

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN ROOM 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman Nacerino, Legislators Jonke & Montgomery

Thursday

May 23, 2019

(The Audit & Administration Meeting Immediately Followed)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested that Legislator Montgomery lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Jonke, Montgomery and Chairwoman Nacerino were present.

Item #3 - Approval/ Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes/ April 9, 2019

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Update/ Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

- a. FYI/Discussion - Discontinuation of WIC Program/Health Commissioner Dr. Nesheiwat**

- b. Presentation/ Open Door Family Medical Centers in Putnam County Area – President and CEO Lindsay Farrell**

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

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that Commissioner of Health Dr. Nesheiwat is present to provide an overview of agenda item #4a, Discontinuation of WIC Program/Health.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated he served on the Board of Health for 27 years. He stated for the past four (4) years he has been the Acting Putnam County Health Commissioner. He stated he feels compelled to speak of the WIC Staff before continuing with this discussion. He stated on a personal note they are some of the finest colleagues he has ever worked with. He stated they approach their job with a high level of compassion. He stated that he is honored to have had the opportunity to work with them. He stated unfortunately there are times when government must make very tough and difficult decisions. He stated decisions need to be made to protect efficiently, effectively and economically the people that are served in this County and the taxpayers. He provided a historical account of the creation of the WIC Program, that it is not a New York State mandated program. He stated Putnam County started the WIC Program over 15 years ago because a need was identified. He stated he was going to speak about the Open Door Family Medical Center in Brewster. He provided a broad overview of some of the services they offer. He stated that he did bring the Putnam County Health Department Fiscal Manager Bill Orr to speak to the financials of this matter.

Fiscal Manager Bill Orr stated he believes the Legislators have some of the backup with the following financial recordings. He stated in 2018 the County lost approximately \$125,000. He stated in the 2019 budget it is estimated it will be a \$111,000 loss. He stated when the CSEA Contract is settled it will be a greater loss.

Legislator Sullivan questioned how is a loss calculated.

Fiscal Manager Bill Orr stated the County is in the 4th year of a 5 year contract. He stated there is a set amount of grant funding the County receives, this year the amount received was \$437,739. He stated any amount over that is calculated as a loss for the County.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated it is recognized that making these decisions is difficult, especially when personnel is involved. She stated however we are entrusted to make these tough decisions based on the greater good, as difficult as they may be. She stated that there is optimism that there will be employees who will retain employment with the Open Door Family Medical Centers. She stated it has been stated this evening that this is the best decision not only from an economic and fiscal standpoint, but for the population that is served.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated the members of the Open Door Family Medical Centers have agreed to interview the County staff for possible employment. He stated the Personnel Director Paul Eldridge is also working with the employees to see if there are employment opportunities within the County.

Putnam County Courier Reporter Eric Gross questioned how many people receive services from the County's WIC Program.

Fiscal Manager Orr stated 1,100 to 1,200 people are served.

Legislator Montgomery questioned what is the date that this will all take place.

Fiscal Manager Orr stated the 4th year of the 5 year contract ends on September 30, 2019.

Legislator Montgomery questioned why Putnam County would choose to end the WIC Program before the contract is up.

Fiscal Manager Orr stated the State pushed that.

Legislator Montgomery stated that she understands this is the trend. She stated she is not interested in trends. She stated we are Putnam County and we are different. She stated this is a Personnel issue. She stated there are four (4) full-time dedicated employees serving the County and its residents, when compiled, for decades. She stated that they are present this evening. She stated they are dedicated and wonderful employees who when the demand was present they brought WIC services to Philipstown. She stated that was one of the beauties of the County's WIC program. She stated as the demographics and demand ebbs and flows the WIC services would pop up as needed. She stated she cannot understand treating dedicated employees this way. She believes it to be very unfair. She stated that she does not support this. She stated with that said, also this bears the question as to why the County would end the WIC Program before the contract is up, why not at least see it through the five (5) year contract. She stated also she believes giving the County employees three (3) months notice is very unfair.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated that she believes this all precipitated with the State and the funding. She stated a component that is prevalent is that although the County WIC program would be discontinued Putnam County would not be remiss to provide the services. She stated the projected population receiving WIC services is concentrated in the Brewster area. She stated the Open Door Family Medical Centers (Open Door) has an established office in Brewster. She stated that they provide all the services under one umbrella. She stated it works better for the clients who are participating from a logistic standpoint as well to have access and accommodations to their healthcare and services.

Dr. Nesheiwat stated due to budgetary restraints the County would not be able to hire Doctors to offer the same level of care that Open Door does. He stated the job of the County is to look at its mission, which is to determine what is best for the people of Putnam County as a whole and for the taxpayer. He stated he agrees that it is awful that there are employees being affected. He stated he knows these are very dedicated and compassionate employees. He stated in his discussion with the Personnel Director he was assured that they will do their best to find jobs in within the County. He stated also Open Door will conduct interviews.

Janet Canaday stated she is a resident of Putnam County, a Putnam County Employee and the CSEA Union President. She read a letter from a member of the union who could not be present into the record. She stated the union and employees were blindsided with this news. She stated she is present this evening on behalf of her union members and also as a Putnam County taxpayer. She stated a request has been made to discuss this further and that meeting will take place on June 17th after the contract negotiation session. She stated she has requested the Legislature table this matter until after the June 17th meeting. She stated this should all be done involving fair negotiation and in her opinion this has not been fair. She did have a question which she presented to the Commissioner of Finance in relation to an employee who retired. She stated that she has other questions as do other union members. She stated that she would like to have a meeting with Union representatives, Dr. Nesheiwat, Fiscal Manager Bill Orr and Personnel Director Eldridge, who is not present this evening. She stated she has another message to convey from a member, which she read. She repeated her request that the Legislature take their time with this matter.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated she would like to clarify that Kate Fitzpatrick the Union Labors Relations Specialist contacted the County on May 15, 2019 and Janet Canaday was copied on that email which requested Impact Bargaining for these employees that would be laid off. She explained that Impact Bargaining is a meeting where the terms and conditions of the layoff are negotiated. She stated basically what the impact of the layoff to the employees is agreed upon at an Impact Bargaining Meeting. She stated that is evidence that the County is communicating with the Union. She stated she assigned outside Counsel, who did respond. She stated the Union Labors Relations Specialist Fitzpatrick replied with three (3) date options. She stated that is being worked on to confirm the date.

Putnam County Employee and the CSEA Union President Janet Canaday stated that is why she is asking the Legislature to not take any action at this time.

Jeanette Baldanza, Putnam County Resident, Putnam County Health Department Employee and a Nurse she stated she wanted to make sure that everyone knows WIC does not serve only residents of Brewster.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she is aware of that. She stated the numbers provided show that the concentration of the clients of the WIC Program is from Brewster.

Legislator Jonke questioned where the majority comes from.

Jeanette Baldanza, Putnam County Resident, Putnam County Health Department Employee and a Nurse stated they come from all over the County. She stated that the WIC services are brought to Mahopac twice a month.

Legislator Montgomery stated that is an important point. She stated the beauty of having the WIC Program run by the County with County employees provides the flexibility of bringing the WIC services to areas where it is needed. She stated that she believes this discussion should focus on the employees, since this is the Personnel Committee. She stated that she believes discussion related to the services that are provided by WIC should take place at the Health, Social, Educational & Environmental Committee.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated we are discussing the Personnel issue in conjunction with the program; they are in tandem with the proposal. She requested County Attorney Bumgarner to speak to the matter of the terms of time being of the essence to make decisions.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated the agreement the County has with the State only allows the discontinuation of the services in a specific way. She stated the approval of the State Health Department was necessary and required. She stated that all of the communication from them is that this is their preference. She said the number of clients who receive the WIC services has been decreasing. She stated the number of people has a direct effect on the amount of funding received.

Chairwoman Nacerino questioned what the date is that the State has set that this needs to be solidified.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated October 1, 2019.

Legislator Montgomery requested a copy of the tracking of the numbers decreasing over the years.

Fiscal Manager Orr stated that he has them and will forward a copy to the Legislature.

Legislator Montgomery requested confirmation that the amount of grant funding is determined by the number of people served.

Fiscal Manager Orr stated that is a major part of the criteria, in addition to more criteria.

Janet Canaday CSEA Union President questioned where will the remainder of the grant funding that would of gone to the County's WIC program go.

County Attorney Bumgarner stated another entity providing the service will receive it.

Janet Canaday CSEA Union President stated in other words the funding will go to Open Door.

Fiscal Manager Orr and County Attorney Bumgarner stated that is correct.

Legislator Montgomery reiterated this is not the right thing to do to our employees. She stated the employees have been without a contract since 2016 and she believes the morale is low. She stated she believes this is not going to help the morale of our employees.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated personnel issues are very fragile, people's livelihood are threatened. She stated it is a difficult decision to make. She stated as elected officials it is our job to make decisions based on the greater good and that is why we are listening, discussing and engaging this evening.

Janet Canaday CSEA Union President stated she would like to have another meeting with the Personnel Committee and have the Personnel Director Paul Eldridge present. She explained there are questions that she has that he would be the one to answer. She stated a specific concern is related two (2) Nutritionist positions that will be affected by the discontinuation of the WIC program.

Legislator Jonke encouraged her to email her questions to Personnel Director Eldridge or the Legislature and he is confident her questions will be answered.

Item # 4b. Presentation/ Open Door Family Medical Centers in Putnam County Area – President and CEO Lindsay Farrell

Chairwoman Nacerino introduced Open Door Family Medical Centers in Putnam County Area – President and CEO Lindsay Farrell.

President and CEO Lindsay Farrell stated with her was Andrea Beltran Ruggiero, Vice President of Community Health for the Open Door Family Medical Centers. She stated the Brewster Open Door facility has been open since 2013. She stated that the Brewster facility also has a dental program. She stated Open Door has operated the WIC program for three (3) decades. She stated currently there is a WIC program in the Ossining location, Sleepy Hollow location and were approved to add the WIC program to the Mt. Kisco location. She stated there was a time at which the Westchester County Department of Health was operating the WIC program. She stated they made a similar decision to make the services available in the Family Medical Center. She provided a further overview of different locations. She stated that they also have Mobile Dental Vans. She stated the Vans are brought into the community and the schools. She stated there are 100 licensed independent practitioners: doctors, dentists, family physicians, internists, pediatricians and psychiatrists. She stated they have a comprehensive medical program that is largely funded through the government. She stated Open Door is a very large Medicaid Provider. She stated for patients who do not have access to Medicaid there are direct grants from the Federal Government. She stated there are also patients who pay cash so Open Door operates with a sliding scale for those folks. She stated the Brewster Office does not provide Vision Services. She stated the Vision Services are offered at the Portchester and Ossining locations. She stated that Enabling Services are very important and Vice President of Community Health Andrea Beltran Ruggiero will speak to that.

Vice President of Community Health Andrea Beltran Ruggiero stated at Open Door there is a safety net of services that are provided for all of their patients if they need them. She stated that we look at each patient in a very holistic way. She stated when a person comes in for medical services they are also looked at to see if the individual needs other services. She stated such as case management, wellness, education there are many different components that support Open Door patients. She stated they partner with many different organizations so if there is a service that Open Door does not offer they will partner with the other organization that does offer the service. She stated the goal of Open Door is to keep our communities healthy and thriving. She stated with their track record, she believes they are supporting that goal. She stated the members of Open Door recognize how sensitive this topic is. She stated she wants everyone to know at Open Door they are open and engaging in conversations and hope to continue to do so with any of the Putnam County Staff.

President and CEO Lindsay Farrell stated part of the Open Door model is looking at the patient comprehensively. She stated the health care system is very complicated, expensive and incredibly confusing. She stated many of the people they serve have barriers: language, financial, transportation etc. She stated the enabling services are designed to help people get to where they need to go. She stated ultimately Open Door saves taxpayer dollars. She stated when people use the system inappropriately that is expensive for everyone. She stated people who are not well cared for and do not have adequate coordination of services wind up in the emergency room. She stated the emergency room is not the best place to take care of needs that are not emergent or significant. She stated the Open Door model has worked very well and they have been very successful. She stated Open Door is very prevention focused. She stated as an example: if a person has diabetes it would be better to have it diagnosed early and help the person modify as needed versus that same person first receiving medical care when the diabetes has progressed to the point of needing an amputation. She stated that Prenatal care is a really important aspect of the WIC program. She stated they provide Prenatal care in the Brewster, Ossining and Portchester locations. She stated baby deliveries are done at Phelps Memorial Hospital. She stated they have been in discussions with Putnam Hospital. She stated an appropriate partnership with the hospitals, as far as creating a backup group of doctors is necessary to provide coverage for the Open

Door doctors. She stated that they have mid-wives also. She stated Open Door has been offering Prenatal care since 1987. She stated Open Door delivers approximately 500 babies per year. She stated after the birth of a baby the mothers are permitted to stay on the program. She stated Open Door encourages breast feeding.

Vice President of Community Health Andrea Beltran Ruggiero stated a big component with their WIC program is that it is so integrated and there is a warm handoff of making sure that no one leaves without getting the support they need, that adds so much to the success of the program. She stated we also have a very strong team who understand how important the services Open Door provides are to a Community.

President and CEO Lindsay Farrell stated once a baby is born it is important that the baby goes back for all of its appropriate immunizations, that is where the Pediatric Care comes in. She stated again they provide great follow up with the families. She stated statistically they have one of the best immunization rates in the State. She stated whatever the clinical metric is, Open Door always exceeds the national norm. She stated Open Door has received many external accreditation and National recognition. She stated they have also been recognized for the efficient use of technology. She stated that Open Door does not want people to fall through the cracks. She stated that their use of technology has helped to avoid that. She provided an overview of the recognition that Open Door has received for the job that they do in serving those who come to their offices.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated Open Door has an integrated scope of services. She stated past Legislator Sam Oliverio always stated the job of the Legislature is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people the Legislators represent. She stated this is a prime example of how we will best serve the people we represent and give them the best scope of services that we can. She stated we also know this is compounded with the personnel issue. She stated in her opinion her job is to make a decision based on the greater good. She thanked the members of the Open Door for being present and giving their presentation.

Legislator Montgomery stated that she saw first-hand the operation at the Open Door facility in Brewster. She stated she was impressed by the people and the vibrancy. However there is a personnel issue that is part of this decision. She stated she would like to learn more about what Open Door would offer as far as Human Resources. She stated that there is a lot to be considered as far as Personnel issues. She stated that she would like Open Door to come back to a Health, Social, Educational & environmental Committee Meeting to present more about the programs that Open Door offers. She stated again she believes the Open Door programs are great. She stated she is not in favor of handing our programs over to the Federal Government. She stated that she has worked on a town board and worked to bring programs to that local town. She stated the more reliance that is given outside of the town the more the programs fell apart. She stated her interest is keeping the program running locally and not handing it over to the Federal Government.

Legislator Sullivan stated the level of care that Open Door provided is impressive. He stated the coordination of efforts to help your patience navigate through the medical field is really something very special. He stated he wished that kind of assistance was available to everyone. He questioned if Putnam County residents are limited to only use the Brewster Open Door location.

President and CEO Lindsay Farrell stated no they can go to any of the Open Door locations.

Vice President of Community Health Andrea Beltran Ruggiero stated to be clear anyone who uses the Open Door WIC program does not have to be a patient of Open Door. She stated that the hope is once they come to the WIC program, they will see for themselves the care they would receive if they chose to continue to receive their additional health care from Open Door. She stated the integrated system at Open Door enhances the level of care that is provided.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated Open Door provides wonderful comprehensive service. She stated the education and need for awareness that is provided as well is really great. She stated that is such a valuable and crucial component especially for people who have a language barrier or for those who are trying to navigate some of these services. She stated when the services are in piece meal there are more obstacles.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if there is transportation. She stated her constituents are not that close to Brewster.

Vice President of Community Health Andrea Beltran Ruggiero stated that is one of the questions that is often asked. She stated if someone is interested in getting to an Open Door Office, there are donated funds designated to transportation. She stated in Westchester County Open Door has been using Uber Health, which is a HIPAA compliant service. She stated that helps to keep the patients compliant. She stated the need has not come up in Putnam County. She stated many of the Putnam County patients use Public transportation.

Legislator Sullivan stated he would like to echo what Chairwoman Nacerino stated. We all care greatly about our employees here in Putnam County. He stated in addition we need to look at this matter from the greater good for all of the people. He stated the services that Open Door provides are outstanding for our residents and taxpayers. He stated it is a very tough decision for all of us. He stated however at the end of the day after listening to the presentation and hearing about the comprehensive services that Open Door provides, in addition to agreeing to interview the County Employees in the hopes to find positions for all or most of them, he stated with the combination of all of this it seems like a great idea for the County residents.

Legislator Montgomery confirmed that \$125,000 was the County's 2018 portion of the WIC Program. She stated considering the other things that money is spent on in the County compared to what would be lost in this scenario and what the County employees would be losing after decades of service, she does not see that this is the right thing to do right now. She stated she would ask that the County at least wait until the contract is expired.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she would make a motion to Table this discussion this evening to the June meeting. She stated she agrees it is important to have Personnel Director Eldridge be a part of this discussion. She stated it was due to a scheduling conflict that he was unable to be present this evening. She stated that Personnel Director Eldridge will be able to speak to the success of separation of services that have been done in the past, in particular the Mental Health Services, which ended in the 1990s. She stated those services are now offered by CoveCare which is a stellar organization that serves our Community well. She stated the County has worked towards more efficient methods to serve the residents of Putnam County. She stated she will work to schedule her June Personnel Committee meeting after the CSEA Union has their meeting so there will be accurate up to date information to speak to.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Table Discussion - Discontinuation of WIC Program; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

**Item #5 - Approval/ Confirmation of Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell's Appointment/
Putnam County Personnel Officer Paul J. Eldridge/ County Executive Odell**

Chairwoman Nacerino stated unfortunately Personnel Director Eldridge was unable to attend this evening. She stated there were scheduling conflicts with the attempt to have Commissioner of Health Dr. Nesheiwat and Personnel Director Eldridge present for this meeting. She stated even though Director Eldridge is not present she would repeat what she has stated, as have other members of the Legislature, many times. She continued by stating Putnam County is very fortunate to have Paul Eldridge working for the employees and the people of

Putnam County. She facilitated additional comments in support of the confirmation of Putnam County Personnel Officer Paul J. Eldridge.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve the Confirmation of Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell's Appointment/ Putnam County Personnel Officer Paul J. Eldridge; Seconded by Legislator Montgomery. All in favor.

Item #6 - Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T081)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Four ((4) Vacancies and One (1) Employee on 207C/ Sheriff Langley (Also addressed at 5/16/19 Protective Svcs.)

Chairwoman Nacerino stated for clarification this matter was discussed at the Protective Services Meeting as well.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve and move to the Audit and Administration meeting Fund Transfer (19T081)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Four (4) Vacancies and One (1) Employee on 207C; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #7 - Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T085)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Vacancy/ Sheriff Langley (Also addressed at 5/16/19 Protective Svcs.)

Chairwoman Nacerino stated for clarification this matter was discussed at the Protective Services Meeting as well. The overtime is incurred due to a vacancy at the Departemtn of Social Services (DSS) office. She stated per the discussion at the Protective Services Meeting there will be research done to determine if this State mandated position can be filled with a Special Patrol Officer (SPO), which would result in providing the needed security while saving taxpayer dollars.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve and move to Audit and Administration Meeting Fund Transfer (19T085)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Vacancy; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #8 - Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T090)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Four Vacancies and One Employee on 207C/ Sheriff Langley (Also addressed at 5/16/19 Protective Svcs.)

Chairwoman Nacerino stated for clarification this matter was discussed at the Protective Services Meeting.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Approve to the Audit and Administration Meeting Fund Transfer (19T090)/ To Cover OT Expenses due to Four Vacancies and One Employee on 207C; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #9 - Approval/ Budgetary Transfer (19T096)/ New York State Mandate to Increase the District Attorney's Salary as of April 1, 2019/ Commissioner of Finance Carlin

Chairwoman Nacerino explained this is a state mandate. She stated she believes District Attorney Tandy is doing a stupendous job. She just wanted to clarify for the members of the public that the County has no control over this matter.

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Approve to the Audit and Administration Meeting Budgetary Transfer (19T096)/ New York State Mandate to Increase the District Attorney's Salary as of April 1, 2019; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #10 - Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T106)/ Reimburse City of White Plains for Training Expenses of Police Officer Ed Burke/ Sheriff Langley

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Approve to the Audit and Administration Meeting Fund Transfer (19T106)/ Reimburse City of White Plains for Training Expenses of Police Officer Ed Burke; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #11 - FYI/ 2019 Accident Report – Duly Noted

Item #12 - Other Business

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Waive the Rules and Accept the Other Business; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

a. Approval/ Fund Transfer (19T111)/ Transfer of Expense Lines to Fund Correction of Budgeted Error - Office for Senior Resources/ OSR Director Michael Cunningham

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to Approve to the Audit and Administration Meeting Fund Transfer (19T111)/ Transfer of Expense Lines to Fund Correction of Budgeted Error - Office for Senior Resources; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Legislator Castellano questioned if there was a letter of necessity provided for this item to be accepted as Other Business.

Auditor Sharkey explained it was a correction to a budget line that was submitted to her from OSR Director Cunningham after the Personnel Agenda was published.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated it missed the published agenda, but she agreed to have it presented as other business because the agenda was published a day early due to the volume of agendas that needed to be published by the Legislative staff for the meetings this week.

Item #13 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:15 PM Chairman Nacerino made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.