

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

Members: Chairwoman Addonizio and Legislators Russo & Sayegh

Thursday 6:00pm July 16, 2026
(Physical Mtg. to Immediately Follow)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairwoman Addonizio who requested Legislator Sayegh lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Russo and Sayegh and Chairwoman Addonizio were present.

Item #3 – Acceptance of Minutes – May 12, 2026 & June 9, 2026

The minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 – Discussion – Retiree Health Insurance Costs

Chairwoman Addonizio stated Acting Personnel Officer Adriene Iasoni and Acting Commissioner Alexandra Gordon are present this evening to speak to this topic.

Jane Meunier Gorman, a retiree of Putnam County, stated she worked for the County for 39 years in various departments. She read a statement from the founder of Putnam County CSEA. She stated she began working for Putnam County in 1985 and worked in the mailroom, the Law Department, the County Executive's Office, and then the Health Department where she worked for the remainder of the career. She stated she was grateful to have insurance as a benefit of working for Putnam County. She stated as an employee and member of the CSEA, of which she was President of for many years, she was made promises about always having affordable health insurance. She stated her retirement income is \$55,000 and her health insurance bill is about \$10,000, plus copays and other expenses. She stated she believes the cost of health insurance for retirees is not appreciative of the years of service. She stated CSEA cannot represent retirees. She thanked the Committee for the opportunity to discuss this important topic.

Aileen Napolitano, a retiree of Putnam County, stated she worked for the County for almost 34 years. She stated since retiring in 2022 her health insurance bill has increased \$1,000 per year. She stated she understands the health insurance contribution was recently lowered for current employees and it is important to note that retirees are contributing a high percentage while collecting income that does not change. She requested this be reviewed while considering years of service of the retirees.

John Mulreany, a retiree of Putnam County, thanked the Committee for including this discussion on the agenda. He stated he and Aileen Napolitano submitted the letter that

brought this to the attention of the Legislature. He submitted a spreadsheet showing retiree health insurance contribution rates in surrounding counties.

Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to waive the rules and accept the additional; Seconded by Legislator Russo. All in favor.

Mr. Mulreany stated when he was working, his income was much higher and he was paying 10% toward his health insurance. He stated he is now paying 30% toward his health insurance on a much lower income.

Janet Gomez-Canaday, a retiree of Putnam County since 2023, stated the current contribution rates, which were passed in 2019 were introduced to the Legislature in October and were approved in December. She stated at that time CSEA was not involved in the process. She recognized that as costs increase for retirees they are also increasing for the County, however income for retirees does not increase. She thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak on this.

Dorothy "Dot" Trottier, a retiree of Putnam County, stated she worked in the Office for Senior Resources (formerly the Office for Aging) for 41 years. She stated any increase to the insurance contribution would be a hardship; it is already burdensome. She stated health insurance is more important now than it has ever been. She requested that the Committee consider that they will one day be retirees as well.

Shawn Rogan, a retiree of Putnam County, stated he worked for Putnam County for 30 years. He stated when he was hired, he was told that Putnam County was a great place to work because although the salaries cannot compete with private industry, it comes with security, great benefits, and an affordable retirement package. He stated he believes years of service should be taken into account when considering retiree health insurance. He stated in Westchester County, it was decided by the entire workforce to pay more while working. He stated he believes the system in Putnam County should reward length of service. He thanked the Committee for their time.

Brett Yarris, resident of Carmel, stated he is a former CSEA member. He stated making an investment in our residents and communities by allowing people to retire with dignity and with the opportunity to be active participants in the local economy, benefits everyone. He stated government often has to look at things in dollars and cents but it is important to view the long-term economic impact.

Chairwoman Addonizio requested the determination of the percentages be explained by Acting Personnel Officer Adriene Iasoni.

Acting Personnel Officer Adriene Iasoni stated in 1993 the contribution was a flat dollar amount and years of service was a category in the contract. She stated this was subsequently removed in 2015, and the contribution was based on pension amounts rather than years of service. She stated in 2017 the COLA adjustments were removed so the contribution rate would not continually escalate each year. She stated in 2019 an

amendment was made to break up the \$40,000-\$64,999 tier in two; \$40,000-\$52,499 with a 21.5% contribution rate and \$52,500-\$64,999 at a 25% contribution rate. She stated as mentioned earlier, retirees are no longer part of CSEA, however they have made positive strides such as codifying the resolutions as part of the CSEA agreement and they can be negotiated moving forward.

Chairwoman Addonizio requested that any retiree present this evening raise their hand if they had 25 or more years of service with Putnam County. There were many hands raised.

Legislator Sayegh stated she appreciates everyone coming this evening to voice their concerns and she understands their position.

Legislator Russo stated her support for a negotiation on this and she looks forward to a resolution.

Legislator Crowley stated it is also important to account for where our insurance is accepted; travel is sometimes a necessary part of treatment especially since there are not many specialists in Putnam County. She stated this needs to be factored in as it can be an additional cost on top of co-pays and prescriptions.

Legislator Birmingham thanked the Committee for entertaining this item. He stated promises were made to employees when they began their employment with Putnam County, himself included. He stated he does not want to take the “kick the can down the road” approach. He stated he prefers to have these conversations in public, as is being done this evening. He stated he would like to find a solution that is in the best interest of the taxpayers and retirees. He stated the County currently has a large fund balance.

Acting Commissioner of Finance Alexandra Gordon stated the County’s fund balance is currently about \$80 million.

Legislator Birmingham stated he believes the lion’s share of that should go back to the taxpayers. He suggested using some of the fund balance to help regularize this uncertainty for people who have served the County for many years.

Chairwoman Addonizio stated nearby counties base their retiree contribution on years of service and she would like to consider this for Putnam as well. She stated this is a complex consideration.

Legislator Montgomery requested that this topic be a standing agenda item moving forward until it is resolved. She requested clarification of the amendment made in 2017 in regard to the COLA, which the County removed but NYSHIP continued.

Acting Personnel Officer Iasoni stated by removing the County COLA in the calculation, it would not bump a retiree into a higher tier.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would welcome an opportunity to look into how to provide relief for retirees as was recently done for current employees.

Acting Commissioner Gordon stated she believes the contribution was based on pension amount rather than years of service because if you look at two (2) employees who both worked 25 years and one retired with a pension of \$45,000 and the other at \$100,000, they would both pay the same amount even though one has twice as much income. She stated when the COLA is added, it is not taken into effect when calculating retiree health insurance contribution. She stated the premiums do go up every year and the cost goes to the taxpayer, who may be paying for their own costly health insurance. She stated it is a great benefit for the County to pay a portion of the health insurance cost when employees retire.

Legislator Regan thanked retiree John Mulreany for bringing this forward. He stated the Legislature is the steward of the County's finances. He stated his appreciation for this transparent discussion and for the information submitted. He stated a balance needs to be found between the promise made to the retirees for affordable health insurance and protecting the taxpayers.

Legislator Birmingham stated in the 2024 audit, fund balance is listed at \$190,984,923, of that only \$27,949,491 is either non-spendable or restricted, the rest, about \$150 million, is assigned or unassigned. He stated that assigned fund balance is merely something that has been assigned and is not restricted. He stated this leaves about \$150 million of non-restricted fund balance.

Acting Commissioner Gordon stated she does not have the 2024 audit in front of her at the moment. She stated she checked the Fund Balance today and it is about \$80 million. She stated she could double-check those figures.

Legislator Addonizio thanked the retirees present for coming to the meeting and voicing their concerns.

Item #5 – Approval – Fund Transfer 26T170 – Finance – Reclassification – Account Clerk to Senior Account Clerk as of June 1, 2026

Acting Commissioner Gordon stated this employee has recently taken on more responsibilities as the department currently has two (2) vacancies. She stated a desk audit was done through the Personnel Department, and it was agreed that this reclassification was appropriate for this position.

Legislator Montgomery stated her concern for the employees as having two (2) vacancies can put strain on the other employees. She stated this was a relevant point recently discussed in relation to the Taxpayer Transparency Act as it would require additional duties from the Finance Department.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned if the vacancies will be filled next year.

Acting Commissioner Gordon stated it is her goal to do so.

Legislator Regan stated there seems to have been multiple reclassifications this year and questioned why it seems to be so necessary and if there is something that could be done differently to avoid this.

Acting Personnel Officer Iasoni stated the need for reclassification comes from vacancies within the department necessitating a larger workload or from the position evolving over time and taking on more responsibility. She stated the Personnel Department looks at the job being performed by the individual and compares it to job specifications to see which is the most fitting.

Legislator Regan stated the reasoning provided is always thorough and reasonable, but he wondered if this is problematic on a greater scale for the County.

Legislator Russo stated positions and salaries should evolve as employees grow and take on more responsibility.

Legislator Birmingham agreed that employees should strive to go to the next level. He stated when a desk audit is performed, it looks at the position's responsibilities, for example: A, B, C compared to the work actually being done, maybe for example: A, B, C, and D. He stated this is where discretion should come in more than it has because as a government, we define what a job is. He stated in the private sector, tasks are assigned to employees; employees do not choose what their job is. He stated if an employee takes on another responsibility, that is called "job creep"; it is when an employee does not necessarily graduate to the next job, it is the job changing. He stated it is important to keep an eye on this.

Acting Personnel Officer Iasoni stated she understands Legislator Birmingham's concern. She stated a desk audit is at the request of the appointing authority and if the audit reveals that the employee is doing more than has been requested of them, duties can be removed from that position; it is not a given that a reclassification will result from the audit.

Legislator Birmingham questioned if a desk audit has ever been denied.

Acting Personnel Officer Iasoni stated yes, it has.

Chairwoman Addonizio questioned if a majority of the time the employee is asked to assume more responsibilities.

Acting Personnel Officer Iasoni stated yes, it is often the reason.

Chairwoman Addonizio stated if an employee is being asked to take on more work they should be compensated accordingly.

Legislator Montgomery stated it is important to encourage upward movement among employees. She stated it is astounding to see how many vacancies there are when the report comes in each month. She stated often times, the lower position is not filled while upper management is bolstered.

Legislator Crowley stated employees taking on responsibilities due to vacancies are covering the work that needs to be done in their department because it needs to get done. She stated although it may not be ideal, the extra work should be rewarded. She stated vacancies are an issue and hiring is a difficult task. She stated the County is lucky to have employees who are willing to step up and take on that extra responsibility.

Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to pre-file the necessary resolution; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Item #6 – FYI – Accident Report – Duly Noted

Item #7 – FYI – Incident Report – Duly Noted

Item #8 – Other Business – None

Item #9 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:55pm, Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Russo. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by Deputy Clerk, Beth Robinson.