

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD IN ROOM #318  
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Chairwoman Sayegh, Legislators Crowley & Gouldman**

**Thursday**

**November 21, 2024**

**(Immediately Following the Protective Mtg. at 6:30PM)**

The meeting was called to order at 6:39PM by Chairwoman Sayegh who requested that Legislator Crowley lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislator Crowley and Chairwoman Sayegh were present. Legislator Gouldman was absent.

**Item #3 - Discussion/Stabilization Center Update/Social Services Commissioner Sara Servadio**

Chairwoman Sayegh stated the deadline to encumber the funds for this project is approaching.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated she has good news as there has been a lot of movement over the past month. She stated the approval has come through for the septic repair. She stated the contract was fully executed today. She stated she has been told that all funds have been encumbered. She stated People USA is working out some contingencies with the landlord on the lease. She stated her hope that there is a signed lease shortly. She stated it will likely go before the Carmel Planning Board early in the new year. She added that they are aggressively hiring for the positions there, and the Director has already been hired and has been participating in meetings with the County. She stated this is very exciting.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated this the most progress the County has seen on this project in a while. She questioned if there are any potential issues with the Carmel Planning Board.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated the County Executive has spent a lot of time speaking with the elected officials in Carmel and remains very optimistic that there will be no issues with the Planning Board.

Legislator Crowley questioned what happens if we run into problems and the lease is not signed.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated the County has had discussions regarding how to move forward in that event and are aware of other locations. She stated they have looked into the potential of a mobile stabilization center.

Legislator Crowley questioned if the ARPA funding could still be used if it was a different model of stabilization center.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated she is not the person to answer that question.

Legislator Crowley stated then we would defer to the Law Department. She questioned if we should send a memo to Law asking for clarification.

Legislator Nacerino requested clarification on how the process will work with the ARPA funding because the County needs to commit to it by the end of the year and the Carmel Planning Board will not be considering the project until 2025.

Chairwoman Sayegh suggested a letter could be written asking for clarification.

Legislator Nacerino stated it is a good thing that the contract is signed. She stated this project is crucial and she is happy this is nearing fruition.

Legislator Crowley questioned why the project could not go before the Carmel Planning Board in December.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated People USA is waiting for their engineer to finalize what needs to be submitted to the Planning Board. She stated unfortunately the delays with the septic delayed the contract.

Legislator Crowley questioned if it could be ready for the December 12th Planning Board meeting.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated she does not believe so but will ask.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked DSS Commissioner Servadio for the update.

#### **Item #4 - Approval/Grant Proposal Partnership with Greater Hudson Heritage Network/County Historian Jennifer Cassidy**

County Historian Jennifer Cassidy stated the Historian's Office is a member of the Greater Hudson Heritage Network. She explained that this opportunity is federal funding for preservation. She stated the County has the Sybil Ludington Statue that is significant. She stated no County funding is required. She stated if the grant is approved, the funding would go to Greater Hudson Heritage, who would then pay conservators to do the work on the statue. She stated the statue has been eroded by the elements.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned what the County's involvement would be.

County Historian Cassidy stated Greater Hudson Heritage does all the paperwork. She stated they have had a successful application in the past for Boscobel. She explained how the grant funding would work and be divided up.

Legislator Addonizio questioned who has been taking care of the statue.

County Historian Cassidy provided the history of the statue. She stated it was installed in 1961 and owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution. She stated after financial difficulty, it was gifted to the County in 1985 with the understanding that the County would take over its care.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is a great opportunity for the County. She thanked County Historian Cassidy for her work and added that the bar has been raised in the County Historian's Office.

Legislator Ellner questioned if the County is limited for one (1) submission and suggested updates to the Historic Courthouse as it is one of the oldest in New York State.

County Historian Cassidy stated that is a good point but could be too big for this grant.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated this grant is a great idea and reiterated Legislator Nacerino's support for County Historian Cassidy.

Legislator Crowley stated her appreciation for the communication from the County Historian's Office.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Grant Proposal Partnership with Greater Hudson Heritage Network; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

#### **Item #5 - Approval/Fund Transfer 24T387/Health Department/Preschool-Care at Private Institutions**

Health Department Senior Fiscal Manager William Orr stated there is no fiscal impact. He stated this is because there are 15 more children at \$48,000 per child. He added the State is also increasing the rate for these schools.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T387; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

#### **Item #6 - Approval/Fund Transfer 24T391/Health Department/Fund Nursing Overtime for Rest of 2024**

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated the Health Department is down three (3) nurses and there has been an increase in overtime.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Fund Transfer 24T391; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

#### **Item #7 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment 24A112/Health Department/Increased Cost of Preschool 3 to 5 Program**

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated this is similar to Item #5.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 24A112; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #8 - Approval/Budgetary Amendment 24A115/Health Department/NYS Department of Health's Local Health Department Performance Incentive Program Award**

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated the Health Department receives an annual award. He stated this year it was for participation in promoting wastewater surveillance. He stated the funds are being put towards replacing conference room chairs, leasing a car, and furniture for Environmental Health.

Legislator Crowley questioned if any of these items were budgeted for already.

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated there is money in some of the lines, but the award letter comes in June or July and then the Health Department looks at its needs and decides where to spend the money.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 24A115; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to go out of order in the agenda items; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #11 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T396/Health Department/Environmental Health Services Overtime through End of Year**

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated the Environmental Health staff rotate taking home a work phone during non-working hours. He stated with the increase in rabies cases this year, there has been more overtime paid out. He added that more people are taking overtime instead of comp time.

Legislator Castellano questioned the difference in overtime and comp time.

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated comp time is additional time off, it is not additional pay.

Legislator Castellano requested clarification on the comp time process.

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated it can be carried over and used in the future.

Legislator Crowley stated it is in the union contracts.

Legislator Castellano stated in Westchester their comp time must be used by the end of the quarter.

Legislators Crowley stated she believes there is a maximum number of hours that can be banked, but no cutoff for when they must be used by.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to go out of order in the agenda items; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #13 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T399/Health Department/Purchase Rabies Vaccines for Pre- and Post-Exposure Patients**

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated approximately 112 vaccines have been administered this year which is 33 more than 2023 and amounts to approximately \$11,000 more.

Legislator Crowley questioned if these animals are captured.

Senior Fiscal Manager Orr stated in most cases capture is attempted but often times it is a bat that flies away.

**Item #9 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T373/Social Services/Authorized Client Transport**

DSS Commissioner Sara Servadio stated the Coordinator for People with Disabilities has been assisting people in the community with disabilities who are working. She stated people have been walking an hour each way and have been using the money they make at work for cab fares. She stated DSS has decided to help people get to and from work and medical appointments where public transportation is unavailable. She stated they will be looking at contracts with cab companies.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned how many people this is for.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated approximately \$500 has been spent helping 4 people.

Chairwoman Sayegh gave an example of someone in her district who needs assistance.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated that individual should call DSS.

Legislator Crowley questioned if the pilot program in Patterson has helped.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated yes but there are too many people who need assistance.

Legislator Crowley stated maybe after the program expands it can be more help.

**Item #10 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T374/Social Services/Purchase Foster Care Recruitment Giveaways**

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated unfortunately Putnam County has seen a decrease in the amount of Foster Homes. She stated they have been aggressively recruiting for new foster parents and homes. She stated they are desperate and need to do a marketing campaign. She listed events where they will be looking to raise awareness. She welcomed any suggestions.

Chairwoman Sayegh expressed the importance of foster parents.

Legislator Nacerino questioned the procedure for vetting the parents.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated it is a lengthy process with background checks, safety assessments, training classes, etc. She stated it is exhaustive.

Chairwoman Sayegh questioned if there was a specific need, such as for younger or older children.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated it has just been an overall increase.

Chairwoman Sayegh stated she went to an adoption for a foster child and it was so heartwarming.

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated adoptions are the best days in DSS.

**Item #12 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T398/Social Services/Expenses related to Foster Home Recruitment Activities**

DSS Commissioner Servadio stated with the events they will be going to, they need to pay the staff overtime.

**Item #14 - FYI/Fund Transfer 24T422/Social Services/Reallocate Funds within ACL-ARPA Grant**

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to remove Fund Transfer 24T422 from the agenda;  
Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #15 - Other Business – None**

**Item #16 - Adjournment**

There being no further business at 7:22PM Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to adjourn;  
Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.