

HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

**Held in Room 318
Putnam County Office Building
Carmel, New York 10512**

(Chairman Oliverio, Legislators Othmer & Tamagna)

Tuesday August 14, 2012 6:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Chairman Oliverio who requested Legislative Chairwoman Conklin lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Othmer was absent due to vacation; Legislators Tamagna and Chairman Oliverio were present. Chairman Oliverio appointed Legislative Chairwoman Conklin to sit in for Legislator Othmer.

#3) Approval of Minutes – June 13, 2012

The Minutes were approved as submitted.

#5) Update/Commissioner of Social Services/Mental Health/Michael Piazza

a) Annual Summer Conference of New York Public Welfare Association

Commissioner Piazza stated that at the Conference there were several major topics of conversation, one of which was staff re-organization. The major item is the potential takeover for Medicaid Administration by the State.

Chairman Oliverio questioned how the potential takeover would be presented.

Commissioner Piazza stated going back to the Important Procures Act and the Institution of Health Insurance exchanges, which come into play at some point in 2013, the State was trying to determine as to how they would do a State Insurance exchange when essentially the expansion of Medicaid is one of the ways they are going to expand Insurance coverage for people who do not have insurance. In 2012 the State will perform automatic renewals for the aged, blind and disabled on SSI. That is some of the responsibility that they will take on.

Chairman Oliverio questioned how the automated system would work.

Commissioner Piazza stated that someone who is on Medicaid, because of age, blindness or disabled will be automatically renewed, which gives the County a little savings. By October of 2013, the Health Insurance exchanges must be able to accept people who applied for insurance through tax credits. By January 1st of 2014 the Health Insurance exchange must begin. Health Insurance producers begin to offer Health Insurance plans for a person who is going to go to the exchange to get insurance if they don't have any. From January 1st of 2014 until April 1st of 2014, the County continues to renew all Medicaid applications, as we always do. On April 1st of 2014, the State will take over for the eligibility for the MAGI (**Modified Adjusted Gross Income**). This means if you have less than 400% of the Federal poverty level, you will be eligible for some sort of subsidy so you can have insurance. By 2018 the State may assume

most functions. Even after 2018, the County will always have the responsibility for walk-ins, for emergency applications, for spend downs and for legal assistance for the recoveries.

Chairman Oliverio asked who would oversee the re-assignments.

Commissioner Piazza stated that it would be the State.

Commissioner Piazza went on to state that the County Executive has been notified by the State, asking for a "Statement of Interest" which is non-binding. The County Executive will have to give a non-binding answer by September 10th.

b) Putnam County to establish a County re-entry Task Force

Commissioner Piazza stated that they had a meeting on July 17th, for phase one and about 70 people attended. Phase two will be Law Enforcement, Social Services and Parole. There is nothing in the pipeline at this time regarding phase two.

Commissioner Piazza went on to state there is a very serious issue with people who are in need of shelter, and a long range plan is one of the issues that the department will be working on. As for the summer, we can rely on the Danbury Connecticut shelter.

#4) Recycling Program/Discussion/Dr. Allen Beals

Dr Beal's gave the Committee an update on the Recycling program along with a hand out with some important points regarding Municipal Solid Waste Recycling.

Legislator Tamagna made a motion to accept the additional. Seconded by Legislative Chairwoman Conklin. All in favor.

Dr. Beals went over the laws and codes for recycling to the maximum extent possible, and spoke about the pros and con's regarding the recycling issue.

Dr Beals went on to speak about the recycling center in Beacon New York, which is called single stream recycling, where you need not separate the recyclables. They are separated through a process that has been set up to accommodate all of the recyclables at one time. There is another recycling center in Poughkeepsie that burns the recyclables and turns them into ash.

Dr Beals believes very strongly that Putnam County can devise a system that will benefit our communities, all the towns etc. If any Town or Village etc. is willing to engage in some sort of pilot program, he and his staff are willing and able to accommodate their requests. With the acceptance of the Pilot Program from the Legislature, they will be able to move forward with this project.

Chairman Oliverio stated he has spoken to Supervisor Bob Tandy about improving the antiquated system which is being used in the Town of Putnam Valley regarding recycling, but the suggestion was not well received by the Supervisor. At this time there are 5 trucks coming in and out of Putnam Valley hauling garbage and recyclables.

Legislator LoBue questioned the possibility of recycling Steel.

Dr Beals stated there are specialized haulers that handle metal.

Chairwoman Conklin stated that she has spoken to the Director of recycling in the Town of Patterson. He stated that based on the evidence from two months, recyclables are up and tipping fees are down.

Legislator Gross stated that in the Town of Southeast they have a “Town Wide Garbage Contract” and the cost is much better with monthly fees. It is mandatory to use separate bags for items such as blue bags for plastic and metal and boxes for only papers and phone books. This has been streamlined and it does work. There is a dumpster at the Highway Garage for steel and televisions, and items of that nature.

Legislator Tamagna stated it is disturbing to hear about the five garbage trucks going in and out of Putnam Valley. There really should be something done regarding this, as it is a health hazard among other things. Maybe the County could offer a set price County wide, and if the towns want to use it they will. In Cold Spring and Nelsonville, there is a system in place at this time, but at what cost is the question.

Legislator DiCarlo stated he has addressed this issue some time ago, with no success. A good idea may be to have a meeting with all of the Town Supervisors so that everyone hears the same thing at the same time and then see what decision they come to.

Steve Rosario, resident of Philipstown stated he has seen great programs and some that are not. He deals with municipalities and agrees with the Legislature in that you really have to involve the towns. Brookhaven in Long Island, as well as Westchester County, have incredible facilities and operations.

#6) Approval/Appointments/Putnam County Mental Health Community Services Board/Carroll/Pilner/McConnell

Legislator Tamagna made a motion to prefile the necessary Resolution. Seconded by Chairwoman Conklin. All in favor.

#7) Approval/Memorialization/Public Assistance Integrity Act Bill #'s S.7671 & A.10758

Chairman Oliverio asked Commissioner Piazza if he could give his expertise on the Memorialization for Public Assistance Integrity, as he wants to be sure that this does not involve another bureaucratic level of the County, or something along those lines.

Commissioner Piazza stated that he does not know exactly how this would be monitored, but he does know that this would not be the County's responsibility.

Chairman Oliverio requested that this item be tabled for August and be held over until September. He would like Commissioner Piazza to review the memorialization and return to the Health Committee meeting scheduled for September to provide his input.

Legislator DiCarlo stated that the State would like to open Casino's all over the state to try and get revenue. However, we do not want people who are on Public Assistance to go in and gamble.

#8) Approval/Budgetary Transfer (12A064) Health/Preschool Program

Chairman Oliverio stated that the care for private institutions has gone up. Money is being pulled from the revenues. Also, some of the unexpected revenue from the sale of the CHA for Medicaid, which they did not know they were going to receive, will be used to offset expenses. Chairman Oliverio stated that he understands there was an increase in student placement.

Ms. Morris of Early Intervention stated that was correct.

Chairman Oliverio asked how many more children were gained through that.

Ms. Morris stated there were 89 students this year, and the year prior there were 67. The estimate for September through December there will be approximately 65 students. That is the reason that transportation has increased as well.

Commissioner Beals stated they are running the system as efficiently as they can.

Legislator Tamagna stated when he had attended the NYSAC Conference; the governor gave a very impassioned talk about changing this system. At this time, the County is just forced into a Mandate and has to pay. He felt that the school districts really have some responsibility in this. The Governor had spoken about splitting the cost into equal parts between the State and the County.

Ms. Morris stated that there were proposals this year from the Governor's for Pre-School, and none of those proposals were passed.

Legislator Tamagna requested that the Committee bring this Pre-School issue back to Committee next month for further discussion, and pass a Resolution that tells the Governor that we are not happy.

Chairman Oliverio made a motion to prefile the necessary Resolution. Seconded by Legislator Tamagna. All in favor.

Legislator Tamagna requested that the item regarding the Preschool Program, be brought back to Committee next month.

Chairman Oliverio agreed.

#9) Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

#10) Adjournment

Being no further business to discuss, Chairman Oliverio made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Legislator Tamagna. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Claire E. Muller
Administrative Assistant