

**PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD IN ROOM 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512
(Chairman Ellner and Legislators Crowley & Jonke)**

Thursday

5:30p.m.

September 25, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M. by Chairman Ellner who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairman Ellner and Legislator Crowley were present. Legislator Jonke was absent. Chairman Ellner stated Legislator Addonizio would sit as a member of the Committee.

Item #3 - Acceptance/ Physical Services Meeting Minutes/ August 20th & Special -August 25, 2025

The minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A079/ Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Formula Funding for 2025/2026/ Commissioner Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa

Chairman Ellner thanked Commissioner Barosa for attending and asked her to speak.

Commissioner Barosa explained that there is annual funding for UPWP tasks for planning purposes for transportation, with annual increment for staff and money for discretionary projects, and that back-up was provided for what is being received for state fiscal year 4/1/2025-3/31/2026. Commissioner Barosa explained she is here to request that one of the discretionary projects is added to the UPWP budget line, a transit study (out on RFP now) which would assess the system and potentially recommend changes.

Chairman Ellner asked for confirmation that the increased aid would be \$137,461 for FY 2025 / 2026, per Fiscal Impact Statement provided.

Commissioner Barosa stated that the total line is \$287,461.

Chairman Ellner requested confirmation that the amount to be transferred is \$150,000 to the Capital Fund and to remove from contingency, \$137,461.

Commissioner Barosa stated that the request is to transfer \$150,000 to Capital Fund, since that's for consultants; \$137,461 covers staff reimbursement for their time.

Chairman Ellner questioned why the fiscal impact is shown as “(\$137,641)”. He stated that the parentheses imply a decrease.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin explained that since they are offsetting their time, it's a positive fiscal impact to the County and will be reimbursed.

Chairman Ellner made motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A079; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Chairman Ellner then made a motion to revise the agenda order, and hold Item #5 until later in the meeting, for a speaker yet to arrive. Legislator Crowley Seconded; all in favor.

Item #5 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A088/ Fund Cornell Cooperative Extension Tree Seedling Program – Utilizing Part C Putnam County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Funds -Per SWCD Resolution No. 002 of 2025

Chairman Ellner welcomed Brett Yarris, Vice Chair and Treasurer of Soil & Water Conservation District Board (SWCD Board).

Mr. Yarris stated that for the public's sake, he will give an overview of what the SWCD Board is and does. He stated it is a political subdivision of NY State government created to perform soil and water conservation for the community and has authority to work on both public and private lands. He stated the SWCD Board is not an advisory board; 2 active Legislators are required to sit on the board to provide Legislative oversight, and Legislators Ellner and Russo are SWCD Board members. He stated, as it relates to this item, SWCD Board is happy to have the Cornell partnership and over the years, funding seemed to come out of different sources, such as the General Fund using Putnam County taxpayer dollars. He stated one obligation of the SWCD Board is to continue to fund this program out of their "Part C" funds; with no fiscal impact to County taxpayers, as these funds come to directly "earmarked" from NY State for performance measures of SWCD, as a district board.

Legislator Crowley asked what is in the SWCD bank account now and where the financials he is going off are, such as "from" and "to" budget lines, as this is asked of all and for transparency.

Chairman Ellner agreed.

Mr. Yarris replied that this is a challenge for him, as a new SWCD Board member and stated that Section 9 of the Soil and Water District Law states very specific responsibilities for the treasurer, to do with custody, monitoring disbursement of funds, etc. and it has been challenging for him to locate that information. He stated that he, as Treasurer, has been actively trying and spoke with Commissioner Carlin, Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully, County Auditor Michele Sharkey and Senior Deputy County Attorney Heather Abissi. He stated that he met with Commissioner Carlin, Commissioner Tulley and County Auditor Michelle Sharkey, and was provided with total Part C and B fund amounts. He stated that SWCD Board gets 3 funding lines earmarked from NY State: Part A- \$60,000, Part B- \$6,000, Part C capped at a certain amount, based on performance measures approved by SWCD and that in past years, it was \$200,000+ but is estimated to be as much as \$240,000 + this year.

Legislator Crowley confirmed that A and B caps are yearly and asked if C was a cap of up to \$240,000, and what is the balance.

Mr. Yarris stated he believes the cap changes yearly.

Legislator Crowley questioned what the balance is.

Mr. Yarris stated his understanding is that the Part C funds balance, where this project funding is coming from, is roughly \$829,078.70. He stated SWCD Board has not been spending this, it rolls over, and he is concerned that NYS could stop providing this funding based on the large balance. He stated the new SWDC Board wants to do this in an expeditious way for taxpayers, and as a resolution was passed, it has been over 2 weeks and would then go before the Full Legislature in October.

Legislator Crowley stated that she will send a memo to Commissioner Carlin asking for a monthly update for funding balances on accounts A, B and C since this has never been discussed before.

Commissioner Carlin stated that he can go back, research and provide trust account balances (B, C) and that the process is transparent. He stated that he believes A is used in General Fund to offset costs.

Legislator Crowley requested the three accounts.

Commission Carlin stated he would provide that.

Legislator Crowley requested that monthly balances be sent to the Physical Services Committee.

Commissioner Carlin stated that he can provide B and C.

Legislator Crowley questioned if this information is needed for end-of-year filings to continue to get these monies.

Commissioner Barosa stated yes, and that SWCD files, proposes projects and discloses what they have done to meet performance measures to get the money.

Commissioner Carlin stated that tomorrow he will send the balances of trust accounts.

Legislator Crowley stated that she thinks it's important to see balances and acknowledge, as it has never come up before.

Legislator Addonizio requested confirmation on specifically what Part C funds could be used for.

Mr. Yarris stated that Part C is for conservation projects that help landowners, municipalities and taxpayers and pricey expenditure/ projects that ease the burdens of soil and water conservation efforts. He provided examples such as the seedling sale to preserve trees native to Putnam

County, invasive species projects, and Lake Carmel ash tree removal to preserve the beauty of the County. He stated that explaining this to Legislators and public is a public outreach measure and a performance measure to continue receiving funding.

Legislator Crowley stated that she heard of a private landowner contacting the Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board (Ag. Board) and the SWCD helped mitigate a stormwater issue.

Mr. Yarris agreed and stated that a great thing about having the Ag. Board in the County is that the SWCD provides farm mapping and soil reviews for farms trying to get into the agricultural district. He stated that if SWCD Board becomes fully functioning as its law intended, that would be a great taxpayer and County benefit. He asked Commissioner Carlin if he could receive the monthly reports and thanked Commissioner Carlin for his responsiveness, which strengthens the SWCD board functioning and then thanked all.

Chairman Ellner stated that we are moving in the right direction and if there were any more questions.

Legislator Russo stated that she attended a New York Association of Lakes conference in June, which helps to meet some of the criteria for using the Part C funding.

Chairman Ellner stated that he had attended previously as well.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A088; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Item #6 - Approval/ Department of Public Works (DPW)/ 2024- 2025 Snow & Ice Reimbursement/ DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci

Deputy Commissioner Bellucci explained how DPW is reimbursed by NY State for maintaining various County roads in the winter months. NY State pays 67% and then calculates the rest of the reimbursement using the Winter Storm Severity Index and provides a check to the County.

Chairman Ellner asked what the actual amount of the check would be.

Deputy Commissioner Bellucci stated that he is not allowed to disclose the amount as it is not finalized.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve the 2024- 2025 Snow & Ice Reimbursement; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #7 - Approval/ 25CP05 – Walk in Cooler & Associated Repairs at Golf Course – Amount Not To Exceed \$50,000/ Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery

Commissioner Feighery stated that the main refrigerator on 2nd floor needs full replacement; it should have been replaced 5+ years ago. He states several years ago, a similar cooler in the basement was taken apart and repaired, which also caused structural damage to the floor and the

cost to replace was \$32,000. He stated the current replacement will be at a much lower cost, as all work will be done in-house.

Chairman Ellner requested confirmation that the replacement would include disassemble, replacement, checking for water and freon disposal.

Commissioner Feighery confirmed that it would.

Chairmen Ellner made a motion to approve 25CP05, Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Contract- Terry Hill Route 311 Project/ Department of Public Works Commissioner Thomas Feighery & Department of General Services Commissioner John Tully

Chairman Ellner acknowledged the presence of Commissioner Tully and asked what could be discussed, as some of this is confidential.

Commissioner Feighery stated this project came up in the Capital Project Committee in 2019, but now there is a preliminary design.

Chairman Ellner asked if all the inter-municipal agreements are in place.

Heather Abissi, Senior Deputy County Attorney replied yes.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve the contract for the Terry Hill Route 311 Project, Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #9 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A080 – DPW – Empire State Development Grant – Terry Hill Road Improvements/ Department of Public Works Commissioner Thomas Feighery

Chairman Ellner asked if this item is for accounting because a grant was received.

Commissioner Feighery said yes, a grant of \$500,000 will go against this project.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A080, Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Item #10 - Approval/ To Apply for NYS Roadway Departure Safety Action Plan (RwDSAP) Local Call for Projects Which Provided Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program Funds For the Stoneleigh Avenue/ Drewville Road Intersection Reconstruction Project (PIN 8761.97) In Putnam County/ Commissioner of Dept of Planning, Development & Public Transportation Barbara Barosa

Chairman Ellner acknowledged Commissioner Barosa.

Commissioner Barosa stated that DPW has been working on this project for a long time; length of time and changes led to cost overruns of potentially \$2 million. She identified the source of funding to offset and seeks approval here to apply.

Legislator Crowley stated that it's a match of \$64,020.

Chairman Ellner stated that of the \$2 million overrun, Commissioner Barosa is looking to secure \$1,280,400 less the match, but a match of \$64,020 is needed to get this funding, so this is something in need of approval. He questioned what took the work so long, so that this wouldn't happen again.

Commissioner Feighery replied that there were many moving parts.

Commissioner Carlin stated that he lives there and believes the reservoir caused difficulties and time constraints.

Deputy Commissioner Belluci stated that every utility runs through that intersection, making the work more complicated; as well as dealing with the utility companies.

Chairman Ellner questioned when the work would begin.

Deputy Commissioner Belluci replied in Spring 2026.

Legislator Crowley questioned Commissioner Barosa if it's applied for now, when the grant is expected.

Commissioner Barosa stated that fortunately, this project/ application was brought to her from DOT, there was an enrollment period that ended and was missed but as there are extra funds, she was advised to apply. She stated she expects determination soon.

Legislator Crowley asked to confirm that if approved, would the project be "shovel ready" by the Spring of 2026.

Commissioner Barosa replied yes, it should be.

Chairman Ellner requested that Commissioner Tully confirm if the County has most of the funds already.

Commissioner Tully replied yes, as far as he's aware, this would round out the budget estimate for the project.

Commissioner Barosa stated that is just the estimate, but she is trying to assure that when it goes out to bid, there are sufficient funds and that she will keep looking for other funds as well.

Legislator Crowley stated that she was just asking to confirm the nearly \$1.3 million here that would cover most of it, then that leaves \$700,000 short. She stated that it was wonderful additional funds were found and asked Commissioner Barosa if the County would be responsible for \$700,000.

Commissioner Barosa replied yes.

Chairman Ellner stated that the sooner this is out to bid, the better, as material costs go up, etc.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Chairman Ellner stated that he saw someone from Soil & Water Conservation District is present, so now Agenda Item #5 would be addressed.

Item #11 - Approval/ Ratification of 2025 Real Property Tax Sale/ Interim Commissioner of Finance William Carlin

Chairman Ellner stated that the County foreclosed on 56 parcels, all were put up for sale and 55 received bids. Upon approval, sales will proceed.

Commissioner Carlin stated yes and that he expected most to close.

Chairman Ellner stated that the sales would give \$1,828,15 back to the County.

Commissioner Carlin stated that is correct.

Chairman Ellner explained that Putnam County makes school districts and towns “whole”, so when the properties defaulted, the County pays the taxes and towns do not have to repay the County.

Commissioner Carlin stated that is correct, and explained that due to a Supreme Court decision, the County does not keep any profits; only breaks even or loses money if back taxes are not received back (which happened on most of the properties). He stated surplus is put into a fund and handled like a regular foreclosure, where prior owner petitions the court, receives a ruling and gets the surplus funds.

Chairman Ellner stated that about \$3.2 million of assessed value would be returned to the tax rolls and asked approximately what percentage of revenue that would generate for the County.

Commissioner Carlin stated that the funds returned to the County would be very little; less than 1% as fortunately, most people in Putnam pay their taxes.

Legislator Crowley stated that it does not seem that anything from the west side of the County is listed and asked if we do this in two parts.

Commissioner Carlin answered no, this is just unpaid parcels, and most are on eastern side of the County.

Legislator Crowley stated that it is interesting- there are no properties from Mahopac, Philipstown, Cold Spring or Nelsonville.

Commissioner Carlin stated that there is Putnam Valley and very little in Philipstown; there is nothing being withheld from here.

Chairman Ellner stated that also there is a delinquency of a certain amount of time required to be listed here.

Legislator Crowley responded that it looks close to three years.

Commissioner Carlin stated that we are catching up, as there was a moratorium imposed during Covid which put everyone in the state behind and 2019 will be done next.

Chairman Ellner asked if this is from 2018 and Commissioner Carlin stated yes.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if parcels, not homes are the majority of these.

Commissioner Carlin said that is correct.

Commissioner Carlin replied that there are a few homes but none that he knows of are occupied.

Legislator Addonizio stated that in many cases, these are adjacent properties and just provide privacy.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to approve the ratification of the 2025 Property Tax Sale; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Item #12 - FYI/ Early Learning Center Student Enrollment Numbers: Currently Enrolled and Number of Students Enrolled for January 2026

Legislator Crowley made a motion to move this item to the Health Committee; since there is no one present to speak on it. There was no Second.

Chairman Ellner stated that this is just an FYI update and should be on this agenda since it has to do with renting space. He stated there are 19 students enrolled, 10 receive services through the Committee of Preschool Education, 9 are through Universal Pre-Kindergarten. There are still 5 open spots, 3 interested families and 1 transfer student. He was hoping that the larger space would be available by December and find out how many people would be available for that. He stated that if more were coming in December, then as a Physical Committee, they would have to start to look at rental space to accommodate.

Item # 13 - Other Business (None)

Item #14. - Adjournment

There being no further business, at 6:14 P.M., Chairman Ellner made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Mary Dechiaro.