

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE ON BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS MEETING
MINUTES NOVEMBER 23, 2009**

MEMBERS B&A: Chair: Jose Alvarado, Legislators:
Jenkins, Myers, Oros, Harckham, Kaplowitz,
Abinanti, Rogowsky, Williams, Burton, Ryan

OTHER LEGISLATORS: Lois Bronz, Vito Pinto

IN ATTENDANCE: **EZKR:** Peter Brown, Cristine Refino; **DES:**
Michael Volk, John Jackson, Tony Sutton,
Jennifer Wacha, Irene Kabwe, Kathryn
Napolitan **Research:** Luisa Iadelum;
Journal News: G. McKinstry; **LWVW:** N.
Fisher; **Clerk:** Eileen McCarthy, Hulda
Martinez, Tim Idoni; **Budget:** Patricia
Huggerly, Angela Owens, John Delaney, Mark
Medwid, Arthur Vietro, Anne Reasoner; **DOT:**
Lawrence Salley, Harry Stanton, Lavelle
Bennett, Bill Leverage; **TVCC:** Jacqueline
Irwin; **CEO:** Randolph, Andrew Neuman;
Public: John DeMilia; Alfreda Williams

Chair Alvarado called the Budget and Appropriations Committee to order at 10:17 a.m.

A351 Budget Transfer Act \$5,987,000: In the 2009 budget, there was no money included for the new labor agreement with the Transit Workers Union that became effective in March 2009 because the amount of money was not known at the time. One hundred percent of the money is coming from the federal government. This will also be true in 2010. On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Burton for Budget & Appropriations, the motion was carried by a vote of 8-0 (Alvarado, Rogowsky, Burton, Jenkins, Kaplowitz, Myers, Harckham, Oros). This was signed out on November 10 by Government Operations by a vote of 6-0 (Jenkins, Rogowsky, Bronz, Pinto, Ryan, Williams).

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Kaplowitz, the minutes of November 19 and November 20 were approved by a vote of 8-0 (Alvarado, Rogowsky, Burton, Jenkins, Kaplowitz, Myers, Harckham, Oros).

The first department to make its presentation was the County Clerk. Last year four positions were cut and this year five positions are being cut for a total savings of \$660,000. Total budget expenses have been reduced, this year by 2.9 percent and last year 6.2 percent. Overtime and hourly costs have been kept flat. The Property Records Electronic Portal (PREP) system is in a pilot stage and will go on line January 1, 2010. They also will begin implementing an e-filing system for tort cases that are filed in Supreme Court, probably in July of 2010. Legislator Oros wanted to know if the Clerk's office could handle the licensing that is presently being done by Consumer Affairs. There is space and with a few simple alterations, it is doable. There were questions on various line items. Legislator Harckham asked if the furlough would affect his department inasmuch as it is a revenue based department. The County Clerk feels the morale would be a problem as he lost eighty man hours when the idea was released. Workers wanted to know how it would affect them and how would they get through it.

The next department was Emergency Services. The commissioner listed quite a few of their accomplishments during the year – coordinate with SEMO and FEMA recovery programs, providing dispatch services, maintaining and storing supplies to support hazardous materials, conducting fire inspections, conducting arson investigations, and providing fire and EMS instruction. There were questions on the various line items. Legislator Harckham wanted to know how the furlough would affect his department. The Commissioner would like the administration to rethink their position insofar as some of the departments that have essential employees. Legislator Kaplowitz would like the Commissioner to put in writing what he would consider as a contingency budget.

The final department was DOT. By the end of this month we will be acquiring 95 new hybrid vehicles electric buses. At the end of this year, our fleet will average a little over 3 years of age. The FDA recommends that the vehicles be replaced every 12 years. Twenty-

five percent of the para-transit vehicles will be replaced each year and in 2013 all seventy articulated buses will need to be replaced at \$1 million a piece. DOT will receive eighty percent funding but the County match will exceed the referendum limit. On the capital side, the department is heavily leveraged and make the best use of all federal and state money. A power point was presented to the Committee. There are approximately 31,200,000 bus passengers, 358 buses, 88 route variations, 3,200 bus stops, 55 County employees and 750 operator employees. Their expenses for 2010 will be \$131.987 million, revenues for 2010 will be \$87.884 million and the total tax levy will be \$44,102,998. There will be some service changes. The Air Link Express service to the airport will be ending, Route 12 with service between Armonk & Jefferson Valley will be ending, the Manhattan Express Service south of 23rd street will be ending and they will be eliminating four of 45 daily round trips on the Manhattan Express. There were many questions on the line items.

A power point was presented on the airport. 55 commercial flights daily, 1,875,000 passengers, 13 airlines, 4 county employees and 240 contractor employees. The total expenses will be \$45,394,383, revenues \$45,394,383 and no shortfall. There will be no tax levy impact. Business aviation is beginning to rebound, airline activity is high, debt service is declining.

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Kaplowitz, Budget & Appropriations adjourned at 1:10 p.m.