

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
Held via Audio Webinar Pursuant to Temporary Emergency Orders
Members: Chairman Jonke Legislators Nacerino & Sullivan

Tuesday **6:00PM** **May 11, 2021**
(The Health, Social, Educational & Environmental Comm Mtg. Immediately Followed)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM by Chairman Jonke who requested that Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Nacerino, Sullivan and Chairman Jonke were present.

Item #3 - Approval/Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes: April 13, 2021

Chairman Jonke stated the minutes were accepted as they were submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/ Fund Transfer Overtime (21T080)/ Depleted Due To The Ongoing E911 Consolidation/ Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Kenneth Clair (also going to Protective Svcs 5-18-21)

Chairman Jonke stated Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton is on the audio webinar to speak to this fund transfer request in the amount of \$75,355.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton stated the decision to begin the consolidation project began at the start of 2021. He explained that there is a vacant position in the regular personnel of the 911 Dispatch Department. He stated they were told because the consolidation would occur, there was no need to fill the vacancy. He stated they have been operating with 12 Dispatchers, rather than the full staff of 13. He stated when they had 13 Dispatchers their overtime budget was \$120,000. He stated that was decreased for the 2021 budget to \$40,000, with the expectancy that the consolidation would have been completed by now. He stated also the Dispatchers from the Sheriff's Department have been transferred to the 911 Dispatch budget line. He stated that department budget now includes the 12 Dispatchers plus 5 Sheriff's Department Dispatchers operating on a \$40,000 Overtime Budget. He stated until the consolidation is completed there is going to be a need for Overtime to manage Dispatchers out due to vacation, illness etc.

Chairman Jonke questioned what is causing the delay and where is the consolidation project at this point and what is the projected completion date.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton stated the consoles are all in and wired, the phone system and computers are all up and running. He stated the Motorola Radio System has been ordered and in the process of being shipped. He stated they expect to have them in the next few days. He stated the install of the Radio Equipment will be in May. He stated then there is a large Motorola Upgrade that must be installed, and Motorola has stated they will do it in June. He stated then all of the equipment will be in place and ready to go. He stated some training has begun with the Dispatchers. He stated the consultant, Blue Wing, was hired to do a study of the project, they expect to receive the report this week. He stated that

should provide them with a good guideline on how to proceed. He stated they still need to work on Union matters that must be addressed. He stated this consolidation involves bringing two (2) different Unions together. He stated his best estimate is that the consolidation would be completed somewhere in the time frame of 2021 September/October.

Chairman Jonke stated it is disappointing to hear that the process is not further along than it is. He questioned what caused the delay in shipment of the Motorola equipment.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton stated he is not aware of any specific reason.

Chairman Jonke stated a request for approximately \$75,000 for basically the first third of the year, even if the Overtime budget had not been cut, there would not have been enough funding in the line to cover the Overtime.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton pointed out that the Sheriff's Dispatchers are paid out of that Overtime line as well.

Chairman Jonke stated he would have thought that funding from the Sheriff's Overtime line for the Dispatchers would have been transferred to this budget line. He stated he will research this further.

Legislator Nacerino stated logistically speaking regarding the Union issues, does Personnel Director Eldridge agree with the estimated timeline that Deputy Commissioner Lipton offered.

Personnel Director Eldridge stated per the County's outside counsel, it is agreed any outstanding items will be able to be addressed within that timeline of a projected completion of 2021 September/October. He stated if there is an unforeseen matter that causes a delay there is always the right of the Employer to move ahead with an understanding that the ironing out of potential Union matters will be done. He stated everyone seems to be on the same page to make this work.

Legislator Sullivan requested more information from Deputy Commissioner Lipton in relation to the consultants and the report that he referenced earlier.

Deputy Commissioner Lipton stated the Blue Wing consultants interviewed himself, Commissioner Clair, Director of EMS Quake and Emergency Manager O'Connor. He stated some of the Dispatchers were interviewed and they spent time researching the CAD System and overseeing the operations. He stated they went to the Sheriff's Department and did the same thing. He stated the report should include all of the current functions and responsibilities of the Dispatchers and feedback on the CAD System and an outline of what steps are needed to accomplish the goal of combining both dispatch centers. He stated per his discussions with the Blue Wing consultants, they are optimistic and believe this consolidation will work.

Legislator Sullivan requested that a copy of the consultant's report be provided to the Personnel Committee Members.

Chairman Jonke confirmed the request that a copy of the Blue Wing Consultant's Report be sent to his attention and he will make sure the entire Legislature receives a copy.

Legislator Montgomery stated this request for funding to cover overtime was not a surprise to her. She stated during the budget process there were reductions made in the Dispatchers of the Bureau of Emergency Services and the Sheriff's Department and there is a vacated Dispatcher position, unfortunately due to a death. She stated these departments are underfunded and understaffed, in her opinion. She stated at the time of the budget there was no plan for the consolidation other than knowing we wanted to consolidate the two departments. She stated to receive the Blue Wing Report after the County has already begun this process does not make sense to her. She stated there are no staffing analysis or equipment analysis. She stated in her opinion the Legislature is now presented with a request for funding to cover overtime due to the Administration and the Legislature not funding public safety properly. She recommended we fund these units through to next year, until there is a completed consolidation in place. She stated she made the Administration, the Legislature and the Bureau of Emergency Services aware that there were resources available back in 2019 that could help fund this consolidation. She stated she took action over two (2) years ago to set up a meeting with the Department of State who had grant funding available and provided consolidations from other areas that laid out the process of consolidation. She stated however now we sit with a \$75,000 Overtime request.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if the County is being charged by the company that is holding some of the equipment.

Deputy Commissioner Lipton stated NYCOMCO (New York Communications Co. Inc) is receiving and storing the equipment and are not charging the County.

Legislator Sullivan stated that Legislator Montgomery's statement about the \$75,000 in Overtime, did not include facts if you look at the entire picture. He stated obviously by having vacant positions there has been substantial savings on employee payroll costs. He stated these comments were without a financial analysis being done to review how much money has been saved, as a result of having the vacant positions, compared to the amount of overtime that has been spent to fill the positions. He stated then there would be accurate facts.

Legislator Montgomery stated if there is a savings, at what expense to the employees and what expense to the safety of the public.

Legislator Albano stated he has heard no complaints about the overtime, the department is running smoothly, and he does not see where the public safety is being jeopardized. He stated when this consolidation is completed the County will have a better program than before.

Chairman Jonke stated he agrees with Legislator Albano that there does not seem to be a deficiency in the Service. He facilitated further discussion on this matter.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve Fund Transfer Overtime (21T080)/ Depleted Due To The Ongoing E911 Consolidation; Seconded by Legislators Nacerino and Sullivan. All in favor.

Item #5 – Approval/ Updated- Putnam County Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy Statement and Complaint Procedure/ Personnel Director Paul Eldridge

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

Chairman Jonke stated Personnel Director Paul Eldridge is on the audio webinar and will speak to this item.

Personnel Director Paul Eldridge stated Senior Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau, has been reviewing the changes that have occurred with the New York State Law relative to discrimination and Sexual Harassment. He stated Senior Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau will speak to this matter and why Putnam County is updating the policy for 2021.

Senior Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau stated that there have been some changes to the law. She stated in 2019 and 2020 New York State expanded upon the Human Rights Law, which expanded on the definition of sexual harassment and statutes of limitations and expanding protections. She stated in Putnam County there was a 2006 Discrimination and Harassment Policy and a 2018 Sexual Harassment Policy. She stated it was decided this is a good opportunity to make one cohesive policy that will also reflect the updates to the New York State Law. She stated she provided in the backup a copy that highlighted the changes being proposed. She stated there are only five (5). She stated the changes expand on the protective classes and the definition of Sexual Harassment.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is glad to hear that the County's revised policy is in alignment with the New York State policy.

Legislator Sullivan stated his appreciation to Director Eldridge and his staff for doing the work to update the County's policy. He stated it is very important that the County have updated policies in place to protect both the employees and the County.

Chairman Jonke thanked Director Eldridge and Senior Personnel Specialist Rau for their work and effort to protect the County.

Personnel Director Paul Eldridge stated Patricia Rau is an Attorney, and did work on this matter in concert with the County's Law Department, so it has been reviewed by the County Law Department.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve the Updated- Putnam County Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy Statement and Complaint Procedure; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #6 - FYI/ 2021/ Accident Report– Duly Noted

Item #7 - FYI/2021/ Incident Report – Duly Noted

Item #8 - Other Business - None

Item #9 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:32 PM Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn;
Seconded by Legislator Sullivan. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.