

**PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
BUDGET MEETING
HELD IN ROOM 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
Members: Chairman Ellner Legislators Castellano & Montgomery**

Wednesday

October 9, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Chairman Ellner who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Castellano, Crowley and Chairman Ellner were present.

Item #3 - 2025 Budget Review

Planning & Dev. – 8020 (page 232 – 233)

Chairman Ellner invited Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa to speak to her budget. He questioned if she was satisfied with her department's tentative budget.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa stated that she was satisfied with the tentative budget.

Legislator Montgomery thanked and complimented Commissioner Barosa for the work that she had accomplished for the County her first year serving as Commissioner.

Page 269 Transportation, Commissioner Barosa explained a lot of the Transportation costs are Federally and State Funded. She stated regarding Operating Costs there is still some ARPA (*American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*) and CRRSAA (*Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021*) funding available so they expect the cost to the County to be further reduced.

Page 270 Transportation – 54354 -Heating Oil, Chairman Ellner questioned why this budget line would not be moved to the Department of General Services (DGS).

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa stated that the County has been reimbursed for that, so that is why it remained in the Planning, Development and Public Transportation Department’s budget.

Legislator Montgomery expressed her appreciation for the work that Commissioner Barosa and the members of her department have done in the area of improved communication with the members of her district regarding the Trolley.

Page 270 Transportation – 54664 – Advertising, Legislator Sayegh requested the reason last year it was budgeted at \$3,000 and that line has a tentative amount of \$60,000 for 2025.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa stated the increase is as a result of contracts that are looking to be awarded. She explained once the contract is awarded the County must advertise about hearings. She stated also it will include wrapping and branding of the current fleet and the microtransit fleet.

Page 270 Transportation – 54678 – Leased Transportation, Chairman Ellner questioned why there is an increase of a little over \$1.5 million.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Barbara Barosa stated that budget line funds the Transportation Department’s contracts. She stated some of the cost is reimbursable through STOA (State Operating Assistance) and through Federal Funding.

MTA Subsidy – 5635 – (page 148)

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated this is a mandated cost that the County pays to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). He stated it is a quarterly payment of \$95,069. He stated this is pursuant to Section 18B of the New York Transportation Law.

Railroad Station Maintenance – 5640 (page 149)

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated this is a mandated payment due September 1st in accordance to section 1277 of the Public Authorities Law. He stated the funds are used for operations and maintenance, the use of the Metro North Passenger Stations throughout Putnam County. He stated there is some residual CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funds which will be put towards that cost. He stated they have approximately \$700,000 that will help to offset this maintenance cost. He stated in 2026 they will need to go back to taxation.

Legislator Montgomery pointed out that the County has to pay for the MTA to maintain their facilities and equipment.

Veteran’s Home – 6511 (page 188)

Page 188 – Veteran’s Home 54637 – Security Monitoring and Rental: Legislator Crowley questioned if there was a new security system put in. She stated there was no funding in that line for 2024, the 2025 Tentative amount is \$2,500.

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated on page 188 the budget lines of Natural Gas-54630, Electric-54631 and the Security Monitoring and Rental -54637 should not have been left in this department. He stated those expenses have been accounted for by DGS Commissioner John Tully. He further clarified that Director IT/GIS Lannon has accounted for the Security Monitoring and Rental -54637.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to remove from the Veteran’s Home Budget: Natural Gas-54630 (\$5,000), Electric-54631(\$4,700) and the Security Monitoring and Rntl-54637 (\$2,500); Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Legislator Castellano expressed his pride about the fact the Putnam County Veterans’ Home is the only County owned Veterans residence in New York State. He stated it is a great place and the County does wonderful things there.

Fish & Game – 8720 (page 244)

Chairman Ellner requested that Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis speak to this budget.

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated this is an outside agency with level funding. He stated they use the funds for their supplies and education.

Chairman Ellner questioned if the Fish & Game supplied accounting that reflects their real costs.

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated they have, as have all of the outside agencies.

Department of Public Works (DPW) – 1440 (page 38-39)

Chairman Ellner welcomed DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery and members of his Department.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery began by thanking members of this department and County employees outside of his department for all of their work and dedication in helping with the DPW tentative 2025 budget. He clarified that some of their fees have not been realized yet, so they will not be found in the budget. He pointed out also some of the projects began years back and are still going on and will not be complete until sometime in the way future. He stated with that said they will try to answer all questions to the best of their ability. He recognized the Administration’s vision for the work to be done and the Legislature’s support of the funding as established in the 2024 budget. He stated there has been a lot of great work done in 2024 as a result. He stated the County trades employees’ morale is very positive, seeing the results of their fine work throughout the County. He recognized the County has a decent blend of outside Contractor work and the County employee work. He cited the work done recently at the Board

of Elections as an example of that partnership. He stated also the lowest bidder turned out to be a local contractor, which is positive also for the community.

Page 38 -54782 Software Accessories & 54783 Licensing Software, Legislator Crowley stated it appears \$17,500 was requested for 54782 but not granted and in 54783 there are no historical figures and there was no amount requested, but in the 2025 Tentative line there is \$17,500.

Commissioner of Finance Mike Lewis stated that was done at the request of IT/GIS Director Lannon. He stated Director Lannon requested all software licensing and accessories be consolidated into one budget line.

Page 38 – 54682 Special Services, Chairman Ellner stated that budget line was reduced by almost \$40,000 to a proposed amount of \$79,000 for 2025.

Deputy DPW Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated that includes miscellaneous engineering projects, consulting work for facility improvements or engineering projects.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated there was more funding in that line for 2024. He stated he believes they will be in good shape for 2025 with the \$79,000.

Page 38 – 54385 Uniforms, Legislator Castellano stated the requested amount was \$3,000, the 2025 tentative amount is \$2,000. He stated the amount budgeted for 2024 was \$2,000. He questioned what the reason was for the increase in the requested 2025 amount.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated they did do rebranding of the department from Highways and Facilities to Department of Public Works. He stated the rebranding began in 2024, so he believes they will be ok with the level funding of \$2,000 in 2025.

Pages 44 & 45 Department of Public Works - 54210 – Vehicle Leasing/Rental, Chairman Ellner questioned Commissioner of Department of Goods and Services Tully if these are Enterprise Equity Lease Vehicles.

Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully stated that they are.

Chairman Ellner stated during discussions with members of the department he learned there are two (2) vehicles: a 2020 Colorado with just less than 20,000 and a 2020 Jeep Compass which he believes has less than 23,000 miles. He questioned Commissioner Tully, due to the age of these two (2) vehicles if they are released, would the County save money.

Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully stated the budget he reconciled for Commissioner of Finance Lewis reflects any changes made to those vehicles in the ensuing year.

Chairman Ellner questioned if these two (2) vehicles are going to be turned in and other vehicles would be leased.

Commissioner of Department of General Services (DGS) John Tully stated yes, they anticipate doing it at a time when there is net positive equity.

Chairman Ellner questioned in the 54210 Vehicle Leasing/Rental line of DPW there is \$15,002, is this for DGS or is this for DPW.

Commissioner of Department of General Services (DGS) John Tully stated that is for DPW. He stated it was discussed at the Rules Budget Meeting, that all the County Departments that have leased vehicles have the allocated funds. He stated that he sent his spreadsheet to the County Auditor.

Chairman Ellner questioned DPW Commissioner Feighery as to whether he has communicated what kinds of vehicles he needs for DPW and has it been communicated accordingly.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the new vehicles are needed especially with the big projects that are coming up. He stated the mileage on the existing vehicles is relatively low. He stated DPW has been the beneficiary in the past, of leftovers, from the Sheriff's Department, Bureau of Emergency Services.

Chairman Ellner questioned then if Commissioner Feighery would be ok with removing the funding in line 54210, and not lease something and just take the leftovers.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated that is correct.

Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully stated there is a process in relation to surplus vehicles, so he would suggest that if the Legislature is considering changes to that budget, talk to him. He stated there are other departments that use surplus vehicles.

Maintenance & Facilities – 5111 - (page 146-147)

Page 146- 54510 – Machine Maintenance, Legislator Gouldman stated the amount requested and in the tentative 2025 budget is \$70,525. He stated in 2024 budget the amount was \$114,610.70. He requested an explanation for the reduction.

Deputy DPW Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated in 2024 certain tests that are required every three (3) years needed to be done to the County Generators and that is what required the additional funding.

Page 146 – 54647- Sub Contractors, Chairman Ellner noted this line has been reduced from the 2024 budget of \$99,419.46 and the requested and 2025 tentative amount is \$75,000. He stated the overall DPW budget is reduced from 2024 by approximately \$73, 000.

Tilly Foster – 10084000 – (page 210 -211)

Page 210 – 412902 – Rent Inc Tilly Foster Farm, Legislator Montgomery questioned why the revenue line was reduced. She stated in 2024 it was \$132,934.00 the requested and 2025 Tentative is \$127,003.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated one of the businesses moved out and the County Youth Bureau will be occupying the space.

Chairman Ellner questioned if there is any vacant space at Tilly Foster Farm available for renting.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated not at the current time.

Page 210- 54710- Bldg. Maint. and Repairs, Legislator Crowley questioned why this budget line was reduced to zero (0).

DPW Accounting Supervisor Keri Knapp stated that the amount requested was \$25,000 and it has been placed in subcontingency.

Page 210 – 54636 – Internet Costs, Chairman Ellner suggested that there be a consolidation of Internet services done to help cut the costs while maintaining the services the County needs.

Page 210 – 54145 – Farm Animals and 54146 – Feed for Farm Animals, Legislator Montgomery stated it is her understanding the County does not own the animals. She questioned if the County is paying these costs or are the owners responsible.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated per the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which he believes a copy was provided to the Legislators last year, the County is responsible for those costs.

Legislator Montgomery stated that the owners do not pay rent to have the animals there either.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated he believes that is correct.

Legislator Montgomery recommended that the for-profit businesses on the farm contribute to the Internet Costs.

Chairman Ellner stated that would have to be done when the leases are renewed.

Page 211 – 424501-10137 – Commissions, Chairman Ellner stated they are projected to be reduced.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated Commissions include ticket sales for concerts and the parking. He stated the County is trying to work with WAC (Watershed Agricultural Council) to build a permanent stage at the Tilly Foster Farm. He stated the project may begin possibly in 2026.

Legislator Sayegh expressed her appreciation for the work done by the County Staff in the DPW who help to maintain the Tilly Foster Farm property and recognized the Administration for their part. She stated that it is a beautiful County facility.

Parks & Rec 7110 – (Page 210 – 215) & Putnam Golf 10085000 – (Page 212)

Page 212 – 7110 – Parks & Rec – Putnam Golf Course – 52670 – Kitchen Equipment and Appliances, Legislator Crowley questioned what is the \$15,000 for.

Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated that funding will cover the cost of a new Walk-In Cooler for the kitchen.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery provided history on the number of repairs that have been done over the years to the existing Walk-In Cooler for the kitchen, and concluded it is at the end of its useful life.

Page 213 – 54330 – Medical Supplies, Legislator Crowley questioned the need for this budget line.

DPW Accounting Supervisor Keri Knapp stated these are supplies that the County has always had in supply for the Parks and Recreation Departments. She explained they were asked to put it in its own budget line.

Soil & Water – 8745 (Page 245-246)

Page 245 – 246 – 8745 Soil & Water, Legislator Sayegh requested that Soil & Water District Manager Neal Tomann explain what the Part B and Part C funding are.

Soil & Water District Manager Neal Tomann stated Part B is a standing grant in the amount of \$6,000, entitled the Community Conservation Grant (page 245 – 439106). He stated the funding can be used alone or as part of a larger municipal or private conservation effort. He cited past projects, Rain Gardens and approved last month were the Fish Cradles at Kirk Lake. He stated the Part C money is in a trust and has a little over \$500,000, confirmed by Finance Commissioner Lewis. He stated the process to get approval for use the Part C funding is more flexible. He continued to speak to his examples.

Legislator Montgomery questioned what budget lines are the Part B and Part C reflected in.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated page 245 – 439106 is Part B, “Conservation Project” and page 245 - 439105 is Part C “Performance Measure”.

All 02 County Road Fund Accounts:

Traffic Control – 3310 (Page 261)

Page 261 – 3310 —Traffic Control – 52180 – Other Equipment, Legislator Crowley requested what the allocated \$2,500 is for.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the County is responsible for some of the signage throughout the County and this budget line pays for the small tools needed to execute that work and maintenance.

Maintenance Roads & Bridges – 5110 (Page 262-263)

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated that the County has a great working partnership with all of the Town and Villages. He stated the practice of Shared Services is clearly seen in the work being done on our Roads and Bridges.

Page 262 – 54560 – Equipment Rental Lease, Legislator Crowley requested what the \$40,000 funding would be used on.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated this is for the Paver that was rented, and referenced earlier.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the renting of the Paver has saved the County a lot of money.

Page 264 – 54898 - Other Maintenance Services, Legislator Sayegh stated it is a new line budgeted for \$50,000. She requested an explanation for these funds.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated they plan to put out a bid for an Oil and Water Separator Cleaner throughout the County Garages (4 locations).

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated as an FYI in November he plans to work with an internal Advisory Committee to upgrade the visibility/social media for the County Parks, Tilly Foster Farm, and the Putnam County Golf Course. He stated that there will be a nominal fee increase applied also. He stated the fee to rent Park Space and at the Putnam County Golf Course there will be some non- residential fares that will be increased and cart rental fee increases. He stated they were very conservative with the increases. He stated that they plan to have them to the Legislature sometime in November. He spoke to the fact that the County Park facilities are all busy, and being enjoyed by both residents and non-residents. He stated the County is not looking to make money, the County is looking to cover its cost.

Snow Removal 5142 (page 264) - Duly Noted

Snow Removal Sate – 5144 (page 265) - Duly Noted

All 03 Fund Accts Road Machinery – (page 266) - Duly Noted

Road Machinery – 5130 (page 267-268) - Duly Noted

Planning & Dev. All 09 Funds Transportation Fund – (269) - Duly Noted

Part Bus System – 5630 (page 270 – 271) – Duly Noted

Capital Projects

Chairman Ellner stated he and Legislator Montgomery were both in attendance at the Capital Budget Meeting. He invited the DPW Commissioner Feighery to speak.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the work has begun on the Fair Street project. He stated there will be a community outreach meeting on November 18, 2024.

Chairman Ellner stated he has had questions presented to him by constituents regarding the status of the Drewville Road project at the intersection near the Putnam Hospital.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the preliminary work is underway. He stated they need to coordinate many factors with that project in relation to the access roads to the Putnam Hospital and at that intersection the Town of Carmel's water and gas go through there. He stated this project will require a great deal of coordination.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated the projection is to get the bid out in the winter.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated the Sprout Brook project is scheduled to begin in Spring of 2025.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated there is a pre-construction meeting with the contractor scheduled for next week regarding the work to be done on the bikeway area behind the Honda dealership in Brewster.

Legislator Castellano requested that attention be given to an area along the bridge that will allow people to go and enjoy the view of the lake. He requested an update on the efforts to paint the bridge that goes over Route 6 (as you come down Route 312 to Route 6 it is the bridge to the left, which is part of the bike path).

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated they have reached out to the State, because it is their bridge. He stated that they are working on it.

Legislator Castellano noted the other bridge located near the Honda dealership is the same type of bridge, and it looks fine.

DPW Deputy Commissioner Joseph Bellucci stated he believes it has to do with the material used to build these two bridges and when they were constructed. He stated the bridge near Route 312 was built in 1896 and the bridge near the Honda dealership was constructed in 1958.

Chairman Ellner stated there are many projects that will be happening. He requested Commissioner of Finance Michael Lewis address the financing of the capital projects. He stated

it was reported that the County will be borrowing minimal amounts so the County will not have to pay interest on the notes.

Commissioner of Finance Michael Lewis stated that is correct. He stated he wanted to point out that the Administration is requesting at this particular time the authorization to potentially go out to bond. He stated if this was committed to the General Fund, then on January 1st he would be taking \$2 million from the General Fund. He stated getting this approval, will allow the County flexibility if the interest rates go down. He stated they will look to see if funds can be repurposed to subsidize this local share.

Legislator Addonizio referenced earlier in the meeting it was stated that the County's Youth Bureau was moving to the Tilly Foster Farm property in the building where the candle business was. She questioned if that will be a suitable size for the entire department.

DPW Commissioner Thomas Feighery stated that it will. He stated they will use the top floor of the building and there will be funds taken from the ADA budget line, because of the need to make the location ADA compliant.

#4 Other Business - None

Item #4 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:48 PM Chairman Ellner made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Diane Trabulsy.