

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

**Committee Members: Chairman Ellner, Legislators Crowley & Jonke**

**Monday** **May 19, 2025**

(Physical & Health Mtgs Immediately Followed the 6:00p.m. Special Full Mtg.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:45p.m. by Chairman Ellner who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Crowley, Jonke and Chairman Ellner were present.

**Item #3 – Acceptance/ Physical Services Meeting Minutes/ March 18, 2025**

Chairman Ellner stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Legislator Crowley called for a Point of Order stating Chairman Ellner had not responded to a memo sent to him from herself and Legislator Russo dated May 19, 2025, regarding the Early Learning Center project. She read the memo into the record.

Chairman Ellner called for a Point of Order and read from the Legislative Manual regarding a request for Other Business, which the proposed item Legislator Crowley was referring to, was subject to a 2/3 vote of the Committee to be accepted. He stated this request would be addressed at the end of the agenda Item# 15 Other Business.

Legislator Crowley made a Parliamentary Inquiry with Senior Deputy County Attorney Conrad Pasquale asking if this falls into the Legislative Manual or if this Committee at Large can decide what goes on the agenda.

Senior Deputy County Attorney Conrad Pasquale stated he would look into this further. He then explained his understanding when he recently reviewed the Legislative Manual was that items sent on behalf of a Legislator to the Chairperson are then assigned to the Chair of the appropriate committee.

Chairman Ellner facilitated further discussion on this matter. He stated he would like to make a Chairman's Report and come back to this.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve adding a Chairman's Report; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chairman Ellner stated, he like many of the people in attendance has special needs children. He explained on this topic there is a lot of information which has not been shared with the Legislature. He stated he did request the information and was denied it. He stated additionally, in writing, he was denied access to important high level, Commissioners and Directors of the Putnam County Staff. He stated if he had been given the information and granted a meeting with the appropriate Commissioners and Directors he would have been able to get key questions asked and answered. He listed a few of the questions he would have asked: What was the evaluation criteria for the location that was chosen? What were locations 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5? He stated there is information that is needed in order to make informed decisions. He stated in an effort to do his due-diligence he contacted different Departments. He stated that he did learn that the Department of Public Works who handles construction was not contacted at all. He stated there is a single page letter documenting this project with a projected cost of \$1.53 million. He stated also after these precious children complete their early learning programs they move on to the Department of Social Services (DSS), to the best of his knowledge they have not been notified. He stated all he wanted was basic information so when the matter comes before the Legislature, which will probably be around June the members of the Legislature will be informed permitting the process to move forward and get things done. He stated having an autistic child he is personally very much in favor of this project. He stated he wants to get this project moving and moving fast. He stated if there is an alternative location that would allow the County to start at the beginning of the 2025 school year, why wouldn't that be done. He questioned if there was anyone present that would object to not spending the projected \$1.53 million and using those funds on additional staff or any other additional things that will be needed. He continued to explain that he wanted to meet with the County Officials so he could run an efficient Committee Meeting. He explained County Executive Byrne prevented that by denying his meeting request. He stated that he supports this initiative, but there are many facts and options that need to be considered. He stated he and other parents with children with special needs are confused by the ThinkDIFFERENTLY label. He stated this is supposed to be all about inclusivity. He questioned why we would want to stigmatize a child that they are "different". He stated he believes there are a lot of issues that need to be discussed, and he simply wanted to have an internal discussion, but he was denied that opportunity by the County Executive. He stated he cannot say it enough he supports this initiative and this concept wholeheartedly. He stated he wants to do it the best way possible and as quickly as it can be done. He stated this matter would not be on that evening's agenda.

Legislator Crowley stated if you want to discuss things privately rather than publicly as you stated, and you wanted to have a meeting, everyone was present to do so. She stated they can go into an alternate location or executive session, if needed to ask certain questions that may not be appropriate to be done in a public format. She questioned Senior Deputy County Attorney Pasquale if an Executive Session would be appropriate.

Senior Deputy County Attorney Conrad Pasquale stated it would depend on the basis of what would need to be discussed in Executive Session. He provided further details on what would warrant an Executive Session.

Legislator Crowley made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss all the topics listed by Senior Deputy County Attorney Conrad Pasquale as they relate to the ELC initiative.

Chairman Ellner stated there is no topic on the Agenda.

Legislator Crowley stated said Chairman Ellner said he did not want to conduct the discussion in public so this is the chance to do it behind closed doors.

Legislator Crowley made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss all the topics listed by Senior Deputy County Attorney Conrad Pasquale as they relate to the ELC initiative; No Second. Motion Failed.

Legislator Montgomery stated she wanted to offer another perspective. She stated that she appreciates the information that Chairman Ellner is looking for and she too would be looking for it. She stated as a non-committee member honestly, she does not want to rely on Chairman Ellner to provide information to her from a private meeting. She stated she respects Chairman Ellner's role and the Committee. She stated this work should happen in the committee process so the public will have a chance to hear the information as well.

Chairman Ellner stated he agrees. He explained he wanted to give the hard-working County Employees a chance to get prepared and come back in June.

Chairman Ellner facilitated further discussion. He stated in summary there is a 37-page lease, and a lot to be reviewed and considered with said lease. He stated he did not want to rush this matter through. He confirmed that he will have this item placed on the June Physical Services Meeting agenda. He stated he hopes the County Executive will allow him to meet with Department Heads to have a meaningful discussion and they can all be prepared to present all of the information the public is entitled to.

Legislator Crowley stated the Department Heads present at this meeting are prepared with what was requested of them leases, and MOUs, and, are ready to address any questions.

Legislator Jonke stated the County Executive has been in office for 2.5 years. He stated approximately one (1) month ago this initiative was brought to the Legislature's attention. He stated now all of a sudden it needs to be done tomorrow. He stated that he has a lot of questions, and he is fully supportive of the initiative. He stated that he shared during last month's meeting

his personal impact of this matter. He stated his daughter had to be driven on a bus an hour each way for her education at an early age. He stated he is behind this. He stated there is a better way to do it. He stated that he had identified an alternative site, that no one has told him why it cannot be considered.

Legislator Crowley stated we would need to go into the Executive Session to find out why.

Legislator Jonke stated no, there is no need to go into Executive Session.

Legislator Crowley stated Legislator Jonke should do some research, it cannot be discussed in public. She stated there is a reason why this cannot be discussed in public.

Legislator Jonke stated Legislator Crowley is the one requesting transparency. He requested if someone would give him an answer to why a facility down the road that has a medical facility on the floor above a vacant school, with nine (9) classrooms, nurses stations, kitchen, and a cafeteria would not be used. He stated if no one wants to give the reason now, then someone needs to call him and explain why the County would not go there.

Chairman Ellner stated he would move forward with the agenda items.

**Item #4 – Approval/ Inter-Municipal Shared Services Agreement with The Towns: Kent, Carmel, Patterson, Philipstown, Putnam Valley, Southeast and Villages: Brewster, Cold Spring and Nelsonville, For Sharing Highway Related Resources/ Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated he would like to begin by thanking all of the Town and Village Officials who assisted with getting this done. He specifically stated Town of Kent Highway Superintendent Richie Othmer, was a big help with this initiative. He stated this is the first initiative of its kind in New York State. He stated he believes to date all of the Putnam County Villages and Towns have accepted this Inter-Municipal Shared Services Agreement (IMA). He stated they are very excited about this, as it will result in a tax savings to the County Residents.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Inter-Municipal Shared Services Agreement with The Towns: Kent, Carmel, Patterson, Philipstown, Putnam Valley, Southeast and Villages: Brewster, Cold Spring and Nelsonville, For Sharing Highway Related Resources; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #5 – Approval/ Agreement with State of New York For Snow & Ice Removal – Five Year Extension/ Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci stated every five (5) years the County renegotiates with New York State for a new Agreement. He stated the agreement is so the County will maintain 120 miles of State Roadway throughout the winter season. He stated this agreement would cover June 30, 2024 – June 30, 2029.

Chairman Ellner questioned if there were any increases.

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci stated there were increases issued towards labor and equipment in this agreement.

Legislator Sayegh questioned is this the funding regardless of the severity of the winters during the five (5) year period.

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci stated there is a winter severity index included. He stated if it is a mild winter then the County will receive less reimbursement.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve; Agreement with State of New York For Snow & Ice Removal – Five Year Extension; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #6 – Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A035/ Close Out FEMA Projects/ Capital Fund Used to Address Work on Various County Roads After Flood Damage Caused by the July 9, 2023 Storm/ Commissioner of Finance Michael Lewis**

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated this is to close out the projects and repairs that were necessary as a result of the July 9, 2023, storm.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Budgetary Amendment 25A035/ Close Out FEMA Projects/ Capital Fund Used to Address Work on Various County Roads After Flood Damage Caused by July 9, 2023, Storm; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #7 – Approval/ Grant Application for Farmland Protection County Planning Grant Through NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to Update the 2004 Putnam County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan/ Commissioner, Planning Development & Public Transportation Barbara Barosa**

Commissioner of Planning Development & Public Transportation Barbara Barosa stated this is a request to apply for an open grant opportunity and would go towards updating the County's Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan. She stated there is a 50% match. She explained New

York State will provide \$50,000, the County has a \$10,000 cash match, and the \$40,000 would be in-kind services, which would be her services.

Legislator Crowley thanked Commissioner Barosa for bringing this forward and focusing on getting the Putnam County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan updated.

Legislator Montgomery stated her appreciation as well. She stated this was attempted to get done a few years ago. She stated it has not been updated since 2004 and she is very happy to see it is finally going to get done.

Resident Cassandra Roth of Town of Patterson and Pawling requested clarification on the process, because she saw that the funding was available in the budget.

Legislator Montgomery stated she recalled the \$10,000 funding was removed by the Legislature during the 2024 Budget Review.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Grant Application for Farmland Protection County Planning Grant Through NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to Update the 2004 Putnam County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #8 – Approval/ Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A042/ Capital Project 52511 – Myrtle Ave @ Rte 6N Garage Roof Repair/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated the roof on this County facility was ripped off a year and a half ago during a storm, and when an outside contractor came to inspect it, 19 layers of membrane with asbestos were discovered. He stated this needs to be addressed. He explained additionally they will raise the roof because the new plow trucks are taller.

Legislator Crowley expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Feighery for all of the work he and his staff have done at this County facility. She stated it has gone from being such an eyesore to looking great. She recognized that the work that has been done so far was done in a fiscally responsible manner generating a cost savings to the County.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A042/ Capital Project 52511 – Myrtle Ave @ Rte 6N Garage Roof Repair; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #9 – Approval/ Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A043/  
Additional Funding to Support the Continuation of Capital Projects 5210 – Youth Bureau  
Reallocation/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

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

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated the backup includes photos that show the degree of fire damage in the County Building on the Tilly Foster Farm property. He stated the cloth wiring had never been updated. He explained due to the lack of oxygen it extinguished itself. He recognized the County Executive for the selection of using this County building to house the County's Youth Bureau. He stated he believes it is a great use of County assets and funds. He spoke briefly to the IT portion of the requested funding that will include a swipe card entry and internet costs that will need to be done.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve/ Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A043/ Additional Funding to Support the Continuation of Capital Projects 5210 – Youth Bureau Reallocation; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #10 – Approval/ Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A044/  
Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Costs for Future Repairs, et al for the Wastewater  
Treatment Plant/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci explained the County's current Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operation will be terminating their contract with the County, for financial reasons. He stated in the search for a new WWTP Operator the market conditions indicate that the price will go from \$1,425 per month to \$4,000 based on the informal proposals received thus far. He stated leaving a shortfall of \$20,600 for the year. He stated the increase in cost will be shared with the NYCDEP through the Operating & Management Agreement. He stated the County must pay the entirety of the operations contract cost and will then be reimbursed 54.4% by the NYCDEP (\$11,206.40) and the County's portion is 45.6% (\$9,393.60). He stated additionally there are two (2) aeration blowers that need to be replaced at a cost of \$20,946.98. He stated that the cost will be shared by the NYCDEP, reimbursing the County 75% (\$22,460.24). He stated this request is for \$68,000 to replenish funds to meet ongoing operating and management costs.

Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully concurred with the information presented by Deputy Commissioner Bellucci.

Legislator Montgomery requested confirmation this is all related to the County Golf Course.

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci stated that is correct.

Legislator Montgomery questioned can we consider rewriting the contract with the Management of the Golf Course so the County would receive a certain percentage of the revenue earned. She stated that would help offset the costs to the County.

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated that is already in the contract. He stated everything that is being requested is to meet the requirements of the NYCDEP.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve/ Department Public Works/ Budgetary Amendment 25A044/ Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Costs for Future Repairs, et al for the Wastewater Treatment Plant; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #11 – Approval/ Soil & Water Conservation District/ Budgetary Amendment 25A045/ Soil & Water Part C Funding for a Summer Intern/ Soil & Water District Manager Neal Tomann**

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated they are excited to have this Intern working with them. He stated the individual has strong GIS and programing background which is valuable and what is needed to do the work to digitize things in the department. He stated it will also benefit the Towns and Villages with their MS4 program.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Soil & Water Conservation District/ Budgetary Amendment 25A045/ Soil & Water Part C Funding for a Summer Intern; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

**Item #12 - Approval/ Department Public Works/ 19CP06 – Architectural & Engineering Services/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Deputy Commissioner of Department of Public Works Joseph Bellucci stated this requested funding for Architectural & Engineering Services is not specific to any particular job.

Commissioner of Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated although most of the work is done in-house there is at sometimes there is a need for outside consultants, of which these requested funds would cover.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Department Public Works/ 19CP06 – Architectural & Engineering Services; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.



**Item #13 – Approval/ Department Public Works/ 25CP03 – Board of Elections Security Gate/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Commissioner Board of Elections Kelly Primavera stated the Board of Elections (BOE) current chain link gate is archaic. She stated the summer of 2024 there was an evaluation of the Early Voting Sites conducted by CISA-Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency. She stated they recommended the gate be replaced. She stated there were many issues that were listed with the current gate. She stated she also had a memo to submit from Sheriff McConville stating his support for this request. She stated the Sheriff's Office also has a building on the BOE property.

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

Chairman Ellner questioned if this project went through the state bid process.

Commissioner of Department of General Services John Tully stated that was correct.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Department Public Works/ 25CP03 – Board of Elections Security Gate; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #14 – Approval/ Department Public Works/ 25CP04 – Chapel Improvements/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated this is a request to bring the Whipple Chapel located at the entrance of the County Veterans Park up to the energy code. He stated then the Chapel could be used year-round.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Department Public Works/ 25CP04 – Chapel Improvements; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

**Item #15 - Other Business**

**a) Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A048/ DPW/ 2025-2026 CHIPS Allotment/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery**

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

Chairman Ellner stated that there was a letter of necessity submitted today, May 19, 2025, and requested Commissioner Feighery speak to this item.

Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery stated this is State Funding that goes towards paving of the highways. He stated there was an increase in the funding this year, which of course was great. He stated the reason for the rush is so that the County can get on the schedule for the outside contractors. He explained if that is delayed, the prices go up and the contractors move out of this area and go upstate.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Budgetary Amendment 25A048/ DPW/ 2025-2026 CHIPS Allotment Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

### **Item #8 - Adjournment**

There being no further business at 7:33P.M. Chairman Ellner made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.