

**AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
CALLED BY THE CLERK AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHAIRWOMAN
Held Via Audio Webinar Pursuant to Temporary Emergency Orders**

Thursday March 18, 2021
(Immediately following Rules & Protective Mtgs. starting at 6:00 P.M.)

The meeting was called to order at 7:43 P.M. by Chairwoman Addonizio who led in the Pledge of Allegiance and Legislative Prayer. Upon roll call, Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, Castellano, Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairwoman Addonizio were present. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

Item #4 – Approval/ Police Policy Review Panel’s “Plan” / Per Executive Order #203 was next.

ADOPTION OF A PLAN REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM A REVIEW OF LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPLOYMENTS, STRATEGIES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PRACTICES

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed Executive Order 203, which directed each local government entity with a police agency to perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Executive Order 203, Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell did convene the head of the local police agency, Sheriff Robert L. Langley, and stakeholders in the community to develop such a plan, which considered evidence-based policing strategies; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Executive Order 203, Putnam County consulted with stakeholders to create a plan to adopt and implement the recommendations resulting from its review and consultation, including any modifications, modernizations, and innovations to its policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, tailored to the specific needs of the community and general promotion of improved police agency and community relationships based on trust, fairness, accountability, and transparency, and which seek to reduce any racial disparities in policing; and

WHEREAS, a draft of such plan was offered for public comment to all citizens in Putnam County, and the public was given opportunities to comment on the draft plan in a variety of ways; and

WHEREAS, after consideration of public comments, the plan, contained in a report entitled "Putnam County Police Policy Comprehensive Review," has been presented to the Putnam County Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the Putnam County Legislature is required by Executive Order 203 to ratify or adopt such plan by local law or resolution, as appropriate, no later than April 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Protective Services Committee has reviewed the Putnam County Police Policy Comprehensive Review report and has moved it to the full Legislature for adoption; now therefore be it:

RESOLVED, that the Putnam County Legislature does hereby adopt the Putnam County Police Policy Comprehensive Review report, as attached hereto, as Putnam County's official plan in accordance with Executive Order 203.

Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to accept the revised resolution submitted to the meeting; seconded by Legislator Nacerino.

By Roll Call Vote: All Ayes. Carried Unanimously.

Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to move the following revised resolution; seconded by Legislator Albano.

Legislator Gouldman stated that he was not thrilled with everything in the plan. He stated that he understands that this is a living document and that there is more work to be done on this. He stated that he looks forward to continuing to review it and discuss it. He stated that this is the beginning of the conversation and not the end of it.

Legislator Montgomery concurred. She did not believe that we heard from the Chairperson of the Police Policy Review Panel. She believed that the final version of the plan was not voted on by the Panel. She stated that she would be voting in favor of the plan with caution. She hoped that this was the beginning of a new era of community involvement in County government to make us work better and harder for them.

Legislator Sullivan stated that he was surprised that the Putnam County Sheriff was not on the call tonight, given the importance of this document and how it relates to his department.

Legislator Montgomery explained that she attended all of the Panel meetings and the Sheriff attended those meetings as well. He was part of the development of this plan, and he was an equal voting member. She stated that she was fully confident the Sheriff did his part in the development of this plan. She believed that the plan was supposed to be orchestrated by the Administration and she was disappointed that they did not do more.

Legislator Sullivan stated that the plan has to do entirely with the Sheriff's Department. He explained that he did not hear the Sheriff speak at any of the Panel meetings. The Sheriff was the one responsible for providing us with his policies and procedures and any updates that he has made to them based on the subcommittees recommendations.

Legislator Sayegh stated that she did not want to diminish the hard work performed by any of the subcommittees who took time out of their lives to volunteer and help with this plan. She stated that we all understand that this is a living document. She stated that we have heard the call for transparency and accountability. She believed this was the beginning of our conversation. She stated that it is certainly not complete, but she was happy to move this forward this evening. She thanked law enforcement for putting their lives on the line for public safety. She believed that should not be lost in this process as well.

Legislator Nacerino stated that she was pleased to move this forward tonight. She believed we could all certainly recognize that this has been a short window of opportunity. She stated that we are grateful to the stakeholders who have dedicated their time, talents, and expertise to develop the plan. She stated that we know that there is more work to be done and we do not have to get divisive about it or point fingers. She stated that we need to work together to make recommendations to put in the plan to be realized by the Sheriff's Department in the future. She believed that cooperation and communication was the key to success.

Legislator Montgomery stated that she agreed with Legislator Sayegh in not diminishing the hard work that these volunteer members, not only of the Panel, but of the subcommittees. She did not believe that they were even given a copy of this resolution or provided the final draft from the leadership of this Panel. She hoped we could do better in the future.

Legislator Sullivan stated that there was nothing in Executive Order 203 that requires the Panel to vote on the plan. He stated that the Legislature votes on the plan to either adopt it or not. The Committee cooperated and operated by consensus, which is a perfectly acceptable way for a Panel to operate. He stated that tonight we are here to vote on adopting the plan. He believed that all the subcommittee's comments were in the plan. He stated that it was up to the Sheriff to adopt those recommendations in his policies. He stated that he looked forward to the subcommittee group members coming to the Protective Services Committee meetings in the future with their comments so they can help us review the policies and make sure their recommendations are incorporated into the policy. He thanked them very much for all their work and efforts.

Chairwoman Addonizio called for a Roll Call Vote on the motion.

RESOLUTION #49

APPROVAL/RATIFICATION OF PUTNAM COUNTY POLICE REFORM PLAN PURSUANT TO NEW YORK STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 203

WHEREAS, the County of Putnam has a common interest with the State of New York to eliminate systemic injustice and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo issued Executive Order No. 203 ("New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative"), requiring each local government entity having a police agency to develop and adopt a policing reform plan (hereinafter the "Plan") by April 1, 2021, including ratification of same by the political subdivision's local legislative body; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 203 directs each local governmental entity to perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, polices, procedures and practices, and to develop the Plan to improve deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color; and

WHEREAS, Putnam County convened the Police Policy Review Panel in order to carry out and complete the directives of Executive Order No. 203; and

WHEREAS, the Police Policy Review Panel subsequently established community stakeholder groups to represent the diverse communities and interests of Putnam County residents; and

WHEREAS, the Police Policy Review Panel worked collaboratively with the stakeholder groups, and obtained other additional public feedback and comments concerning the numerous issues outlined in Executive Order No. 203; and

WHEREAS, on or about January 12, 2021, the stakeholder groups submitted their final recommendations to the Police Review Panel, that were tailored to the needs of Putnam County residents; and

WHEREAS, on or about February 3, 2021 an Addendum to the final recommendations of the stakeholder groups was submitted to Police Policy Review Panel; and

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2021, a final draft version of the Plan, including all of the recommendations from the stakeholder groups, as well as the Addendum thereto, was made available to the public for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2020, a public forum was also held allowing for further public comment by all interested residents of Putnam County to voice their comments and concerns; and

WHEREAS, Police Policy Review Panel listened to and considered all of the comments made by the public; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 203 requires ratification by the Putnam County Legislature prior to certification of same by the County Executive; now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Putnam County Legislature hereby adopts and ratifies the final version of the Plan of the Police Policy Review Panel, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "A"; and be it further

RESOLVED the Clerk of the Legislature shall provide a certified copy this resolution to the County Executive for the purpose of certification and delivery to the New York State Director of the Division of the Budget in full satisfaction of the requirements of Executive Order No. 203; and be it further

RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

BY ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no further business, at 7:17 P.M., Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.