

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

**Members: Chairman Jonke, Legislators Castellano & Nacerino**

**Tuesday**

**June 18, 2024**

**(Immediately Followed 6:00p.m. Protective Mtg.)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM by Chairman Jonke who requested Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Castellano, Nacerino and Chairman Jonke were present.

**Item #3 - Approval/Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes/ May 14, 2024**

Chairman Jonke stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

**Item #4 - Approval/ Appointment of Director of Tourism Tara Keegan/ County Executive Kevin Byrne**

Chairman Jonke welcomed Tara Keegan and Tracey Walsh. He stated he has been fortunate enough to know Tara Keegan for a few years and believes she is a great choice to fill the shoes of outgoing Director of Tourism Tracey Walsh. He invited Tracey Walsh to say a few words.

Tracey Walsh began by thanking the members of the Legislature for their support in her role as the Director of Tourism. She stated she is happy and confident that Tara Keegan is the exactly right person to continue all the great work in tourism. She stated Tara Keegan has a tremendous work ethic, she is energetic and thorough. She stated as a Putnam County resident, she believes Tara Keegan will make the Putnam County Tourism Department even stronger and continue to move it forward.

Tara Keegan expressed her appreciation to the members of the Personnel Committee and the Legislators present for welcoming her to the evening's meeting. She stated she has been a resident of Putnam County for over 30 years. She provided a brief overview of her past schooling and job experience. She spoke of her experience working for the State Assembly for six (6) years. She stated she believes her education and past job experience will serve well to bring economic development and promote small businesses, which is the heart and soul of Putnam County. She stated she looks forward to working with all the Department Heads. She stated and she looks forward to working with the Legislators with whatever tourism endeavors you would like to see in your districts.

Legislator Nacerino stated she has known Tara Keegan for a long time. She stated she is always very steadfast and a hard worker in any and all endeavors that she pursues. She stated she is happy to have her on board.

Legislator Castellano stated he has also known Tara Keegan for approximately 10 years. He stated she does have a great work ethic and is confident she will do a great job for Putnam County. He thanked Tracey Walsh for the work she has done for Putnam County for the past years as the Director of Tourism.

Legislator Crowley expressed her appreciation to Tracey Walsh and recognized her for the great work she has done for Tourism in Putnam County. She stated she sat in on the interview of Tara Keegan for this position, Director of Tourism. She stated she learned some things from her during the interview process that she was not aware of. She stated she is excited about what Tara Keegan will bring to this position and Putnam County. She stated this is a breath of fresh air mixed with a lot of history. She stated she believes Tracey Walsh and Tara Keegan working together for a period will be fantastic.

Legislator Addonizio stated her congratulations and welcomed Tara Keegan.

Legislator Montgomery stated her appreciation to Tracey Walsh for the fine work she has done, and looks forward to working with Tara Keegan. She spoke to the need that the western side of the County is not in need of more advertisement, they are in desperate need of assistance to manage the large numbers of tourist who come to the area. She stated her district is in need of support with tourism in the areas of trash, parking, etc.

Tara Keegan stated she plans to work with all areas of Putnam County. She stated she will be working with the different Chamber of Commerce, and in fact had her first meeting with the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce. She stated she believes Tourism and the Chambers should work together in the area of Tourism. She stated an initiative she plans to do is a Social Media Campaign promoting the uniqueness that the County has. She briefly spoke to that. She stated she will do all she can to promote and to resolve any issues that exist in the area of Tourism throughout the County.

Legislator Montgomery stated she communicates frequently with the New York State of Tourism office trying to help them understand the crisis they are facing in Philipstown. She stated the I Love New York funding can only be used on promotion. She stated she is trying to get them to understand her district does not need promotion, they need help in the areas of health and safety. She stated Tracey Walsh is well informed on this and she is confident that Tracey will bring Tara Keegan up to date. She stated she is looking forward to working with her.

Legislator Ellner stated most of his sentiments have been stated. He thanked Tracey Walsh and stated he looks forward to working with Tara Keegan and welcomed her. He stated her appointment will be official at the next Full Legislative Meeting.

Legislator Nacerino stated she did not want to take away from this moment, but did want clarify something. She stated there have been a lot of hiccups in terms of procedure. She stated there was an announcement of your appointment in the Newspapers already. She stated, as Legislator Ellner mentioned your appointment will be official when confirmed by the Legislature at the July Full Meeting. She stated she would like the message to go back to the County Executive to

refrain from doing that, because the authority to approve rests with the Legislature. She stated announcements should not be made until such items are official. She repeated that this has nothing to do with Tara Keegan.

Chairman Jonke confirmed with Tracey Walsh that she worked five (5) years as the Director of Tourism and thanked her again for the fine work she did and wished her well moving forward.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve Appointment of Director of Tourism Tara Keegan; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

**Item #5 - Discussion/ Approval/ Part-Time Threat Assessment Analyst Position/ Sheriff Kevin McConville**

Chairman Jonke invited Captain Schepperly to speak to this item.

Captain Schepperly stated this appointment is waiting to finalize the use of the funds from the Threat Assessment Grant. He stated it would be a part-time temporary position. He stated it will be grant funded, when the funds run out from the grant, they will revisit what options may be going forward. He stated they are looking for the individual in the position to determine trends based on the threat assessments they have had in the past two (2) years. He stated the Threat Assessment group meets bi-monthly.

Chairman Jonke stated the qualifications for the individual to fill the position are attached to the backup. He stated it sounds as though this would be experiment..

Captain Schepperly stated they want to see the value this position may bring.

Legislator Nacerino stated the backup speaks to hiring one (1) part-time person at a rate of \$30 per hour, not to exceed 17.5 hours per week, and then in the next paragraph of the same document it states they want to hire two (2) part-time at a rate of \$30 per hour and the combination of two analysts will not exceed \$70,000. She requested Captain Schepperly to speak to that.

Captain Schepperly stated he was only aware of the one (1) Part-Time.

Legislator Castellano questioned if a retired law enforcement person would be a fit for this position.

Chairman Jonke stated he was wondering the same thing, or would it be more of an individual with technical experience.

Captain Schepperly stated it was left open, and he believes during the interview process they will make the determination.

Chairman Jonke questioned Personnel Officer Eldridge as to if he knew if they will be looking for a statistical analysis, or a tech person.

Personnel Officer Paul Eldridge stated it could be either and spoke to the wording in the backup. He stated they will be looking for a candidate with law enforcement knowledge and tech knowledge.

Legislator Crowley stated she would like clarification on whether it is one (1) or two (2) candidates they are looking for. She questioned if this could be tabled to Audit.

Chairman Jonke requested Captain Schepperly have a memo sent to the Legislature providing clarification on the number of candidates the Sheriff's Department is looking for. He questioned what the urgency level of this item is.

Captain Schepperly stated the Sheriff wanted this to be brought to the Legislature's attention. He stated the Sheriff's Department cannot take action until the funding has been moved around.

Chairman Jonke stated it could wait until next month.

Captain Schepperly confirmed that.

Legislator Montgomery stated this sounds as though this is something that would already be being done in the District Attorney Office.

Captain Schepperly stated most of the cases do not involve arrests, they are mostly mental health issues. He stated this is part of a large public safety agenda, trying to avoid future issues with persons who have made threats.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how they can be legally investigated if they are not under arrest.

Captain Schepperly stated this is being done by the Sheriff Department in their partnership with Mental Health, Social Services, and under the Governor's directive to create a Threat Assessment Team. He stated part of the Governor's directive was that resources be secured and support them. He stated there are reports sent to the State quarterly on the Threat Assessment Program.

Legislator Crowley stated she has interacted with the Threat Assessment Team in her other job. She stated they are very helpful with people in need. She continued to speak to the experience she has had and the great work they have done.

Chairman Jonke facilitated further discussion.

Legislator Nacerino stated she believes this to be a very proactive measure and will support this.

Legislative Clerk Diane Schonfeld stated Undersheriff Lindert met with her and Legislative Auditor Michele Sharkey on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. He explained that this is a grant amendment. He requested that this item be placed on the agenda as a discussion/approval hoping that he would hear on the next day, Friday, that it was approved by the State. She stated there has been

no update received, and she believes Undersheriff Lindert is at a conference. She stated it is up to this committee if you would like to move this to Audit, in the event they have the approval by then. She stated the Finance Commissioner will not do a budgetary until an approval is received.

Chairman Jonke recommended the Personnel Committee move this matter to Audit for approval. He stated any questions the Legislators may have will be submitted in a memo to the Sheriff's Department and it will include a request that a response be submitted to the Legislature before the Audit Meeting.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo requested a point of clarification, will it be a motion to move it to the Full Meeting or Audit Meeting.

Chairman Jonke stated the motion will be to move it to the Audit Meeting, June 24, 2024.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to move to the Audit & Administration Committee Meeting the Approval for Part-Time Threat Assessment Analyst Position Pending Additional Information; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Chairman Jonke stated anyone who has questions, please get them to the Clerk tomorrow and they will be submitted.

**Item #6 – FYI/ Accident Report – Duly Noted**

**Item #7 – FYI/ Incident Report – Duly Noted**

**Item #8 – Other Business**

**a. Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T152/ District Attorney Office/ Funds to Hire Temporary Employee/ District Attorney Robert Tendy**

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Waive the Rules and Accept the Other Business; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Chairman Jonke stated a letter of necessity was received from the District Attorney's Office today, June 18th. He requested the members of the District Attorney's Office speak to this request.

District Attorney's Chief of Staff Christina Rizzo and Chief Assistant District Attorney Chana Krauss were present to speak to this request on behalf of District Attorney Tendy.

Chief of Staff Christina Rizzo stated their request is for a fund transfer to utilize unused funds from a Personnel Line of an employee who has been working less hours than scheduled. She stated this request therefore will have zero impact on the District Attorney's budget. She stated they would like to bring in a Temporary Employee. She explained there is a need, because they have an employee out unexpectedly on medical leave. She stated the employee is expected to be out 3 -6 weeks. She stated they need a Temporary Employee to help keep up with the workload

and to assist in coverage with summer vacations that have been scheduled and approved for support staff.

Chairman Jonke questioned how far the \$10,000 go will.

Chief of Staff Christina Rizzo stated she is not sure. She stated she is working with the Personnel Department to find and hire a Temp from their list of candidates. She stated she has an additional \$10,000 that is available if needed.

Chairman Jonke questioned if Personnel Officer Eldridge had anything to add.

Personnel Officer Paul Eldridge stated he did not. He mentioned not knowing when the individual will be returning to work so they will progress as they move forward.

Chairman Jonke questioned how long the employee has been out.

Chief of Staff Christina Rizzo stated she believes May 29<sup>th</sup> was the employee's last day in the office.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve Fund Transfer 24T152/ District Attorney Office/ Funds to Hire Temporary Employee; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

#### **Item #9 – Adjournment**

There being no further business at 7:58PM Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.