

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE ON BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS MEETING
JOINT WITH THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION
MINUTES DECEMBER 7, 2009**

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

MEMBERS LEGISLATION: Chair: Bill Burton, Sub Committee on
Appointments Chair: Lois Bronz, Legislators:
Abinanti, Harckham, Jenkins, Myers, Oros,
Nonna, Rogowsky

IN ATTENDANCE: **Pace Women's Center:** Karen Comment,
Barbara Wolfert, Susan Ferlaulo; **My Sister's
Place:** Karen Cheeks Lomax; **Child Care
Council:** Kathy Halas; **Children's
Association:** Cora Greenberg, Stephen
Pados; **WAB:** Judith Schwartz; **Planning:**
Susanne Marina, Deborah DeLong; **60 West
Street Associates:** Daryle Hawes; **Bridge
Fund:** Lisa Buck; **Westcop:** May Krukiel;
Human Resources: Wendy Price; **EZkR:**
Eric Lerner; **Titus Investors:** John
Saraceno; **Legal Services:** Barbara
Finkelstein; **ODMD:** Nick DeSantis, Susan
Barossi, Alan Kossay, Robert Pollmann,
Robert Cordero, Barbara Van Bergen; Jeffrey
Shaver, Nora Galleros; **Early Step Forward:**
Donna Morrison; **Transition:** Kay Carsky;
CBAC: John McGarr, Bill Kay, Julie Stern,
Barbara Strauss; **Budget:** Anne Reasoner,
Arthur Vietro, John Delaney; **WWA:** Lindsay
Farrell; **TJN:** G. McKinstry; **Arts:** JoAnne
Mongelli

Chair Alvarado called the Committee on Budget and Appropriations
to order at 9:45 a.m.

CBAC gave their presentation. Their objective was to continue to cut expenses and evaluate realistic revenue fund balance projections. They interviewed the Director of the Finance Department focusing on Financial Compliance Practices and Internal Audits, they met with representatives of MTA to discuss the payments that Westchester makes to Metro North and they discussed the new MTA payroll tax and its effect on Westchester's economy and they reviewed the Capital and Operating Budgets. On the Capital Budget they were pleased that lower dollars were being looked at for the debt service but they want to be sure that the County is spending enough to maintain the infrastructure of the County. There should be an internal audit with 15 people and the group should be managed by the Finance Department but report to the Chairman of the Board of Legislature. The sales tax should remain the same as the 2009 projected amount. Playland revenue should be revaluated as well as the mortgage tax. Contract Services should be cut. Some of I.T. should be outsourced. Employees should contribute to their medical benefits. Employees should contribute to their retirement benefits. 6J ended 2008 with a negative balance. The claims administrator recommends the County fund for only 5 years in settling cases involving permanent disabilities. This is not long enough and it should be longer. They suggest having a new claims administrator. The Reserve Account has been drawn down and they feel the County needs to be protected against revenue shortfalls at least into 2011 so this should be reviewed. There is duplication of services. Finance functions in various departments should be under one department, Economic Development, Tourism and Community Services should be consolidated. And communication in various departments should be combined. Payroll functions should also be combined as it presently includes a payroll supervisor or clerk in 9 departments. It is being suggested that the quality of management and oversight be improved. They are suggesting a County Executive with six Deputy County Executives who would be responsible for various departments. There was much discussion by the various legislators.

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Harckham, the minutes of December 4 were approved.

Chair Burton of Legislation called the Committee on Legislation to order at 10:37 a.m. Sub-Committee of Appointments had one item.

Legislator Bronz made a motion to approve Florence McCue to the Human Rights Commission for a term to expire on December 2009. On the motion of Legislator Bronz, seconded by Legislator Jenkins, the motion was carried by a vote of 9-0 (Burton, Abinanti, Bronz, Harckham, Jenkins, Myers, Oros, Nonna, Rogowsky).

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Myers, Legislation was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

The auditors then presented a preliminary report. There are 4879 full time positions with 32 less than in the 2009 budget. There were two major changes – funding for the medical center and the furlough of employees. All other services that were addressed in the 2009 budget are addressed in the 2010 budget with some small changes. The suggested revenues and the suggested expenditures are listed in the handout given out by the auditors. The sales tax is not included. In 2009 the sales tax revenue was \$328.8 million and in 2010 the County is projecting an increase of \$10.8 million. The Auditors are suggesting removing the \$10.8 million but if the Board wishes to leave it in, they need to review this on a monthly basis and on a quarterly basis if necessary make the necessary adjustments. The auditors then went down the line items and discussed them with their recommendations. The Legislators had many questions. The auditors will be back on December 11 with a final report.

A362 Act Entering into first Amendment to Cooperation Agreement with WCHCC: The Medical Center is requesting that the pay down of the debt be deferred so improvements can be made to the area known at 7 North. The \$7 million would be paid for three years starting in 2010, then \$8 million starting in 2013 for three years and then \$9 million for two years starting in 2015. Legislator Rogowsky pointed out that the money would be used for improvements to 7 North and it should be part of the legislation. This was passed as amended by a vote of 11-0 (Alvarado, Jenkins, Burton, Rogowsky, Kaplowitz, Myers, Harckham, Ryan, Williams, Oros, Abinanti).

A363 County Pay Plan Amendment: There were changes to 6 positions. Legislator Oros objected and wanted to know with two weeks left why this was being done and why couldn't it wait for the new County Executive. He can always make changes. On the

motion of Legislator Kaplowitz, seconded by Legislator Jenkins, the motion was carried by a vote of 9-1 (Alvarado, Jenkins, Rogowsky, Kaplowitz, Myers, Harckham, Ryan, Williams, Abinanti) (Oros - no).

A336. Environmental Resolution-60 West 1St Street-Mount Vernon;
A337. Property Purchase-60 West 1St Street-MV; A338 HIF Act-IMA-
60 West 1St Street-Mount Vernon; C192 NHLA Bond Act-BPL10- 60
West 1St Street-Mount Vernon; C193. HIF Bond Act-BPL01-60 West
1St Street-Mount Vernon: This is for 43 affordable rental apartments in Mt. Vernon. It was not discussed in the subcommittee on Capital Projects as Legislator Williams had questions that now have been answered. His concern was that funding would be in place by the State, City and County and it now has been resolved. The affordability is for 50 years. Legislator Abinanti agreed to sign it out providing we had a letter of first refusal. (It was provided). On the motion of Legislator Williams, seconded by Legislator Jenkins, the motion was carried by a vote of 9-0 (Alvarado, Jenkins, Rogowsky, Abinanti, Burton, Kaplowitz, Myers, Ryan, Williams). This was signed out of Government Operations on December 1 by a vote of 6-0 (Jenkins, Burton, Myers, Harckham, Rogowsky, Pinto).

Chair Alvarado recessed the Committee at 12:50 a.m.

Chair Alvarado concluded the recess at 10:53 p.m., announcing that the additions were ready to be signed out. Legislator Oros made a statement. The new County Executive can't do anything about this budget. He can't veto it, sign it or negotiate it. Think of what you are doing as it is a legislative budget. Think of the taxpayers. Next year we will probably get through this but the following year there will be serious problems.

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Burton, the additions were accepted by a vote of 9-2 (Alvarado, Jenkins, Rogowsky, Burton, Myers, Harckham, Ryan, Williams, Abinanti) (Oros, Kaplowitz – no). The total additions amounted to \$20,940,159.

On the motion of Legislator Jenkins, seconded by Legislator Harckham, Budget & Appropriations adjourned at 11:03 p.m.