

**AUDIT & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN ROOM #318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Castellano and Legislators Ellner & Gouldman

Monday **6:30pm** **October 28, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Chairman Castellano who requested Legislator Gouldman lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Ellner and Gouldman and Chairman Castellano were present.

Item #3 – Correspondence/County Auditor

- a. **Sales Tax Report** – Duly Noted
- b. **OTB Report** – Duly Noted
- c. **Board In Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- d. **Transfer/Revenue Report** – Duly Noted
- e. **2024 Contingency/Sub-Contingency Report** – Duly Noted

Item #4 – Correspondence/ Commissioner of Finance

- a. **Overtime/Temporary Report** – Duly Noted

- b. **Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A090/ Health Dept./ Additional Vaccines for Upcoming Clinics**

Commissioner of Finance Michael Lewis stated there are surplus revenues so the Health Department is putting those funds towards vaccines for international travel. He stated it is cheaper for residents to get these vaccinations through the Health Department rather than privately.

Legislator Addonizio questioned how often residents get these vaccines.

Commissioner Lewis stated that would be a question for the Health Department.

Chairman Castellano stated this is a benefit for the residents.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

- c. **Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A091/ Senior Resources/ Increase in Served Meals and Cost of Food**

Tom DiMarchi, Fiscal Manager of the Office for Senior Resources, stated last month a budgetary amendment was requested in relation to the increased food costs. He stated this item is revenue from State Aid received for this program.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

d. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A092/ DPW/ Unexpended Major Repairs through Year End

Chairman Castellano made a motion to waive the rules and accept the revised budgetary amendment; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

e. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A093/ Veterans Service Agency/ Peer to Peer Program/ Comply with State Aid Level

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

f. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A094/ Health Dept./ Utilize ATUPA Funds for Tobacco and Vaping Education and Prevention Activities

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

g. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A095/ Finance/ Contracts/ Tilly Foster Farm/ Putnam County Golf Course

Commissioner Lewis stated this is a three (3) part adjustment. He stated they had O'Connor Davies come in to do an audit regarding the sales incentive program from April 1, 2021-December 31, 2023. He stated anything above \$1.2 million at Tilly's Table would be paid an incentive. He stated at Putnam Golf Course the audit found that when they were sending their sales to the County they were including service charges, however that belongs to the catering company, not the County. He stated the County is now reimbursing those funds for the same length of time mentioned above in the amount of \$243,000.

Legislator Ellner questioned if the threshold of \$1.2 million was exceeded, even after the \$243,000 of service charges were taken out of the equation.

Commissioner Lewis stated yes, it was. He stated this budgetary amendment includes projections into the 4th quarter as well.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if this will affect the budget moving forward.

Commissioner Lewis stated it has been corrected so it will not be an issue moving forward.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

h. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A096/ DPW/ Funding Awarded from NYSERDA to be used for Electric Landscaping Equipment

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

i. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A097/ Personnel/ Board of Ethics/ Legal Services

Commissioner Lewis stated Personnel Officer Paul Eldridge requested this additional funding for legal services, citing Putnam County Code section 55-16D which speaks to their ability to obtain legal services.

Legislator Jonke requested that the Committee amend this Budgetary Amendment to decrease the amount to \$10,000. He stated it is interesting that there is a provision in the Putnam County Code allowing the Ethics Board to hire their own attorney and the Legislature just received a veto from the County Executive which disallowed the Legislature to hire their own attorney. He stated he believes \$25,000 is a lot of money at this time and if the \$10,000 is exhausted, the Board of Ethics can come back to the Legislature to request what is needed.

Legislator Ellner agreed with Legislator Jonke's suggestion.

Legislator Gouldman agreed with Legislator Jonke's suggestion.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if the Board of Ethics currently has a budget for legal services.

Chairman Castellano stated no, they do not. He stated the Law Department would normally act as their counsel, however there is a conflict in this case therefore it is necessary to obtain outside legal services.

Legislator Ellner questioned if these funds should be coming from the County Attorney's budget.

Legislator Jonke stated he would like to be transparent. He stated the County Attorney filed the ethics complaint against a member of the Legislature and he made it public by sending it to the State Attorney General. He stated this complaint emanates from a lawsuit filed by the County Attorney without the permission of this Legislature. He stated in response to being called in front of the Legislature to explain, he filed an ethics

complaint against a Legislator and our Counsel. He stated this has created a situation that has paralyzed the Legislature; we don't have ability to get outside counsel since it was vetoed. He stated if the Ethics Board needs more than \$10,000 they can come back to the Legislature. He stated in response to Legislator Ellner's question about if the funding should come from the County Attorney's budget, he does not believe it should because the Code states that the Board of Ethics has the ability to hire their own outside counsel and they do have a line in their budget that was not funded this year through the budget process. He restated how it is interesting that the Board of Ethics can hire their own Attorney but the Legislature cannot.

Legislator Gouldman stated being that they are the Board of Ethics, they really should have an independent voice. He stated we should not control what they do. He stated he originally stated he would support decreasing the amount, but he believes the full requested amount of \$25,000 is fine.

Legislator Sayegh stated this money is going from one account to another but it is important to remember it is all taxpayer dollars.

Chairman Castellano stated he believes the Board of Ethics should have their own counsel and \$10,000 is reasonable. He stated if more is needed they can come back to the Legislature.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to amend the budgetary amendment from \$25,000 to \$10,000; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. One nay: Legislator Gouldman. Motion carries.

j. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A098/ Sheriff's Dept./ Overtime Reimbursement from NYS Stop-DWI Foundation, Inc. for DRE Callouts May 2024

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

k. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A099/ Sheriff's Dept./ Overtime Reimbursement from NYS Stop-DWI Foundation, Inc. for DWI Checks February-May 2024

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

l. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A100/ Coroner/ Funding Awarded from Health Research Inc. for Participation in Drug Overdose Report Submission Program

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

m. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A101/ Planning/ US DOT Grant Award/ Transit Buses

Commissioner of Planning Barbara Barosa stated this is an annual allocation and the executed grant will go toward five (5) transit buses.

Commissioner Lewis stated there is a correction to be made on the account numbers.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to amend the resolution with the correct account numbers; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Chairman Castellano make a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

n. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A102/ Planning/ Funding Awarded from NYSERDA/ Solar Panels on Transit Facility

Commissioner Barosa stated this will create a line NYSERDA provided several allocations of funding through the Climate Smart certification. She stated this will create a line for this project.

Legislator Ellner stated the backup material shows that there was a rejection. He questioned if it had been cleared up.

Commissioner Barosa stated yes, they had originally applied for replacement windows at the Donald B. Smith campus, which was rejected.

Legislator Ellner stated the backup states there was a vendor who did not complete their certification that they were not engaged in any business with Russia.

Commissioner Barosa stated for the windows project, they did not even get to that part of the contract.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

o. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A103/ Social Services/ Projected Expenses through Year End

Chairman Castellano stated these are court ordered expenses.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

p. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A104/ Finance/ Legal Aid Payment

Commissioner Lewis stated this adjustment is due to the State increasing the hourly rate from \$75 to \$158.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

q. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A105/ Sheriff's Dept./ Reimbursement for Patrol Services

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

r. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A106/ Sheriff's Dept./ Replace UTVs (Utility Task Vehicles)

Commissioner Lewis stated purchasing this vehicle now will allow the Sheriff's Department to get it faster while locking in the 2024 rate.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

s. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A107/ Finance/ Unexpended Funds/ Youth Sports & Education

Chairman Castellano stated this is a decrease in State aid therefore the line needs to be adjusted.

Commissioner Lewis stated the State reached out to Youth Bureau Executive Director Janeen Cunningham and it was determined this funding was not needed, therefore the State will reallocate it.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #5 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T308/ Emergency Services/ Travel Expenses covered by Threat Assessment Management Grant

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T308; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #6 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T320/ Sheriff’s Dept./ Cover Projected SPO Salary through Year End due to Pay Increase

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #7 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T329/ Mental Health & Social Services/ Furniture for Legal

Commissioner Lewis stated operational savings from a temporary line is being put toward this purchase.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T329; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #8 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T330/ Mental Health & Social Services/ Furniture for Commissioner’s Office

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T330; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #9 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T331/ Mental Health & Social Services/ Furniture for Deputy Commissioner’s Office

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T331; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #10 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T333/ Health Dept./ Replenish Rabies Vaccines

Chairman Castellano made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T333; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #11 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T335/ Mental Health & Social Services/ Furniture for New Office – Director of Mental Health

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #12 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T344/ DPW/ Overtime through Year End

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #13 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T353/ Law Dept./ Litigation Settlement/ Krivak v. County of Putnam

Risk Manager Mat Bruno stated this is moving funds from contingency to get the deductible paid, which was reduced from \$250,000 to \$200,000.

Chairman Castellano thanked Risk Manager Bruno for getting the deductible lowered. He stated he is glad to be putting this behind us.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #14 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T354/ Emergency Services/ Dispatch Overtime through Year End

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #15 – Approval/ Fund Transfer 24T355/ Mental Health & Social Services/ Computer Equipment for new Director of Mental Health

Legislator Ellner questioned if this purchase will reduce what is needed in 2025.

Commissioner Lewis stated yes.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #16 – Approval/ Designation/ County of Putnam/ Tourist Promotion Agency

Director of Tourism Tara Keegan stated this is a yearly designation for the I Love New York funding.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #17 – Approval/ Semi-Annual Mortgage Tax Payments/ April 1, 2024-September 30, 2024

Chairman Castellano stated the total amount is lower than the previous payments because there are less sales taking place.

Legislator Ellner requested clarification on the numbers in the backup material.

Commissioner Lewis stated the backup is showing the recording officer expense, which goes to the state.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #18 – Approval/ Local Law/ Amend Chapter 41/ Code of Putnam County Entitled “Deposit & Investment Policy”

Commissioner Lewis stated this was discussed with the Committee a couple months ago. He stated the County’s investment company suggested broadening the investment options to provide the County with more flexibility. He stated this is done in other municipalities throughout the State. He stated it does not mean the County will invest in every institution, it merely gives the opportunity to do so.

Chairman Castellano questioned if all institutions are secure.

Commissioner Lewis stated yes, they are all institutions that the investment company has experience with.

Legislator Ellner thanked Commissioner Lewis for bringing this forward. He stated this will generate more funding for the taxpayers and continue to do so as the limits are increased as well.

Legislator Jonke stated he is in favor of this. He questioned how much of a surplus was in interest earnings.

Commissioner Lewis stated there is a \$5 million surplus.

Legislator Jonke questioned what was budgeted for 2024.

Commissioner Lewis stated \$3 million was budgeted.

Legislator Jonke stated the budgeted amount is so low compared to the \$8 million the County has.

Commissioner Lewis stated that surplus will be invested and the rates will be locked in.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #19 – Approval/ Authorization to Execute NYS DOT Urban Master Agreement/ Supplements for Transportation Related Projects

Commissioner Barosa stated this contract will execute the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) funding from the past three (3) years. She stated this enables the County to get a 10% match on the Maybrook Bridge 5 project.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Item #20 – Approval/ Ratification of the 100 Ten Acre Lane Property formally known as 100 Zimmer Road, Town of Southeast Property Tax Sale

Chairman Castellano questioned how many bidders there were.

Commissioner Lewis stated there were three (3) or four (4). He stated it is his understanding when the bidding closed there were bidding wars, ending at \$465,000.

Legislator Ellner stated this originally came through to be sold at the appraised value of \$290,000 and the Physical Services Committee voted to put the property to auction. He stated the final price is significantly higher than it would have been if it were sold.

Legislator Jonke questioned if the winning bidder is public information.

Commissioner Lewis stated he was asked to redact that information.

Chairman Castellano made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Item #21 – Other Business – None

Item #22 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:29pm, Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Ellner. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Beth Robinson.