

**PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING**
Held via Audio Webinar Pursuant to Temporary Emergency Orders

Members: Chairman Albano, Legislators Gouldman & Nacerino

Wednesday

October 7, 2020

The meeting was called to order via audio webinar at 6:00pm by Chairman Albano and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Gouldman & Nacerino and Chairman Albano were present.

Item #3 – 2021 Budget Review

Chairman Albano stated he would begin the budget review with the Planning & Development Department.

County Planning – Account 8020 (207- 208)

Legislator Gouldman - page 207 449895– Fed Aid UPWP-Data Mgmt.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Sandra Fusco stated that revenue line is connected with the Special Services expense line on page 208 54682.

Legislator Gouldman – page 207 54182 – Consultants. He stated in 2020 there was \$50,000 in the line, no money has been spent to date this year and there is there is zero funding requested. He requested the reason.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Fusco stated due to the Pandemic, many opportunities have not been afforded Statewide, that prohibited the use of those funds or the services. She stated the decision was made to try to do all of the work in-house in 2021.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated that there has been some support from the Legislators in the past that a Grant Writer would be of great value to the County. He stated he and Commissioner Fusco stated when things get better, they believe the funding removed from the Consultants line would be better used toward the hiring of a Grant Writer.

Legislator Nacerino – page 207 54647 – Sub Contractors

Legislator Nacerino stated the requested amount is the same as 2020, \$25,000. She stated the actual expenditure to date for 2020 is zero. She questioned if there is a need for this line to be funded for 2021.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Fusco stated she cannot say for sure. She stated this year was an such an anomaly. She stated she left it untouched but did trim her budget in other areas. She stated they were fortunate in 2020 to receive monies through the UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program), that is the NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) Program to conduct planning studies and there was no County match required. She stated that Putnam County is a member and eligible for such funding. She stated she made the decision to cut the \$50,000 in the Consultants budget line (54182) and leave this budget line untouched with the hope; expectation that other opportunities will present themselves in 2021 and the County will have the funds available to act. She stated she does not believe that \$25,000 is being ambitious.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated as the Legislators are aware, there is a complete restoration/ renovation of the County's Transportation Department currently underway. He stated there are probably three (3) more phases that will be conducted in 2021 that may require a specialty site contractor or engineer for the HVAC system or whatever else may come up. He stated \$25,000 is not very much money.

Chairman Albano – page 207 54383 - Building Rental

Chairman Albano stated in the future he would like to see that budget line reduced. He stated the County has open space, such as 34 Gleneida that could be utilized rather than the County paying rent for space.

Legislator Montgomery – page 207 54675 – Travel

Legislator Montgomery questioned if the \$2,500 is for gas reimbursement.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Fusco stated pre pandemic she traveled once sometimes twice a month to New York City and to Westchester or Rockland County. She stated that funding does cover her mileage reimbursement or MetroNorth and parking.

Legislator Montgomery – page 207 54640 – Education and Training

Legislator Montgomery stated due to the current situation with COVID-19 classes are on line. She questioned if the budgeted amount of \$2,500 for 2021 needs to be kept at the same amount as it was in 2020.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Fusco stated there are still registration fees and other expenses.

Legislator Montgomery stated on page 207 there is a sub-contractor (54647) budget line with \$25,000 and a contracts (54646) budget line with \$100,000. She questioned how those two budget lines are different.

Commissioner of Planning, Development and Public Transportation Fusco stated this is the last year with the Transportation Advisor. She stated a lot goes into the preparation for an RFP for that particular service. She stated that is one of the largest contracts the County has. She stated it involves the transportation services for the County. She stated in the past a Transportation Advisor Consultant was hired who assisted with looking at various matters and components in preparing the RFP. She stated she will ask Transportation Manager Tamagna to speak to this.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated Mr. Jack Reilly was hired to help with the last RFP. He stated the money to hire Mr. Reilly was well spent because the instruction and guidance he gave to the County resulted in a great savings with the contract which the County is still in. He stated it is a very competitive contract and nationally bid. He stated COVID-19 has had an impact on Transportation. He stated as the next RFP is being prepared, which will take 6-9 months, that money will go towards those expenses.

Chairman Albano requested clarification on when the current contract expires.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated the current contract has one more extension which will start April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

Part Bus System – Account 5630 (233 - 234)

Legislator Gouldman – page 234 54373 – Diesel

Legislator Gouldman questioned why there shows a large reduction in the Diesel line.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated they have been weaning off from the buses that pollute our air quality. He stated the County only has one (1) Diesel Vehicle left. He stated the regular gas budget line is increased but the Diesel has been reduced. He stated they have also right sized the fleet.

Legislator Gouldman – page 235 54311 - Printing and Forms

Legislator Gouldman request an explanation.

Transportation Manager Tamagna stated they do as much as they can in-house. He stated they print monthly paratransit tickets, weekly passes, monthly passes and possibly new maps.

Road Machinery Fund – Account 5130 (230)

Legislator Gouldman – page 230 52180 - Other Equipment

Legislator Gouldman questioned why there is a reduction in that budget line.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated that budget line is to cover the cost of small equipment that the mechanics use. She stated there are no specific request that are needed.

Legislator Gouldman – page 231 54373 - Diesel

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated that pays for the diesel used in the winter equipment for snow removal.

Legislator Montgomery – page 231 51000 - Personnel Services

Legislator Montgomery stated there is approximately a \$30,000 increase.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Saccavino stated that is as a result of the reorganization that was approved by the Legislature.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated that is correct. He stated the increase is as a result of the reorganization. Commissioner Pena requested the opportunity to give an overview of his proposed budget and what they were working to accomplish. He stated his overall budget request is \$368,000 less than 2020. He stated the utility costs, gas, propane and electric have been adjusted as a result of the Article 9 work being done throughout the County facilities. He stated you can see the significant savings overall throughout the budget. He stated generally the reorganization that was approved is a zero-fiscal impact between 2020 and 2021 that is within his control. He stated that does not include the insurance adjustments and the other items they do not have control over. He stated no specific adjustments were made because of COVID-19. He stated they made the decision to prepare the budget as they normally do. He stated no one knows how it will affect the 2021 budget. He stated business is down overall, but the costs are down as well.

Legislator Jonke questioned how many employees fall under Commissioner Pena's authority in the Highways and Facilities Department.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated there are 81 employees.

Highways and Facilities – Account 1490 (38-39)

Legislator Nacerino – page 38 54410 - Supplies and Materials

Legislator Nacerino stated there is an increase in this line. She requested an explanation.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated that is to fund the administration items used in the offices: copy paper, pens, pencils, toner.

Commissioner Pena stated they may need to buy a new plotter.

Legislator Nacerino questioned that would justify an almost \$1,000 increase.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated in this budget line it funds the materials that the engineers and the architects need. She stated the plotter, the paper and writing utensils.

Legislator Nacerino stated they are looking to save dollars, so she needs to ask these questions where she deems appropriate.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena confirmed he believes they need the additional funding for 2021. He stated that they have seen an uptick in the use of these supplies and materials.

Legislator Nacerino - page 38 54640 - Education and Training

Legislator Nacerino stated to date \$1,552.57 has been spent. She stated the amount requested for 2021 is \$10,000. She would like to know what is anticipated to justify this.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated education and training is done for snow and hoping to add other training such as forklift training. He stated there are other safety training classes, that are very important, and it assures the County is meeting the PESH (Public Employee Safety and Health) Bureau requirements. He stated he works closely with Cornell Local Roads, and there are times when specific Highway Issues Training is required. He stated the Cornell Local Roads training he has employees registered for now is online. He stated he is not sure how their Training will be done next year.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if Commissioner Pena believes they could do with less than \$10,000. She stated you have not realized anywhere near the \$10,000 in the prior year, especially in light of the fact that training will be done online. She stated she personally does not see the need for \$10,000.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated every year he attempts to increase the number of training programs his employees receive. He stated additionally they have had a significant number of retirements. He stated so there are new employees in the department that need the training.

Legislator Nacerino stated that is a very good point.

Legislator Montgomery - page 38 54682 - Special Services

Legislator Montgomery there is a requested budget amount of \$50,000. She requested an explanation of what this money is spent on.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated on specific issues when they need outside expertise, the funds from this budget line are used. He stated they consult with architects, structural engineers etc.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated they are under contract with outside consultants for when/if the need arises.

Maintenance and Facilities – Account 5111 (128-130)

Legislator Gouldman – page 128 54354 - Heating Oil

Legislator Gouldman there is over a \$40,000 reduction in this budget line. He requested the reason for the reduction.

Commissioner Pena stated that has to do with the projected savings as a result of Article 9 work being done throughout the County. He stated those adjustments were made accordingly.

Chairman Albano – page 128 412904 - Rent Income Cove Care

Chairman Albano stated the year-to-date does not seem to be on track to reach the full 2020 rent of \$75,828.

Highways & Facilities Fiscal Manager Jeanette Saccavino stated they lag a bit in their payments sometimes. She stated in the end the County receives the full amount that is due. She stated you will notice the rent did go up for 2021 to \$81,572.

Highways & Facilities Commissioner Fred Pena stated there were also adjustments made to the contract with Cove Care. He stated they have more responsibility now to take care of the building.

Legislator Montgomery stated the rent was also raised for the Mental Health Facility. She stated the County owns the buildings, they pay the County rent, yet the County is requiring they do the maintenance in their building. She stated she is not in favor of raising the rent. She stated these are our mental health services. She stated she believes the County should be supporting them. She stated the buildings we are talking about that the two (2) agencies are in, need a lot of work.

Highways & Facilities Deputy Commissioner John Tully stated the Cove Care facility over the history of it was eventually supposed to phase out. He stated Cove Care, at one point, proposed to purchase the building. He stated an appraisal was provided to Cove Care. He stated there continues to be ongoing conversations. He stated they agreed to this modest increase. He stated there will probably be more to come on this matter.

Legislator Montgomery expressed her appreciation for that explanation. She expressed her opinion that these are places where people go to get better and get healthy. She stated we have some amazing County facilities that could benefit people in need, especially mental health needs. She stated that building needs a lot of work.

Chairman Albano – page 128 51000 - Personnel Services

Chairman Albano stated there is a request for \$1,106,125 which is approximately a \$300,000 increase.

Commissioner Pena stated there are vacancies that need to be filled.

Legislator Nacerino stated anything related to Personnel should be discussed in depth during the Personnel Budget Meeting, October 14, 2020. She stated that there are the proposed changes in the Highway Department that will be discussed. She stated that would be the proper committee to have the discussion.

MTA Subsidy – Account 5636 (131)

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin stated this is the MTA station Maintenance charge the County must pay. He explained it is formula based and based on a cost of living index.

Park & Rec – Account 7110 (190 – 194)

Legislator Nacerino - page 190 54145 - Farm Animals

Legislator Nacerino explained that \$2,500 was budgeted in 2020, no money has been spent to date and \$2,500 is budgeted for 2021. She requested an explanation.

Highways & Facilities Deputy Commissioner John Tully stated there were no purchases of animals to date in 2020. He stated contingent upon the winter we may need to replenish some.

Legislator Nacerino – page 190 54147 - Vet Services and Supplies

Legislator Nacerino stated there is an increase of \$2,500, bringing the tentative budget amount to \$17,000.

Commissioner Pena stated the cost of the care and veterinary fees have increased. He stated the increase is the projection of what will be needed.

Legislator Gouldman – page 190 54753 - Rubbish Removal

Legislator Gouldman questioned why there is an increase of is \$1,000.

Fiscal Manager Saccavino stated there is a State contract, which will expire November 2020. She stated they are anticipating an increase.

Commissioner Pena stated that we did a projection of what they thought the new price would be.

Chairman Albano – page 191 54631 - Electric

Chairman Albano stated that the actuals in 2019 were approximately \$7,200, year to date for 2020 the actuals are approximately \$3,600. He stated the requested amount for 2021 is \$11,400. He requested an explanation for the increase.

Deputy Commissioner Tully stated as Commissioner Pena mentioned there has been significant reductions in a lot of utility lines. He stated there is an undocumented agreement with the Finance Department that funds are not transferred out of the utility lines. He stated this projection is based on what they think the rates are going to be.

Chairman Albano made a motion to reduce the 54631 Electric to \$10,000; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Legislator Gouldman – page 191 54560 - Equipment Rental Lease

Fiscal Manager Saccavino stated that the 2021 budget was based on prior spending. She stated they want money in that line if/when needed.

Legislator Montgomery made a comment regarding the Feed for Farm Animals and Veterinary Services and Supplies budget lines. She referenced when the horses were purchased in 2019, the estimated cost for their care would be about \$15,000. She stated every budget line has been increased, which she believes is important to note. She stated additionally overall she thinks it is fantastic that we are saving costs in utilities and appreciates the work that has gone into that. She stated to increase any line that is not necessary, she believes is a big disservice. She cited the Sub Contractors line (54647) and the Rubbish Removal (54753). She stated just because money was saved in the utility lines and the reorganization in the department, she recommends that they legitimately save the money and not increase any line that is not mandated. She stated we are in a pandemic, it is not going away in a year, she would like to give the residents a break.

Legislator Sayegh – page 190 412902 - Rent Inc Tilly Foster Farm

Legislator Sayegh questioned what properties at the Tilly Foster Farm are included in that revenue line.

Commissioner Pena believes the revenue in this line is from the residential rentals and the business rentals at Tilly Foster Farm. He stated they can offer the specific breakdown.

Legislator Sayegh – page 191 - Total Revenue for 2020 \$213,726.74

Legislator Sayegh questioned if there is a projection of the 2020-year end total revenue.

Chairman Albano stated given the fact that there is approximately 20% of the year left he would estimate another \$50,000.

Legislator Sayegh stated she is hoping through 2021 the business at the Tilly Foster Farm will maintain and the County will reach the projected revenue of \$915,800.

Deputy Commissioner Tully stated the projection of the 2021 revenue was provided by General Manager Mike McCall. He stated General Manager McCall met with himself, Commissioner Pena and member of the County's Finance Department to assist in his preparation of his 2021 tentative budget.

Commissioner Carlin stated the Tilly Foster and the County's Golf Course budgets represent the best estimate that General Manager McCall has made at this time. He stated if there is another bad year with COVID-19, we will come to the Legislature to adjust the budget down. He stated to date he has provided the best estimates, revenue and expense. He stated regarding the budget and the comments made by Legislator Montgomery, the tentative 2021 budget increase is less than 1%. He stated it is the lowest budget increase in over a decade.

Legislator Sayegh – page 191 54646 - Contracts

Legislator Sayegh questioned what contracts are paid for from this budget line and why has the 2021 been reduced: the 2020 budgeted amount was \$828,318 and the tentative 2021 is \$768,736.

Commissioner Carlin stated General Manager McCall has made the best estimates on what he thinks is going to take place next year. He stated this line is related to the events. He stated again if the current conditions continue and events cannot be held the budget line for both of the County's facilities, Tilly Foster and the Putnam Golf Course will need to be redone. He stated that the Legislature can request that General Manager Mike McCall speak to the projection for the 2021 budget at each County Facilities.

Legislator Jonke stated he would like to have General Manager McCall involved in future discussion. He stated he has questions related to Tilly Foster Farm and the Putnam County Golf Course. He stated he would like to know if there are any physical changes that must be made to either of the County facilities due to COVID-19.

Chairman Albano stated a request to have General Manager Mike McCall speak at the upcoming Audit & Administration Budget meeting on October 15th will be sent.

County Road Fund (224)

Legislator Sullivan requested if there is a projection of how many miles of road would be paved. He stated he would like to see a listing of the Roads scheduled to be repaved in 2021. He stated he would like the list to include the location of the Roads.

Commissioner Pena stated the Capital Projects funding is distributed amongst Roads, Culverts and Equipment. He stated they try to achieve paving eight (8) to ten (10) miles per year.

Legislator Sayegh questioned what is the total mileage of roads in Putnam County.

Commissioner Pena stated it is 116, double that for lane miles (232).

Legislator Montgomery stated in the Capital Project Committee Meeting she brought up the need and request for a paving schedule. She stated that she is glad to hear that her colleagues now see the value in a paving schedule. She questioned how far out would you go with the paving schedule, as an example, could it be a five (5) year plan, as she has see elsewhere.

Deputy Commissioner Tully provided an explanation of how the roads are selected annually.

Legislator Montgomery stated she believe having a paving schedule, it would serve our public. She stated the State resurfaced Route 9, it created a real problem for businesses along Route 9. She stated the farther out the Road Paving Report can go the better.

Chairman Albano facilitated further discussion regarding the Capital Project Report and the Vehicle Report that provided the condition of each vehicle.

Chairman Albano questioned if there is an update on the Vehicle Leasing.

Commissioner Pena stated that is being moved under the Central Automotive. He stated they worked closely with the Purchasing Department.

Legislator Montgomery stated in the Capital Projects meeting the sale of the County properties, the 'White House' and 34 Gleneida was discussed. She stated at said meeting she questioned what the revenue could be used for. She stated that Commissioner Carlin stated the money could be used for whatever the Legislature wanted to use if for and that the money would not be used to balance the budget. She questioned if there is any idea of where those proceeds would go.

Chairman Albano stated he would believe that remains to be determined. He stated those decisions would be made in the future.

Chairman Albano made a motion to Adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. Before the vote was taken on that motion to adjourn Legislator Sullivan raised questions on the disposition of funds from property sales.

Legislator Sullivan stated he recalls that the funding from the sale of the properties would go back into the Capital Project Fund.

Chairman Albano stated the question would be looked into.

Legislator Montgomery stated her inquiry to Commissioner Carlin and his response is documented in the August 24, 2020 Capital Projects Minutes.

Item #4 – Other Business – None

Item #5 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:55pm, Chairman Albano made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Gouldman. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk, Diane Trabulsy.