

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
40 Gleneida Avenue Room #318
Carmel, NY 10512**

Committee Members: Chairman Jonke, Legislators Castellano & Nacerino

Tuesday

November 14, 2023

(Immediately Followed 6:00p.m. Special Full and the 6:30p.m. Health Mtg.)

The meeting was called to order at 7:59PM by Chairman Jonke who requested Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Castellano, Nacerino and Chairman Jonke were present.

Item #3 - Acceptance/Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes – September 7, 2023

Chairman Jonke stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

**Item #4 - Approval/ Appointment of Commissioner of DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau/
Sara Servadio/ County Executive Kevin Byrne**

Chairman Jonke stated he would like to begin this item by stating the Administration went through a very thorough process to select the new Commissioner of DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau. He stated that he has been told that Sara Servadio (Sara) rose above all of the other candidates. He stated Putnam County has been fortunate to have Sara working with the Former Commissioner Mike Piazza as his Deputy Commissioner for the past two (2) years. He stated it was an honor to be in attendance at Mike Piazza's retirement party, November 9th, and listen to his colleagues in the County and the State speak to their respect for Commissioner Piazza and their appreciation for having had the opportunity to work with him.

Legislator Nacerino stated she is honored to cast her vote in support of Sara's appointment. She stated Mike Piazza certainly left some big shoes to fill, but she believes Sara is up to the task. She stated she wishes her a long and happy career in Putnam County.

Legislator Castellano stated that he had reviewed Sara's resume and was very impressed. He stated it has been a pleasure working with her over the past couple of years. He stated Mike Piazza has spoken very highly of Sara and he was very much in support of this decision.

Legislator Addonizio stated everyone speaks very highly of Sara and the work she does. She stated she is proud to support this appointment.

Legislator Sayegh expressed appreciation of the County Executive for inviting her to be involved in the interview process. She stated there were amazing candidates. She stated for her and everyone involved Sara was the best candidate for the position. She stated it was a challenging interview, it was lengthy and there was a lot of information requested of the candidates. She stated above and beyond her interview, she as Chair of the Health, Social, Educational & Environmental Committee, has worked with Sara. She stated Sara is knowledgeable, engaged, and considerate. She stated she believes Sara will be a great addition to the Putnam County team and will lead the department into the next generation.

Legislator Ellner stated he had a constituent crisis that Sara assisted him with, and she did a great job. He believes she is the right person for the job, and he will give his full support for this appointment.

Deputy County Executive Jim Burpoe stated he was a member of the interview committee and Sara took it to the next level. He stated Mike Piazza said it best, at his retirement party. He stated Mike told everyone who was present that he felt so relieved that he could retire knowing that Sara was taking the helm to run things. He stated Sara is already developing new programs and things in support of the residents of Putnam County. He stated the Administration looks forward to the Legislature's confirmation and to working with Sara Servadio in the position of Commissioner of DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau.

Personnel Officer Eldridge stated having been involved in many, many interviews over many, many years he told Sara that hers was one of the best interviews and she was one of the best people interviewed that he has been a part of in the 46 years he has worked for Putnam County.

Chairman Jonke stated that is some high praise.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve the Appointment of Sara Servadio as Putnam County Commissioner of DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #5 – Approval/Financial Disclosure List for the Year 2024 Filing Recommended by the Putnam County Personnel Officer Pursuant to Code Section 55-7/ Personnel Officer Paul Eldridge

Personnel Officer Eldridge stated this matter is addressed annually in December. He stated the new Financial Disclosure Forms will go out by January 15, 2024.

Chairman Jonke stated this list includes the names of each person that is required to file a Financial Disclosure Form.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve the Financial Disclosure List for the Year 2024 Filing Recommended by the Putnam County Personnel Officer Pursuant to Code Section 55-7; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #6 - Discussion/ New Position, Mental Health Outreach Worker – FY23 Implementing Crisis Intervention Teams- Community Policing Development Solicitation Grant/ Sheriff Kevin McConville & Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio

Sheriff Kevin McConville stated he and Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio appeared in front of the Protective Services Committee on May 17, 2023 and presented information about Co- Responder Teams which consist of a Deputy Sheriff, a highly trained Mental Health Clinician that would work under the auspices of the Mental Health Commissioner. He stated the purpose is to assist the Sheriff's Department in addressing and dealing with the mental health issues they are faced with on a day-to-day basis. He stated in these cases not every individual needs to be brought to the hospital. He stated he would like to correct what was mentioned in the earlier Health Committee meeting. He stated the hospitals do not do follow up work. He stated the goal of this Co-Responder is to address and mitigate the issue immediately and then provide services forthwith to address and follow up with the individual suffering from the crisis. He stated he is pleased this committee has approved Sara Servadio's appointment, pending the Full Legislature's approval, because she certainly has the skills knowledge, abilities and the work ethic. He stated he has been working with Deputy Commissioner Servadio since 11:00a.m. that morning. He stated they are working with the committee they have put together for persons in crisis. He stated the establishment of the Co-Responder Team will go a long way towards addressing these needs immediately as opposed to three, four or five days later.

Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio stated the new position, specifically for law enforcement, will be titled Mental Health Outreach Worker. She stated they are looking for an individual who has experience in outreach work in a community, has experience working with law enforcement and knowledge of outreach and providers in the in-patient psychiatric world. She stated the candidate will be hired through the Mental Health Office utilizing grant funding. She stated the individual employee will be housed in the Sheriff's Office and riding with the identified trained Deputy with clinical oversight from her.

Sheriff Kevin McConville stated on November 2, 2023, the County was awarded \$400,000. He explained it is a 100% Federally Funded Grant, with a grant period of two (2) years beginning October 1, 2023, through to September 30, 2025. He stated the funding will be used to support these matters.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is great news. She stated this is a partnership between Mental Health professionals and law enforcement that has been recognized as a necessity for many years.

Legislator Sayegh stated a portion of the \$400,000 will be used to pay for the new position, Mental Health Outreach Worker salary. She questioned what else will the funds be used for.

Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio explained there are other costs that will be covered by the grant funds: equipment, electronics, cell phones, laptops, radio, vehicle lease, mandated annual training and training that will require some travel throughout the year.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if this grant will be able to be renewed.

Sheriff McConville stated not at this time.

Item #7 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment - 23A071/ New Position, Mental Health Outreach Worker- Member of Police & Mental Health Co-Response Team/ Sheriff Kevin McConville & Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio

Chairman Jonke stated this budgetary is related to the position that was just discussed, see agenda Item #6.

Legislator Nacerino stated this grant ends September 30, 2025. She stated she hopes the grant will be renewable by then or the County can re-evaluate the position and the need to continue the position.

Legislator Sayegh stated that was her concern as well.

Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio stated this is evidence-based practice. She stated in two (2) years she is hoping the two (2) Departments will be able to figure it out and find a way to keep the program funded.

Sheriff Kevin McConville stated in two (2) year time span they will have data in support of furthering the program.

Chairman Jonke questioned if this is a new program.

Deputy Commissioner DSS, Mental Health & Youth Bureau Sara Servadio stated there are some co-response teams throughout the State. She stated she, the Sheriff, and Undersheriff will meet with those Counties and do a ride along with them. She stated they could go to Westchester but would like to focus on some more rural Counties that have the co-response teams.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve Budgetary Amendment - 23A071/ New Position, Mental Health Outreach Worker- Member of Police & Mental Health Co-Response Team; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Putnam County Employee Policy Update - Drug and Alcohol Policy/ Sr. Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau

Sr. Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau requested the Committee accept an additional item. She explained the cover memo from Paul Eldridge, Personnel Officer dated November 9, 2023, which is the backup for this item, was missing the attachment: New York Department of Labor document regarding these changes. She stated that she has brought said attachment and has copies for the Legislators.

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

Sr. Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau stated April 1, 2021, the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) took effect in the State of New York, which legalized recreational marijuana use. She stated as part of that Legislation there was a change to Labor Law Section 201-D. She stated basically it states employers cannot make adverse employment decisions based on the use of marijuana by employees in their free time. She stated the County had to address this legislative change in its Drug and Alcohol Policy. She stated the County explicitly tested for marijuana. She stated the County wanted to make sure we were in compliance with the changes in the Labor Law. She stated that she has submitted the updated County policy and a version that outlines where the changes were made. She stated the only changes made were necessitated by the passage of the MRTA and a small change was made to the County's pre-employment drug testing policy. She stated CDL Drivers, and anyone covered by Federal Laws, where it is explicit regarding drugs, such as the Federal Firearms Act, which include the County's Law Enforcement Members will continue to be tested for marijuana at pre-employment and at their random drug tests.

Chairman Jonke stated his primary concern was how would this affect those employees whose positions involve the use of guns and the County's CDL Drivers. He stated he did contact Personnel Officer Eldridge and he explained it to him. He thanked Sr. Personnel Specialist Rau for clarifying that as well.

Sr. Personnel Specialist Patricia Rau stated in terms of if there is a concern that employees may be using at work, there is a section of the law that addresses that. She stated the County can test for marijuana if there are articulable signs of impairment. She stated a specific form has been prepared for the Department Head/ Supervisor to complete. She stated once the policy has been approved the next phase of implementation will be Department Head and Supervisor Training so they will be informed.

Legislator Castellano questioned how many CDL Drivers does the County have.

Personnel Officer Eldridge stated off the top of his head he estimated 65. He stated they are spread out in the Highway Department and the Office for Senior Resources.

Chairman Jonke made a motion to Approve the Putnam County Employee Policy Update - Drug and Alcohol Policy; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Item #9 – FYI/ Accident Report – Duly Noted

Item #10 - FYI/ Incident Report – Duly Noted

Item #11 - Other Business- None

Item #12 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 8:20PM Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.