

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD IN ROOM 318  
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Members: Chairwoman Nacerino, Legislators Jonke & Montgomery**

**Wednesday**

**5:30P.M.**

**July 10, 2019**

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The meeting was called to order at 5:30PM by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested that Legislator Jonke lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Jonke, Montgomery and Chairwoman Nacerino were present.

**Item #3 - Approval/ Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes/ May 23, 2019 & June 19, 2019**

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

**Item #4 - Approval/ Discontinuation of Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program as of October 1, 2019/ County Attorney Bumgarner**

Chairwoman Nacerino invited County Attorney Jennifer Bumgarner and Personnel Director Paul Eldridge forward to address this agenda item. She stated this topic has been discussed at the past two (2) Personnel Committee meetings. She questioned if either County Attorney Bumgarner or Personnel Eldridge had any more comments to make or more information to add.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated there was a request sent from Legislator Montgomery for copies of several documents. He stated the Administration compiled the information as quickly as could be done. He stated that he delivered it to the Legislative Office this afternoon. He stated the packet included a cover letter from the County Executive.

Legislator Montgomery stated her appreciation for compiling and getting the information to the Legislative Office.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the packet has been scanned and emailed to all of the Legislators. She stated copies were not made of it as it was a very voluminous packet. She questioned if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the WIC program. She stated it was discussed in great detail at the last two (2) meetings.

Legislator Montgomery stated having just received the information she requested she was only able to review it quickly, she again stated her appreciation for providing it. She stated one thing that has been on her mind and she asked this question at the last two (2) meetings, "how did this come about". She stated she did not know how the actual events could be initiated to cancel a program like this without the Legislature's approval or knowledge. She stated this topic was on the agendas for discussion at the May and June Personnel Meetings. She stated she was surprised on July 3<sup>rd</sup> to receive a resolution cancelling the program. She stated this is a done deal. She explained that she spoke of this at the past meetings also. She stated that she spoke to

the New York State Health Department WIC Coordinator Mary Carrol, it was confirmed that it is a done deal and has been a done deal since March 14, 2019 when it was first initiated. She stated in reviewing the 88 pages of recently delivered documentation from Personnel Director Eldridge there is a letter from County Attorney Bumgarner stating the Legislature's approval is not needed. She stated that is unfortunate. She stated that she is here tonight, since this is a done deal, to ask for mercy for the four (4) jobs. She stated there is one person who is a year away from retirement, there is a five (5) Year contract, which the County is currently in the fourth (4) year of. She requested that a year be waited before the WIC Program gets cancelled. She stated that there could still be time to submit a budget to the New York State Office. She stated that New York State did not request a budget from Putnam County, the request went to Open Door. She stated is this a good thing for the County, it is not a good thing for the constituents she represents in Philipstown and Putnam Valley. She stated that she has been looking at how Westchester County handles their services. She stated that they run a WIC Program and have Open Door that serves a different geographical location. She stated maybe we could keep part of Putnam's WIC Program or keep part of the WIC program in Putnam Valley. She stated that there is a lot that she wanted to say regarding this matter. She stated however after receiving the 88 pages prior to this meeting and especially after reading County Attorney Bumgarner's email from March 2019, this is a done deal. She stated it is unfortunate that the Legislature went through two (2) previous meetings, and tonight's meeting, when it was known maybe by the Administration that this is a done deal. She stated she believes someone from the Administration should come to these meetings to talk to the Legislators prior to initiating an action like this. She stated it would be in the best interest of the people who are served by this program and the employees. She stated this meeting was scheduled on a night when the CSEA is holding their Member Meeting. She stated that she believes a meeting date should be set so the members of the public and the County employees would have a chance to plan to attend if they would like. She stated she is asking for mercy for the people who are served by the WIC Program, the employees and the constituents who use the program.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she will respond to those comments by saying that she fundamentally disagrees. She stated firstly nothing is a done deal until this Legislature votes to defund the budget line. She stated the conflict with the CSEA meeting was a conflict that the Legislature was unaware of. She stated lastly she disagrees with the statement "this is not in the best interest of Putnam County". She stated that Putnam Valley, Garrison and Cold Spring will be the least impacted. She stated the concentration of the WIC clients are predominantly in the Brewster area, which will best serve the clientele. She listed some of the salient points addressed during discussions that took place at the May and June Personnel Meetings. After reviewing the points she provided her personal thoughts on this matter. She stated while employee issues are very concerning she believes concerted efforts have been put forth to avoid layoffs. She stated that the County staff is valued. She stated that being said we must remain steadfast and focus on external factors, not internal factors. She stated as an elected official she is unwavering in her commitment to the people of Putnam County to remain cognizant that her role is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people we represent. She stated she will move forward to make a motion on this matter.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would like to continue with her comments.

Chairwoman Nacerino disagreed and moved forward with a motion; Seconded by Legislator Jonke.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if the members of the public will be permitted to speak to this matter.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated if anyone from the public would like to be recognized they would be permitted. She stated up to this moment no one has requested to be recognized.

Rebecca Swan, Resident of Carmel stated that she supports the services being provided by Open Door but she protests the lack of transparency and the way the decision was made and the time period. She stated Rebecca Wittenberg presented a pliable proposal that would allow for a smooth transition. She stated Ms. Wittenberg's proposal would be to the advantage of the four (4) full- time County employees and the part- time employees who will be losing their positions as a result of this decision.

Legislator Montgomery stated in relation to the comments regarding Open Door's Doctors and all other services, she believes it is beyond our scope to expect people on WIC to go to the Doctors at Open Door. She stated to assume that the people who use WIC will want to use the Doctors at Open Door is not accurate. She stated also in regards to transportation being provided by Open Door through donations, she questioned how much money is in the transportation budget for Open Door and how long will that last, and how do we know that is actually happening.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated there was not an assumption that anyone should use the services of Open Door. She stated it is a fact that a full scope of services is available, making health care more viable and wellness and prevention more doable. She stated that there was not a specific amount provided in regards to the transportation. She stated however the representatives who spoke at the June Personnel Meeting stated that Open Door does provide transportation through private funding sources.

Legislator Jonke stated his observation from the public comment has not been so much as anything against the services provided by Open Door. He stated the concerns seem to be mostly for the County Employees, which that is a concern of his as well. He stated in the presentation that Personnel Director Eldridge gave at the June Personnel Meeting and during the discussions of this matter, it seems Director Eldridge is almost 100% confident that the said employees will find other employment with the County.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated that he is very confident of that.

Legislator Jonke stated that seems to be the main concern and it seems that it will be taken care of. He stated having WIC services provided through Open Door, may even be better service, which is a sentiment that members of the Public have communicated. He stated that he believes this is a good decision. He stated this decision will save taxpayer dollars and provide a better service. He stated it will be in a different location, but Open Door also has mobile services. He stated that he is satisfied.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she believes every concerted effort has been made to secure positions for our employees. She stated as Chairperson of the Personnel Committee she has stated over and over again that she recognizes the sensitivity of working with people and representing personnel in matters that affect their livelihood and wellbeing. She stated it is a concern. She stated she is confident that her role as an elected official is to represent the people of Putnam County and make decisions based on the greater good.

Legislator Addonizio stated she is also concerned about the County Personnel, but after all of the conversation at the June meeting with Personnel Director Eldridge she is confident that the employees will be placed. She read the mission statement from the Open Door website. She stated they provide a lot of focus on preventative services. She stated the residents will not be lacking in services. She stated that Open Door has so much to offer. She stated again, she does have concern for the Personnel.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated he is working on the Personnel component. He stated he has met with all but one (1) of the employees. He explained the one employee he has not met with yet works only one (1) day a week and they have not yet been able to coordinate calendars. He stated that he has indicated to them the other places they could be looking for a job in government services. He stated that there will be opportunities coming up in the County services.

Legislator Albano stated this matter has been discussed and there has been a lot of time spent on this topic. He stated he believes this to be a common sense approach. He stated he believes this to be a positive move for all of the people of Putnam. He stated that he is concerned for the employees. He stated with that said, based on past experience of similar actions being taken in the County, they have worked out well. He stated the decision to move forward will result in doing the best thing for the majority of people who use the services.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she agrees that the Legislature has been open and transparent in the dialogue and meetings that have taken place regarding this matter.

Legislator Castellano stated he would like to touch on the transportation issue, as he represents the part of the County where Open Door is located. He stated the Village of Brewster is a transportation hub and is easy to get to. He stated also the majority of the population that uses the WIC services live in the Village of Brewster area. He stated he believes the Open Door office in the Village area is a perfect location and an organization that does a lot of good work.

Legislator Sullivan stated he would like to add to what Legislator Albano stated. He stated this is the third meeting of the Legislature, where the WIC topic is being discussed. He stated the topic has been discussed in three (3) different meetings, which is a lot for a topic in this Legislature's way of doing business. He stated to say there has been a lack of transparency or no in depth discussion is not fair. He stated he knows that the Personnel Director will do all that he can to find positions for the affected employees. He stated he is more than satisfied this will be great for the tax payers and for the employees. He stated the Health Department has worked very hard to make sure this is done correctly.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated and most importantly this change will benefit the clientele that will frequent Open Door.

Legislator Sayegh stated that Westchester County has a population of just fewer than 1 million people. She stated loosely that works out to 100,000 per WIC Office. She stated in Putnam County the current WIC office serves 962 people. She stated she went to see the WIC Office herself, on behalf of her constituents. She stated Open Door will go on road trips to see where there is a need. She stated she is confident that this will be positive for our residents. She stated that she is also confident that the County's Personnel Director will be successful in working with the affected employees.

Legislator Montgomery stated she also believes Open Door is a wonderful organization and has no doubt they will be able to provide a service to the people who will access it easily and use it. She stated her problem is, again, with the process and the Personnel issue. She stated there have been no second interviews between Open Door and the County Employees and it has been longer than three (3) months. She stated it has been three (3) months that the Legislature has been discussing this matter. She stated in the documents that were delivered in response to her request today, it appears as of November 2018 there were conference calls made to discuss the logistics of transferring the program and transferring the WIC clients to Open Door. She stated the process was happening in March and there was no opportunity for Putnam County to submit a budget for 2020 WIC program. She stated a request from the State did not come to the County to submit a budget. She stated so it was a done deal before the budget process, there was no opportunity to submit for funding. She stated she does not appreciate the process. She stated she would have liked to have been notified back in November, when the Administration began discussing the cancellation of the WIC Program. She stated a couple of months ago it came as a surprise, and it came as a surprise to the employees too. She stated she believes in community health and public health. She stated she is not confident that Open Door will expand their services in Putnam County. She stated she believes they will be stuck in Brewster. She stated one of the benefits of the County's WIC program is that it can open a location where they see the need.

Lynne Eckardt Councilwoman of Town of Southeast Representing herself stated that she has a bit of a problem with the process of the Legislative meetings. She stated when Legislator Montgomery is cut off from speaking, she is being prevented from expressing an opinion of her constituents. She stated that Legislator Montgomery's constituents' opinions may be different from the other Legislators constituents. She stated that she believes it is important to let her speak. She stated although she has great confidence in Personnel Director Eldridge what she has heard tonight is "we are almost 100% sure we can place these employees". She stated if it was her job and she believes each Legislator should put themselves in the place of said employees, almost 100% is not 100%. She stated she has concern for the employees.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated for clarification a motion was made prior to Legislator Montgomery asking to speak. She stated that she has had ample time to speak and she concluded her comments and said "thank you". She stated Personnel Director Eldridge is working in earnest to secure jobs for all of the affected employees. She stated she is confident that this will

reach fruition. She stated that she wants to remind this Legislature that there may be times where we face a decision that has to be made for the welfare of the people of Putnam County. She stated that the tough decisions just might not work out for everyone. She stated this elected body needs to make the tough decisions for the right reasons.

Lynne Eckardt Councilwoman of Town of Southeast Representing herself stated it seems the majority of this Legislature will vote to switch to the Open Door services. She questioned what the timeline to this action is.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated if in fact this is passed by the majority of the Legislature, it would be effective close of business on September 30, 2019.

Lynne Eckardt Councilwoman of Town of Southeast Representing herself questioned when the County's 2019 budget expires.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated it runs until December 31, 2019. She explained the reason for the September 30, 2019 effective date is due to the fact that the funding agreement with the State is only through September 30, 2019.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would like to speak to Ms. Eckardt's concerns about the timeline. She stated the employees of the County's WIC services are already sending letters to the clients notifying them that they need to find a new program. She stated that is very unfortunate, because she has heard a lot of the WIC recipients have no interest in going to Open Door.

Fiscal Manager Orr clarified that no letters have been sent yet from the County.

Legislator Montgomery stated she believes they need to go out soon.

Chairwoman Nacerino reiterated that the letters have not been sent out.

Legislator Montgomery stated she does not see in the budget where the County is at a deficit. She stated that there is a vacant Nutritionist position and there are no plans to fill that vacancy, so there is no deficit. She stated the wording in the proposed resolution states that there is a deficit, she would like that corrected before the resolution is passed. She stated to speak to Chairwoman Nacerino's point about that there are times when we face a really hard decision and it is crucial, this County is not in dire straits. She stated the County is purchasing horses and supporting golf courses and tourist farms and catering facilities. She stated that she does not see that it is critical to cancel this program as far as the financial health of the County.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she does not believe that to be the driving factor and conversely she has heard that the WIC recipients are reluctant to go to the County to give their names and provide personal information. She stated the hope is that the Open Door organization is a friendlier environment for them, resulting in the elimination of their reluctance to use the services. She stated there is anticipation that there will be an increase in the number of people

who use the services. She stated make no mistake that the driving factor is to provide a scope of services that would benefit the people who would need these services.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to move Approve Discontinuation of Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program as of October 1, 2019 ; Seconded by Legislator Jonke.

By Poll Vote:

Two Ayes. One Nay - Legislator Montgomery. Motion Carries.

**Item #5 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendments (19A042)/ To Defund the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program as of October 1, 2019/ Commissioner of Health Dr. Nesheiwat**

Jenny Lambert Resident of Carmel apologized for arriving late and questioned if it is too late to speak to express an opinion regarding the WIC Program.

Chairwoman Nacerino explained that Ms. Lambert could speak to the WIC Program. She stated that the resolution was just approved to Discontinue the County's WIC Program and it will go forward to the Full Legislature Meeting.

Jenny Lambert Resident of Carmel questioned if Chairwoman Nacerino is saying that whatever she says now really does not matter because it is a done deal.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she was providing clarification of where we are in the process since Ms. Lambert just arrived.

Legislator Jonke clarified it is not a done deal.

Jenny Lambert Resident of Carmel stated that she has a background in Social Services. She summarized what she understands this situation to be: there is another program everyone hopes the County's WIC recipients will go to. She questioned where the current WIC location is.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the Open Door office is located in the Village of Brewster on Main Street. She stated the County's WIC office is located on Geneva Road off of Route 312 near the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Jenny Lambert Resident of Carmel stated that she has heard there is a concern regarding transportation to the Open Door location. She stated most people who use WIC services do not own a car, or own a reliable car, or they are in a family where there two (2) adults and one (1) car. She stated she believes the more services we can have for people the better. She stated to make them struggle when they are already clearly struggling she believes it is unkind. She stated if the County does not need the money and it is not making a save the day change why do this. She stated also the article she read stated there are a couple of employees very close to retirement that will lose their jobs at WIC as a result of moving forward with this proposal. She stated the article further stated that there will be effort put forth to help said employees find another job. She question who wants to be moments away from retirement and have this happen. She stated she is opposed to getting rid of the County's WIC program.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she realizes Ms. Lambert arrived late. She provided her a brief overview of what had previously been discussed that addressed Ms. Lambert's concerns.

Legislator Jonke explained the Personnel Director is working with the employees in an effort to find suitable employment for them.

Chairwoman Nacerino facilitated further discussion with Ms. Lambert.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Approve and move to the Audit & Administration Meeting Budgetary Amendments (19A042)/ To Defund the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program as of October 1, 2019; Seconded by Legislator Jonke.

By Poll Vote:

Two Ayes. One Nay - Legislator Montgomery. Motion Carries.

**Item #6 - Approval/ Confirmation of Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell's Appointment/ Putnam County Director Real Property Tax Services Lisa A. Johnson/ County Executive Odell**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve the Confirmation of Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell's Appointment/ Putnam County Director Real Property Tax Services Lisa A. Johnson; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #7 - Approval/ Re-Appointment of Mike Budzinski as Director, Consumer Affairs / Weights and Measures/ Trades Licensing and Registration/ Personnel Director Eldridge**

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

John Morrison a member of the Electrical Board and Home Improvement Board stated he would like to say on behalf of the Board Members, we applaud the decision to keep Mike Budzinski on.

Bill Rossiter, Chairman of the Electrical Board echoed Mr. Morrison's comments. He stated that the Board Members appreciate the Legislature's support of this re-appointment.

Legislator Jonke stated he would like to thank Mr. Morrison and Mr. Rossiter for their volunteered time to serve as active members of the County boards.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve the Re- Appointment of Mike Budzinski as Director, Consumer Affairs / Weights and Measures/ Trades Licensing and Registration; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #8 - Discussion/ Possible Creation of Tourism Position in County Government/ County Attorney Bumgarner**

County Attorney Bumgarner stated she will provide an overview of what has taken place to date with the Tourism Office. She stated that she was approached by both the Administration and

members of the Legislature. She stated she received the message that there were concerns and need for corrective measures to be made by the Putnam County Visitors Bureau to better serve the County residents. She stated both the Administration and Legislature attempted to resolve the issues. She stated no positive reactions were received. She stated early in the year of 2019 Legislators Sayegh, Sullivan and she attended a Putnam County Visitors Bureau Board meeting in order to voice the concerns directly to the members of the Board in an attempt to resolve the issues and to determine how willing they were to work with the County in addressing the lack of presence that was felt in terms of the marketing being put out. She stated her personal assessment of that meeting was that there was no indication that they were inclined to cooperating in making any changes. She stated the Board believed their current Project Director was doing a fantastic job. She stated they did ask that the concerns and issues of the Administration and Legislature be provided in writing in a more specific manner. She stated there was a plan to do that. She explained before that was done a couple of things occurred in the meantime. She stated the County attempted to negotiate contract terms with their counsel. She stated because things continued to deteriorate quickly that actually never occurred. She stated at the same time the County did change a lot of the outside County contracts. She stated additional provisions were included to create additional transparency with the County. She stated such things were added that the agencies provide additional information to the County if requested, and that they assist in responding to F.O.I.L. requests and respond to additional auditing requests made by the County. She stated all of the other agencies the County provides funding to have signed off on the amended contracts and sent them back. She stated the Counsel for the Putnam County Visitors Bureau sent her an email indicating they wanted all of the new provisions stricken from the contract. She stated that she replied that would not be done and that all of the other agencies had already signed their amended contracts. She stated she has not heard back from them since then. She stated currently there is no 2019 contract with them. She stated the 2018 contract, by operation of law continues under the same terms. She explained the County would receive the same services and not jeopardize the I Love New York Matching Funds for this year. She stated the decision was made to not move forward with the execution of a new contract, since there were many problems. She stated this way the County would not be bound for an additional year and would have the ability to terminate the services mid-year if needed. She stated after it seemed things were not going to resolve themselves a discussion was had and it was everyone's collective opinion to see what other options are there for the County. She stated also the consideration was given to potentially bring Tourism as a department in the County, bringing it in house, like the majority of the Counties in New York State. In order to determine what the County's options were, it was decided to advertise for the position to see if there was an interest and if it was a possibility. She stated there were 21 responses to the job posting. She stated the existing Project Director who works for the Putnam County Visitors Bureau was one of the 21 responses. She stated she believes it was assumed by the Putnam County Visitors Bureau that the County had decided to move in that direction, which in fact was not the case at the time of the job posting. She stated that she was notified by Kelly Baquerizo the Director of the I Love NY Matching Funds at the State that the Putnam County Visitors Bureau had sent back the I Love NY Matching Funds to the State in the amount of just over \$68,000. She stated Director Baquerizo informed her that in the cover letter that accompanied the returned funds it was written that the Putnam County Visitors Bureau is now closed. She stated Director Baquerizo was very concerned about this action, beyond it being unprofessional, it is not the proper procedure at all, if in fact it was the wish of the County to return the matching

funds, which it is not. She stated the better way to have handled this would have been for the Putnam County Visitors Bureau to have issued the check to the County. She stated that would have permitted the County to either designate a new Director or designate the County itself, and handle the task for the remainder of the year. She stated that she has made attempts to get a hold of the Visitors Bureau via email by writing to Bruce Conklin and Steve Tomann, their legal counsel. She stated Mr. Conklin's email was sent back indicating it was no longer active. She stated she can only assume Mr. Tomann received her email. She stated also Director Baquerizo contacted them and indicated she would like them to void the check, which Director Baquerizo would return to them. She stated the check would then be reissued to the County. She stated that Director Baquerizo was successful in communicating with them. She stated so at this point it appears the check will be reissued to the County, once the Visitors Bureau voids it. She stated that she went to the office location in the County Building where Director Conklin worked. She found it to be vacated with the keys to the office door lying on the desk. She stated there has been no formal communication to anyone in the County that the corporation was going to be dissolved and cease to operate. She stated additionally the social media pages state that the Putnam County Visitors Bureau is closed. She stated the County Auditor informed her that the money, the Matching Funds from I Love NY will be deposited in a segregated account until the County has an infrastructure in place. She stated that the Visitors Bureau did not receive payment for June 2019, however were paid in 2019 January through to May. She stated that she recommends a request be made of an accounting of their operations account and see what funds remain. She stated the funds were provided by the County. She stated a decision needs to be made on how to proceed. She stated she is not aware of any other not-for profit agency in Putnam County that does this type of work. She stated most of the other Counties in New York State have this function in house. She stated that they have a division or department. She stated the decision needs to be made quickly. She stated she believes the fastest way to move forward would be to bring the tourism work in house. She stated there is certainly an interest based on 21 applicant responses to the ad that was place in the local newspapers. She stated the Tourism Promotion Agency designation is only good through August 2019. She stated that the County would need to designate itself as the Tourist Promotion Agency, that would permit access to the I Love NY funds. She stated the money designated for the contract with the outside agency would need to be reallocated for the new position in the County. She stated she recommends the cleanest way to make this change is to submit a charter change and include the position. She stated it is not necessary, but she believes it would be a good thing to do to clarify the structure of the position. She stated decisions would need to be made such as if the employee will report to a department head of the County or have the position listed as a department head under the Executive Department and all of the final decisions would be documented in charter. She stated would the position be a department head subject to re-appointments, as was done by this Committee with the Director of Real Property this evening. She stated she believes all of the many details should be spelt out and articulated. She stated the Administration needs to know if the Legislature is amendable to this solution and should she move forward with the interview process of the candidates. She questioned who would the Legislature like involved in the interview process and if moving forward with this, money would need to be moved for that purpose. She stated once all of that has been discussed then a resolution can be adopted by the Legislature.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she would be in support of moving in that direction. She stated for the past several years she believes tourism in Putnam County has not come near to reaching its full potential. She stated the former Director was not amenable to providing updates or attending Committee Meetings when requested to do so. She stated she believes the Director of Tourism needs to be someone who is in the community, seeking innovative programs and ways to promote the County's agenda to tourism, while maximizing the beauty and potential of the County.

Legislator Albano stated he agrees that we should bring Tourism in house, and if need be change it in the future. He stated it seems to be the logical next step.

Legislator Jonke questioned if County Attorney Bumgarner believes there is any criminality in the actions of the Visitors Bureau.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated she is not qualified to answer that question, as she is not that familiar with criminal law. She stated however she does know a not-for profit needs to seek approval of the Supreme Courts to fully dissolve. She stated they should be doing that.

Legislator Jonke stated in reference to the Visitors Bureau, they were not transparent. He stated that was part of the main issue. He stated they were unwilling to provide requested documentation. He stated it was tax payer funds the Legislature was demanding accountability for and they chose not to cooperate. He stated when that began to occur things declined quickly. He stated he agrees with making the Director position a job within the County. He stated any employee would, by terms of their County positions, respond to requests for information by the Legislature. He stated he is in favor of having the person chosen to run the tourism function for the County accountable to the Legislature and answer to the County Executive.

Legislator Sullivan stated he was very disappointed with the way the Visitors Bureau was run. He stated there was no flow of communication to the Legislature. He stated that tourism is critical to Putnam County. He stated there are a lot of good things happening in the County and there is a need for an energetic person who is in the community and spreading the word. He stated he never saw that with the last Director. He agrees with bringing Tourism as a department into the County. He stated that way we will have more input on moving forward with tourism in Putnam County.

Legislator Castellano echoed the disappointment of the last Director and his lack of communication with the Legislature. He stated his concern is the social media aspect. He stated he wants to make sure that is covered. He stated he knows in the past the Facebook page that was set up, was not always accurate. He stated in terms of marketing events that promote Putnam County's tourism social media is a key component and he wants that covered in this transition.

Legislator Addonizio stated she believes there is a deadline as to when the I Love NY funds must be spent.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated the money must be spent by December 31, 2019. She stated also the paper work for the application for the 2020 process is beginning now. She stated that she has provided herself as the point of contact with the NYS I Love NY office. She stated whoever gets hired as the Tourism Director she will pass the paperwork along to that person. She stated her focus is to make sure Putnam County does not miss out on the 2020 I Love NY matching funds.

Bill Nulk, Representing the Putnam County Business Council (PCBC), stated they are looking forward to work with the Putnam County Economic Development team and it has been in the minds of the PCBC members that there should be a team approach which would include the Tourism Bureau. He stated that the PCBC Members are encouraged and look forward to the Director position being filled properly.

Legislator Montgomery stated this issue seems to have been a topic of conversation since she got involved in local government, which is over a decade ago. She stated in the Villages of Philipstown and Cold Spring the people involved in government and the Chamber of Commerce have wondered where all of the Putnam County Tourism money goes, because they were not seeing any of it. She stated in the interim while in a rush to get the money spent, she recommends that the money be sent to the local Towns.

County Attorney Bumgarner explained the I Love NY matching funds can only be used outside of the County to bring people into the County and there are very specific restrictions as to what the money can be used for.

Legislator Montgomery stated for example the Shakespeare, Depot Theatre even the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce spend money on advertising outside of the County to bring people to their events. She stated tourism is not anything new. She stated tourism is here and currently we are not handling it and we need these resources now to manage what we have.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated if the position is brought in house there will be more control over how the money is used.

Legislator Montgomery stated those attempts have been made for over a decade. She stated speaking for those folks she represents, they have felt left out of this program from the beginning. She stated Tilly Foster Farm is a great resource, but Cold Spring brings in a lot of people into this County. She stated the increase in sales tax revenue indicates there are more and more people spending money in the County, especially Cold Spring. She stated they are still receiving the same \$7,500 for garbage pickup from the County for tourism and that is it.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated one of the uses of the money would be to advertise on the trains.

Legislator Montgomery stated you do not have to pay to advertise not-for profits on the MTA Trains. She stated the fliers are submitted to the MTA and they post them.

Legislator Sullivan stated he believes it is critical to get an accounting of the money that has been distributed since January 2019 through to May. He questioned who will move forward with that action.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin stated that he will send a letter and copy the Visitors Bureau's attorney, Steve Tomann requesting a copy of their final accounting for the County funds spent in the year 2019.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated that she will work with Commissioner Carlin on the creation of the letter.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that in our tenure the punch list for the release of taxpayer funding information from the not-for profit organizations, needed to be addressed. She stated for the Director and the Visitors Bureau to refuse to be compliant and close up shop in the middle of night speaks volumes to the integrity of it all.

Lynne Eckardt Councilwoman of Town of Southeast Representing herself stated she understands if there is a deadline the County needs to move quickly. She stated she is fearful that if it is an agency run by the County and intends to be top heavy, in that County venues will be the focus of promotion. She stated we all want the County businesses to be successful and self-sustaining, but not at the expense of the other cultural events and businesses in the County. She would urge that a focus be placed on providing a diverse promotional campaign of tourism attractions throughout Putnam County, avoiding a dominant focus of location or theme.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she agrees with the need for a diverse focus.

Legislator Sayegh stated she believes this is a positive move. She stated the comments made regarding the need for a change in the approach of promoting tourism solidifies that this needs to be brought in house. She stated that the unresponsiveness of the past Director speaks volumes to his lack and the Board's lack to understand their only client was the County of Putnam. She stated that she agrees with Ms. Eckardt that a diversified campaign is what is needed, due to the fact that what Putnam County has to offer its residents and visitors is diverse, from our local theatres, golf courses, to our parks, lakes, shopping and more.

Legislator Montgomery stated that Philipstown and Cold Spring do not need any more promoting. She stated the number of people that come to those areas is a challenge. She stated that there is a need for additional support from the County with emergency services, rescues on the mountain, crowd management, getting rid of garbage etc.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated there are many restrictions as to how the I Love NY funding can be spent. She stated once the new person is selected and working the position then the County will have a better idea of what can be done.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated if we want to maximize the potential there will need to be an operating budget provided to the new Director. She stated the Legislature is cognizant of the resource needs of the Cold Spring area, especially during this season. She stated the ropes used

for the mountain rescues have been paid for through the County. She stated the Legislature has supported the Canine Search and Rescue dogs for use on the popular mountain hikes as well. She stated the County has taken measures to assist with some of the needs in the Cold Spring area.

Jenny Lambert Resident suggested, as the ad and interview process continues for the new Director, since it is time sensitive include in the ad that the County is looking for an interim Director. She stated this would allow the County flexibility, if the candidate selected is not a good fit.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated that would be a matter to discuss with the Personnel Director. She stated it will all depend upon how the position is structured.

**Item #9 - FYI/ 2019 Accident Report – Duly Noted**

**Item #10 - Other Business**

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to waive the rules and accept the Other Business; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated Sheriff Langley did submit the required Letter of Necessity, with his request to have this fund transfer which will cover the cost for his department's coverage at the July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks event at the Highlands shopping center. She stated this matter will also be addressed at the Protective Services meeting, which will immediately follow this meeting.

**a.) Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T156) / Patrol of the Southeast Fireworks Detail by the Sheriff's Department/ Sheriff Langley**

Legislator Jonke stated he wanted to thank Sheriff Langley for a job well done, and doing it at a cost much reduced from previous years. He stated it was a wonderful event for all who were in attendance.

Legislator Albano stated that he heard all positive feedback on the event and even positive remarks regarding the traffic management, particularly when leaving the event.

Legislator Castellano echoed the comments made regarding the handling of the event through the efforts of the Sheriff's Department and the other agencies, such as the State Police, that they coordinated with to help provide coverage for the event. He stated he believes the amount of coverage for the event was very appropriate. He stated that he also had people express to him their appreciation with the traffic management at the end of the event. He stated the County had the Trolley available, which was great. He stated it was a great event, and he expressed his thanks to the Sheriff's Department members who worked the event.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if anyone had an estimation of the number of attendees.

Sheriff Langley stated he did not have an estimate number of attendees. He stated the number of people was a little less than past years. He stated of course there are many contributing factors. He stated especially the weather, which was not great leading up to the event.

Legislator Montgomery questioned the Sheriff if this is a type of report that his department prepares for each event they work. She stated that she submitted a request to the Administration requesting a budget for the coverage at the May 11, 2019 Travis Tritt Concert event at the Tilly Foster Farm. She stated she is still waiting for her requested document. She stated this would be useful to receive a breakdown like this for the special event coverage. She stated it would keep the Legislature informed of what these events are costing the County.

Sheriff Langley stated he cannot speak to the mechanics of Legislator Montgomery's request to the Administration.

### **Item #11 – Adjournment**

There being no further business at 6:55PM Chairman Nacerino made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Diane Trubulsy