  
Members: Chairman Gouldman & Legislators Gross & Wright**

**Thursday**

**October 13, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 6:25p.m. by Chairman Gouldman who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Wright and Chairman Gouldman were present. Chairman Gouldman stated that Chairwoman of the Legislature Ginny Nacerino would sit as a member of this Committee for the meeting.

**Item #3 –2017 Budget Review**

Chairman Gouldman stated that he will go through the budget page by page of the Departments that are addressed by this committee.

Judicial Expense (County Share) Page 3:

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin was requested to address any questions pertaining to this department.

Legislator LoBue questioned if there is a new Janitorial Contract coming up.

Commissioner Carlin stated that there is a bid going out. He stated further questions should be addressed to Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino. He stated that she will be in attendance at the Physical Services meeting tomorrow evening.

District Attorney Pages 4-6 & Legal Aid Page 7 Legal Defense (County Appointed Indigents) Page 8:

Legislator LoBue stated there are no representatives present from the District Attorney or the Legal Aid offices. She stated she would like to hear what Legal Aid has to say in reference to the large drop in their revenue line for 2017.

Legislator Wright stated that the annual Putnam County Bar Association Dinner is tonight, that may explain why there is no representative from either office.

Legislator Nacerino stated on page 4 in the District Attorney's budget there is no funding for Radio Communications for 2017. She questioned Commissioner Carlin as to why that would be.

Commissioner Carlin stated that he believes it is due to the fact that a lot of the employees in the District Attorney's Office have cell phones.

Chairman Gouldman questioned how many County Cell Phones have been issued in the District Attorney's, the 2017 budget is \$7,000 (page 5).

Commissioner Carlin stated that he was not certain. He stated the Legislative Auditor, Michele Sharkey, has a list of all County Employees who have a cell phone. *(Auditor Sharkey provided the answer the day after the meeting the D. A. Department has 13 County Cell Phones )*

Legislator Wright questioned Commissioner Carlin as to whether the County has implemented an unlocked code for all of the County owned Cell phones.

Commissioner Carlin stated he does not know the answer to that question. IT/GIS Director Lannon would be able to respond to that question. *(Director Lannon replied via email 10-17-2016 that he does have access to all County Cell Phone records.)*

Legislator Wright questioned on page 7 under Legal Aid it shows that Legal Aid requested for 2017 \$863,294, the Administration submitted in the Tentative 2017 Budget \$616,559.

Commissioner Carlin stated that is due to the drop in the State revenue for the Legal Aid. He stated that every year Legal Aid receives Indigent Legal Services (ILS) distribution. He stated at that point the Administration adjusts the County's Budget. He stated the County's Legal Aid Office bases their budget on what they will spend. The County bases the allowance on the revenue that the County will receive. He stated if Legal Aid does not get the Competitive Grant that was issued in 2014 \$300,000 (\$100,000 per year expiring Dec. 2016) renewed that will be a substantial hit to the Legal Aid's budget.

Legislator LoBue questioned stated how Legal Aid would function.

Commissioner Carlin stated whatever they have done to enhance their services they will need to cut back. He stated regarding the Indigent Legal Services (ILS) defense, the State Legislature is projecting that the State will take it off the backs of the Counties in a seven (7) year period. He stated that the bill is sitting on the Governor's desk waiting action. He stated that is the last update he has received. He stated the County, for the 2017 budget has kept its financial commitment of \$616,559, which it has since 2013. He stated if Legal Aid receives more funding form ILS, then the County acts as a conduit and passes it along to the Legal Aid Office. He stated if Legal Aid does not receive the funding from ILS, the County will not be the back-stop in 2017.

Legislator LoBue stated the difference could be put into sub-contingency and then if the grant funding does come through, it would be a wash. She stated these are services provided to our community.

Commissioner Carlin stated the money cannot be put in contingency because the County does not have the funding. He stated unless the decision is to back-stop them and give Legal Aid the money at the expense of the County taxpayers.

Legislator LoBue stated she believes that is what should be done. She stated funding could be taken from the Sales Tax surplus. She believes the decision should be made to make Legal Aid whole, it is her opinion that it is the responsibility of the County to see to that.

Legislator Albano stated that money can always be moved around if it becomes critical. He stated that the people should know that the State is falling short and not the County. He stated he does not believe money should be set aside. He believes it takes the pressure off the State.

Legislator LoBue stated that she believes funding should be set aside in contingency for Legal Aid, so they can continue function at the level they have been.

Legislator Wright stated he would like a clearer picture of the \$250,000 cut. He questioned if there was a budgetary analysis done.

Commissioner Carlin stated the County share has remained exactly the same. If the State does not support this program with the revenues of the past, then the State will need to make changes to the way that they do business. He stated that Legislator LoBue is correct that everyone needs to be clear that the ramifications could be that the County will be the back-stop if the State comes up short.

Legislator Nacerino stated she agrees that from a moral and ethical perspective the County would be the back-stop if push came to shove. She stated she does agree with Legislator Albano as well that if the need arises then it will be addressed at that time.

Chairman Gouldman stated that he will request that a representative from Legal Aid attend the next budget meeting to address this matter.

Legislator Wright stated he believes they should be requested to attend the October 17<sup>th</sup> Budget Personnel Meeting, since the majority of their budget is likely Personnel Services.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like a request to be made to provide the stats regarding the number of cases they have handled for the past three (3) years.

Chairman Gouldman stated he will contact Legal Aid.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she will address this matter at the 2017 Budget Personnel Meeting.

#### Coroners Pages 10-11:

Legislator Wright questioned what the post mortem projection is for the Coroner in 2017.

Commissioner Carlin stated that it is 85.

Legislator LoBue questioned what falls under the Coroners "Contract" budget line (page 10).

Commissioner Carlin stated the payments to the hospital for the morgue, the autopsies and the transportation. He stated all of the 2017 projected amounts are based the 85 cases.

Legislator Nacerino stated that there has been no demonstrated activity in the Postage budget line for the Coroner (page10). She stated she would like to reduce the Postage line from \$750 to \$150.

Legislator Nacerino made a motion to reduce budget line 10118500 54314, Coroner's Postage to \$150; Seconded by Chairman Gouldman. All in favor.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if every Coroner is issued a County Cell Phone.

Commissioner Carlin stated he is not sure of that. He stated he knows the Coordinator of the Coroner's has one. He stated he will check on whether the other Coroners have a County Cell Phone.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if the Coroners receive mileage reimbursement, for going to the different scenes because there is nothing spent to date or in the actuals of 2015.

Auditor Sharkey stated that she believes the Coroners use their own cars to go back and forth to the scenes. She stated also they have conferences they attend.

Chairman Gouldman stated that it is not reflected. He requested that the actuals amounts be gathered.

Legislator Wright questioned Commissioner Carlin as to whether the County has ever taken an analysis of what it would cost to operate a Medical Examiner's office. He stated that he has heard on the average it costs \$50,000 per case.

Commissioner Carlin stated he is not sure of that. He stated that there has been some discussion about building a morgue in Putnam County.

Sheriff Page 52-68:

Captain Vincent Martin stated the Live Scan Grant (pg. 52) was acquired through Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) last year. He stated it was a matching grant. He stated that two machines were purchased and now utilized for finger and palm prints.

Undersheriff Convery stated it is a very valuable tool. He stated that it is used in the process of acquiring Pistol Permits, which applications are up 40% this year and projected to continue to increase in the years ahead.

Commissioner Carlin stated the 2017 Furniture and Furnishing budget line on page 52 \$28,000, that will be used toward the DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) Lab. He stated the Administration will be coming back to the Legislature in the future with a proposal to use the Capital Reserve.

Undersheriff Convery stated currently the Sheriff's Department depends on the State Police, however they are so backed up with their cases, that it has created the need for the Sheriff's Department to have their own DNA Lab, the types of cases being handled in this rural County of Putnam, requires the use of a DNA Lab.

Legislator Nacerino stated the 2017 Overtime Line (page 52) has increased.

Undersheriff Convery stated the number of investigations has increased and the Sheriff's Department is now responsible for patrolling 1/3 of the Town of Carmel. He stated that the work load continues to increase.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if there are any plans to purchase new motor vehicles (page 52).

Captain Martin stated that the projection is to buy two (2) cars in 2017. He stated there is a current vehicle with 150,000 and another with 145,000 miles on them, these two (2) cars will probably not pass inspection, which is due in early 2017.

Legislator LoBue questioned why the Software Accessories budget line has increased for 2017 (page 53).

Captain Martin that line pays for the different contracts with the Software that is used in the Sheriff's Department. He stated an accessory has gone up in the Tractor System, which is the system that controls all evidence.

Legislator LoBue questioned why there was not financial history for the Canine budget line 13311000 54150 (page 54).

Captain Martin stated that budget line is in connection with the Bloodhound, which has not been here for a year yet.

Legislator Wright questioned the Canine budget line on page 52 versus the Canine budget line on page 54 one is the new one.

Captain Martin stated that one is for the Arson Dog.

Legislator Wright stated they are both in the amount of \$6,000.

Undersheriff Convery stated they have a proposal for an Arson Dog. He stated that there are issues with fire investigations and the liability. He stated that Commissioner Sutton is present and can speak to those issues in more detail. He stated currently if the need arises for an Arson Dog, Putnam County needs to ask the State for a dog, and it can take sometimes up to five (5) hours. Sergeant Meyers will be able to speak to the Grant that is available. He stated there is an opportunity to get an Arson Dog through Grant Funding, with no cost to the County. He stated it would enhance the County's ability on major fire arson investigations.

Legislator Nacerino questioned what the \$6,000 is budgeted for in those two budget lines.

Captain Martin stated the dog is free, the training is free, but there will be expenses that will need to be covered by the County.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if the \$6,000 is for the personnel.

Captain Martin stated it is for the handler of the dog.

Legislator Wright requested an estimate of the number of Arson cases last year. How many Arson prosecutions did the County have?

Undersheriff Convery deferred that question to Commissioner Sutton.

Commissioner Sutton stated he would only have the number of times the Arson Team was called out. He stated he does not have that information with him tonight, but he will provide it to the Legislature.

Legislator Nacerino stated the Grant is all well and good, but what dictates the need for it, when in fact another \$6,000 needs to be encumbered for personnel services.

Legislator Wright stated the information on the actual incidents of Arson in Putnam County, that seems to be the question that should drive the conduct, not what the Dog can do. That is understood. He stated besides just the number of times the Arson Team has been dispatched, how many of them were actually Arson.

Commissioner Sutton stated it is the responsibility of the local Fire Chief to determine, to the best of their ability, the cause and origin of any fire. Because there is a group of individuals with the expertise, the Chiefs will often call the Fire Investigation Team (Team) for even just confirmation. He stated that he will provide the Legislature with the number of times the Team has gone out year to date and he will provide the number of fires deemed suspicious in origin.

Legislator Nacerino stated if there is no Arson Dog, there is, as Commissioner Sutton stated, a qualified team of people who can make the same determination that the Arson Dog could.

Commissioner Sutton stated in the absence of an Arson Dog in the County, if a situation warrants it, as stated earlier, a request is sent to the State of New York, and it can take anywhere from 3 to 6 hours.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if that has proven to be not satisfactory in the past.

Commissioner Sutton stated on the part of the local Fire Departments they would like to close out the investigation and depart the scene as quick as they can.

Legislator Castellano questioned the cost efficiency in having an Arson Dog at the scene. He stated that there would not be a need to pull the State's resources, if the County had its own Arson Dog and assuming expediting the process would be a benefit.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Clair stated also there is the goal to get the Fire Department's volunteers back to service.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that in Cold Spring there is an Arson Dog that works in Westchester. She questioned if it would be feasible to share that Dog, Daisy.

Captain Martin stated he is not sure Daisy is certified as an Arson Dog with New York State.

Legislator Nacerino requested that information be provided to the Legislature. She stated the need is recognized, however the statistics regarding Arson Fires in Putnam County is viable information to this consideration.

Legislator Wright questioned what is included on page 56, Education and Training \$12,000.

Sheriff's Department Captain Velotti stated that funding is used for the Police Academy training. He stated there have been a lot of retirements this year. He stated depending on which Police Academy is used, either Orange County or Westchester County, the cost is \$2,000-\$2,500 a student. He stated that the timing is what dictates the choice of which academy is selected.

Legislator Wright stated in 2015 the actual funding spent was \$5,477.47. He stated that represents that only two (2) students went through the Police Academy training in 2015.

Captain Velotti stated that is correct.

Undersheriff Convery stated currently there are five (5) people going through the Orange County Police Academy.

Legislator LoBue (Motor Vehicles Page 57) questioned how many cars will be purchased with the requested \$40,000.

Undersheriff Convery stated that will be funding to purchase one (1) patrol car and all of the required equipment the car needs as well.

Chairman Gouldman (NYS Parks and Rec) requested an explanation of how there is a revenue in that line for \$50,250.

Undersheriff Convery stated that is funding from New York State for the Sheriff's Marie Unit.

Legislator Wright questioned in respect to the Canine Assignments, is it accurate that the assigned Officers on every shift are at all times with the animal, and are they available for full regular duty.

Captain Velotti stated yes, and they are on patrol every day. They are assigned a post, the only difference is they have a dog with them.

Legislator Wright questioned on page 66 what generated the increase of \$50,000 in the Temporary budget line.

Captain Velotti stated the Security Guards and Special Patrol Officers (SPO) are paid out of that line. He stated that the hourly pay for the SPOs did increase from \$21.00 to \$25.00. He stated based on the amount of duties for an SPO, they could not get people to take the job at the \$21/hourly rate. He stated it is still challenging to get qualified candidates at the \$25/hourly rate. He stated when the positions were first advertised they received over 100 applications. However, once the candidates were contacted and the number of responsibilities and the fact that they need to work five days (5) a week was communicated to them they were no longer interested.

Legislator Wright, recognized that part of the explanation. He stated, however that does not correlate to that level of increase in the funding for 2017.

Undersheriff Convery stated that he will provide the Legislature with the reasoning for the increase. He stated that the Sheriff's Department works to use Temporary employees where and when possible to save on the additional costs that exist with full time employees.

Legislator LoBue questioned on page 75 Misc Supplies, \$40,000 what falls in that category.

Auditor Sharkey stated it pays for the supplies used in the Jail.

Chair Gouldman facilitated further discussion with the County's Probation and Bureau of Emergency Services Budgets. There were no recommended changes made.

#### **Item #4-Other Business- None**

#### **Item #5-Adjournment**

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

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Diane Trabulsy.