

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE
BUDGET MEETING
HELD IN ROOM 318 OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Gouldman, Legislators Jonke & Montgomery

Thursday

October 7, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Chairman Gouldman who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Jonke, Legislator Montgomery, and Chairman Gouldman were present.

Item #3 - 2022 Budget Review

Dues – Account 1920 – Page 44

Chairman Gouldman stated it is level funding at \$16,000.

Legislator Montgomery clarified that these are dues for membership to certain organizations.

County Auditor Michele Sharkey stated yes, it is membership to Pattern for Progress, New York State Association of Counties, New York State Association of County Executives, County Executives of America, and National Association of Counties.

Tourism – Account 6410 – Pages 161-162

Chairman Gouldman requested clarification on line 437151 on page 161, entitled State Aid I Love New York.

Tourism Director Tracey Walsh stated the numbers from 2021 were affected by the pandemic and were basically cut in half. She stated the 2021 funding amounted to approximately \$28,000 for six (6) months of the year, so she doubled that figure for her projection of the 2022 funding.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if there is any chance the State will be sending additional funding for the rest of 2021.

Tourism Director Walsh stated no, but they should be receiving the 2022 funding within the next three (3) weeks.

Legislator Montgomery clarified that the County matches the State funding for I Love New York. She requested clarification on what the I Love New York Funds can be used for.

Tourism Director Walsh stated it is used for promoting the County in areas outside of the County, to bring tourists in.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if the County match is also under those restrictions. Tourism Director Walsh stated they are.

Legislator Montgomery questioned what funding is left over for local advertising.

Tourism Director Walsh stated there is \$12,500 in line 54664 on page 161, entitled Advertising, because she believes it is important to support local endeavors.

Legislator Montgomery stated her district cannot handle any more tourists than already visit. She stated the area does not need more advertising. She stated her area needs the trash removal that was taken out of the County budget previously. She questioned if there is anywhere in the budget to assist her area with the public health issues due to tourism, such as maintaining the public bathrooms. She stated the municipalities do not receive any of the sales tax that they help generate for the County.

Chairman Gouldman clarified that items such as maintaining the bathrooms would not be in the Tourism budget.

Tourism Director Walsh stated Tourism tries to assist with managing the number of tourists and draw them out of the main area to the other attractions. She stated there was recently a campaign about responsible tourism and how to be a better tourist.

Chairman Gouldman requested clarification on line 51094 on page 161, entitled Temporary.

Tourism Director Walsh stated that is for her assistant who has undertaken a much greater scope of responsibilities and saved the County money. She noted that this budget is much lower than the 2019 budget. She stated in the past Legislator Montgomery has been critical of the Tourism Department utilizing an out of State creative consultant. She noted that the employee in the temporary line has taken over some of those responsibilities. She noted that this line had \$20,000 in it in 2019.

Chairman Gouldman requested clarification on line 54635 on page 161, entitled Cell Phones, as there is no funding there.

Tourism Director Walsh stated she simply did not need the cell phone and should not spend on things that are not needed.

Chairman Gouldman requested clarification on the \$5,000 increase in line 54678 on page 161, entitled Leased Transportation.

Tourism Director Walsh stated she coordinates this line with the Transportation Department. She stated this line has funds for transportation for concerts and other events such as the Heritage Apple Fest at Boscobel. She stated it is also used to augment the trolley system. She stated if the funds are not used, they go back to the County.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there is any way Tourism can help support transportation, for example by contracting with a taxi company or Uber.

Tourism Director Walsh stated she is just in the beginning of looking into this and has spoken with Metro North about having ZipCars at the train stations.

Chairman Gouldman stated there is a new line item this year, 54989, entitled Miscellaneous, on page 161. He requested clarification on what this line will be used for.

Tourism Director Walsh stated in working with the Auditing Department, sometimes they are unsure where to fund certain items. She stated for example the Tourism Department wanted to support the “Vision Breakfast” at Boscobel, but it did not fit into an already existing line. She stated this led to the Miscellaneous line being created. She stated this helps allocate funding in a proper, neater way.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how the Tourism Department was supporting the breakfast event at Boscobel.

Tourism Director Walsh stated the Tourism Department wanted to support it, similar to being a sponsor for the event.

Legislator Montgomery stated she loves that the Tourism Department supports organizations that bring in tourism, especially those on the west side of the County. She stated there are public health and transportation issues in the Village of Cold Spring. She stated she would like to see support come from the Tourism Budget in the future. She stated the County has seen an increase in sales tax revenue from the tourism industry. She stated she would like to advocate for that funding to be shared to help with these issues.

Legislator Albano stated the sales tax is not directly shared, but the County does provide services to the municipalities. He stated there is a large list of things the County provides that they do not have to.

Legislator Montgomery stated she understands that, but she would like to see the breakdown.

Legislator Sullivan stated that the County Executive stated at her Budget Address that the County provides \$5.5 million worth of services to the Towns and Villages that the County does not charge for.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there is a breakdown of what each municipality sends to the County in sales tax and property tax. She stated she knows there was a year when she was on the Town Board, where Philipstown sent \$9 million to the County in sales and property taxes.

Economic Development Corporation – Account 6420 – Page 163

Chairman Gouldman questioned why there was an increase in the EDC’s budget for 2022.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin stated the increase is because the EDC took a big decrease in 2021. He stated the County is bringing their funding back up.

Putnam County IDA – Account 6460 – Page 165

Commissioner Carlin stated the IDA always only asks for what it needs. He stated this year they requested \$10,000 less funding due to success in receiving fees from their projects; such as Ace Endico.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if the fees that are generated are the IDA's minutes on their website.

Commissioner Carlin stated the financial statements are on their website.

Legislator Jonke thanked IDA Chairman Bill Nulk and the other volunteers on the Board for their hard work.

IDA Chairman Nulk stated the IDA appreciates the County's support.

Item #4 - Other Business – None

Item #5 - Adjournment

There being no other business, at 6:50 P.M., Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by Administrative Assistant, Ed Gordon.