



# Sullivan County

## Executive Committee

### Meeting Minutes - Final

Chairman Nadia Rajsz  
Vice Chairman Joesph Perrello  
Committee Member Matt McPhillips  
Committee Member Brian McPhillips  
Committee Member Nicholas Salomone Jr.  
Committee Member Catherine Scott  
Committee Member Luis Alvarez  
Committee Member Amanda Ward  
Committee Member Terry Blosser-Bernardo

Thursday, September 19, 2024

9:00 AM

Government Center

#### Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair Perrello called the Executive Committee meeting to order at 9:05AM.

#### Roll Call

Joshua Potosek, Michelle Huck, Robert Freehill, Chris Knapp, Nancy Buck, Laura Quigley, Ed McAndrew, Heather Brown, Sharon Jankowicz, Angela Chevalier, Chief Hal Smith, Tom Cawley

Ken Walter, Star Hesse, Lise Kennedy, Martha Scoppa, Jerry Steven, Ruby R.

**Present:** Joseph Perrello, Matt McPhillips, Brian McPhillips, Nicholas Salomone Jr., Catherine Scott, Luis Alvarez, Amanda Ward and Terry Blosser-Bernardo

**Absent:** Nadia Rajsz

#### Public Comment

Director of Real Property Services Chris Knapp spoke about the Fallsburg segment of the Tri-Valley School District had a significant increase in their tax rates this year due to the equalization rate.

County Treasurer Nancy Buck spoke about the Accept/Reject Bids resolution on the agenda as well as two houss that will be on the second auction next week.

1. Ken Walter made a public comment.

#### Resolutions:

1. To Reappoint Two Members to the Sullivan County Department of Public Health Professional Advisory Board

[ID-6690](#)

Enactment No: 475-24

2. Apportion the 2025 County Self-Insurance Plan [ID-6734](#)  
**Attachments:** [Appendix I - Apportionment 2025](#)  
Enactment No: 476-24
3. To Reappoint Gerald J. Skoda, to the Health Services Advisory Board for the Department of Public Health [ID-6735](#)  
Enactment No: 477-24
4. Authorize the Election Infrastructure Grant Contract [ID-6763](#)  
Enactment No: 478-24
5. To modify Resolution No. 440-23 [ID-6766](#)  
**Attachments:** [2024-09 ATT Res 440-23 Warming Center](#)  
Enactment No: 479-24
6. To Appoint Leroy Cordero Floyd III, MD, MBA, CPE, FACP, FHM to the Health Services Advisory Board for the Department of Public Health ..end [ID-6767](#)  
Enactment No: 480-24
7. The Legislative Discretionary Funding program is designed to assist Sullivan County and County-oriented entities with achieving such goals as public safety, public health, youth services, community development, and economic development [ID-6770](#)  
Enactment No: 481-24
8. To amend Resolution No. 223-24. [ID-6772](#)  
Enactment No: 482-24

9. Approve double time for Correction Officers working overtime at the Sullivan County Jail for the period between September 19, 2024 - March 19, 2025

[ID-6773](#)

Catherine Scott stated that this resolution was on Public Safety last week and it was moved to Executive. She thought there was supposed to be a number associated with this resolution and there isn't. She wants to support and vote for this but it seems like a blank check and she cannot authorize a blank check. She needs a number. Luis Alvarez stated that Chief Hal Smith is here.

Brian McPhillips inquired if this is something we can do contractually, is this something we can do as a sign-on bonus instead of doing the blank check term for just mandated overtime? He personally doesn't have enough information in a week to make a decision like this.

Terry Bernardo stated she supports law enforcement and the correction officers but her concern is that the contracts are up next year and she is concerned about the legislature approving this and how it will affect the other unions.

Chief Smith stated there are very few divisions that get mandated at the rate that a correction officer does. Since January, the midnight shift was mandated 165 times. He doesn't know how you can put a number to it because it depends who is getting mandated. A brand new correction officer is making a whole lot less than a Sergeant who gets mandated.

Catherine Scott stated last month you stated that there were 138 mandates for August, if you could give us the dollar value since it is time and a half for those mandates. Chief Smith stated correct. Catherine Scott stated if you could give us a value for that time and a half and what the additional half would be. We would need a soft number for what it would be for a three month period of time. Double time would cost the county money. It might be more effective at contract time to hire more people at a higher wage and have more stability in the jail then to do double time to try and retain people. Chief Smith he agrees 100 percent but we are not there. He is sure he could go to payroll and get those numbers in ten minutes.

Amanda Ward stated she supports law enforcement but what she would suggest considering is having a cap on the hours. Chief Smith stated there is already a cap of 16 hours which includes their regular shift. Amanda Ward stated the quality of life for an employee and the cost should be balanced.

Terry Bernardo stated what Chief Smith said was perfect. If you could get that to us, the point that you are the only department that is mandating overtime, it would make a difference in her opinion and if we could have the County Manager's Office or Human Resources verify that there is not other departments who are going to say "us too".

Chief Smith stated let me be clear, he said there aren't other departments being mandated at the rate that his employees are. County Manager clarified the Nursing Home and 911 get

mandated.

Luis Alvarez stated it is always difficult to come out with the numbers. He then gave examples when he worked for the Sheriff's Office. You do not know what is going to happen on a daily basis. People do not understand. The only way for legislators to understand what the guys are going through and we have to remember we have a moral obligation to the correction officers, and we have a moral obligation to the taxpayers and the only way you guys are going to understand is if you work for the Sheriff's Department for at least a month in that facility. He doubts very much you would last a week. When that door locks behind you, then you know you cannot get out.

Vice Chair Perrello stated between the Sheriff, the Undersheriff and Chief Smith, a plan needs to be put together to recruit people to work in this field. Chief Smith stated it is not so much recruitment, it is retention.

Catherine Scott stated there is also a financial impact for not retaining. It costs the county in training, etc.,

Nicholas Salomone asked how many officers work on the midnight shift. Chief Smith stated typically 10 people. It is a skeleton crew because there is not a lot of activity. There is no medical or court appointments. We let them out at 6AM.

Vice Chair Perrello stated what is going to happen moving forward if we give a stipend or thank you bonus and this could be a snow ball affect that the county cannot afford.

Catherine Scott stated we did do something for the nursing home staff for volunteering to cut down on the mandates. People felt like they were getting something out of it as it was their choice. Amanda Ward stated she is trying to understand how the double time will resolve the issue.

Terry Bernardo stated she is trying to get to yes. She does take exception as being portrayed not understanding this issue unless she does a month working in the jail. Brian McPhillips stated he seconds that. As Chair of the Legislature of Ulster County, she did a full 8 hour shift locked in and a full 8 hour shift with Road Patrol. She makes the same offer to the Sheriff's Department to do it here. She does support law enforcement and she does know what it feels like and she does want to talk to the employees. But the numbers that we need and maybe from the County Attorney's office, is it an issue with 911, is it an issue with the Health Department and maybe from Human Resources, how do the other unions feel about this. Are they going to support the correction officer union for us to do this for them or are they going to weaponize it against us to say me too. That is what she wants to avoid. If there are no problems with the nursing home and 911 being mandated, she thinks we might be able to get to yes.

Luis Alvarez stated in regards to mandates, these guys have no choice., This mandate is imposed by the Sullivan County Sheriff's Department. He stated we don't have the manpower, but let me offer you double time for staying so many hours. If you work an 8 to 4 shift, at 4 o'clock you don't know if you can leave and go home or be stuck to work

additional hours. It is fair to recognize the men and women that work in that Jail. He doesn't see anyone else getting mandated day after day.

Vice Chair Perrello stated that this was good conversation and he is going to end it now.

Catherine Scott stated last Thursday, Sheriff Schiff stated that this is not the first time that this is being requested. In the past, did we have other unions running to the Legislature asking-----Luis Alvarez stated before Mike Schiff, we did this twice.

Brian McPhillips stated so three times in 35 years. The county is proud of your service however, the issue here is a handout and you are putting legislators on blast, where if we follow policy, this should have gone through the Human Resources Committee. Then, from there, it should have gone to the Management and Budget Committee. Instead, we are forcing this down and we are getting mad at Clerks for pushing this to the legislators so they are aware of what the issue is so this isn't a surprise to them. Unfortunately Chief Smith to you and your people, it gives off the presumption that there is no care for what they do. That is an unfair and coming from the Legislature is even more embarrassing because everyone here has basically said that they are willing to look at this problem. We have had conversations on how to fix this problem and he even stated last time that he is not the type of person to throw money at the problem. Let's fix it organically and there is many options to do this. To stand here and advocate for a certain group is totally acceptable but to do it as if the other employees of this county do not matter, that their positions do not matter, that whether they are mandated or not and you can easily go to the highway department and they have women and children too and their kids are at school plays and they are out plowing the roads to keep people safe and to not understand that this is an employee issue across the county, and to minimize it as if we do not care for the well being or the status of what Correction Officers do for us, he is sorry if that message is being said by us just asking questions. This is just so the public can understand that this is how things get weaponized against each other or political. That is completely untrue and he will not sit here and be lambasted for trying to look out in the long run, for your people and your department. We sat here and we did it for the County Manager's contract which was well deserved and we said we would do this for all the employees. This legislative body has been very vocal on providing a working and quality living space in this county and he will do his best to make sure that the correction officers are taken care of in the long term and we can provide the services that the taxpayers are expecting of us.

Catherine Scott stated what she is hearing today from Hal Smith and last week from the Sheriff that this is a critical situation. And, if we do not act, we could be faced with a more dire situation. Chief Smith stated that the doom and gloom is being placed on this,. What he is trying to do and it did work the last time, we throw money at this and more people will volunteer.

Matt McPhillips stated he liked what Amanda Ward said about making it a volunteer incentive like the care center. If that is the incentive, he thinks that is a great idea. Amanda Ward stated that it makes sense.

Brian McPhillips moved to amend by adding a \$100 bonus to any Correction Officer

volunteering to do a mandated shift, seconded by Joseph Perrello. Luis Alvarez stated that this is going to help the people who volunteer but not the people who are mandated.

Terry Bernardo asked what Chief Smith thought of this and if he thinks it would get enough people to come forward so you wouldn't have to mandate people. If we do this for two months and revisit it to see if it is fixing the problem

Amanda Ward asked if we could have a Special Meeting the first week of October so we can get the language properly.

Amanda Ward then moved to table this resolution, seconded by Brian McPhillips, all in favor 8-0.

10. Amend Resolution No. 376-22 [ID-6774](#)  
Enactment No: 483-24
11. Modify Resolution No. 386-23 [ID-6775](#)  
Enactment No: 484-24
12. To accept/reject bids from the September 2024 Real Property Auction [ID-6776](#)  
Enactment No: 485-24
13. Adopt an Updated Guide for Reimbursement of Employees' Travel Expenses Policy [ID-6781](#)  
**Attachments:** [Travel Policy effective 090124 final](#)  
[Travel Policy effective 090124 with mark up](#)  
Enactment No: 486-24
14. Adopt a Proposed Local Law to Amend the Sullivan County Administrative Code regarding Investigation of Alleged Ethics Violations and Advisory Opinions [ID-6782](#)  
**Attachments:** [A8A-4 Revised 8-19-24 - numbered lines](#)  
Enactment No: 487-24
15. To Amend 301-24 regarding Promised Tuition Free Scholarship Program [ID-6783](#)  

Vice Chair Perrello stated he has been working wit some people like Angela and we have some financial issues with this program which we are going to get to the bottom of.

Enactment No: 488-24

## Adjourn

There being no further business, Catherine Scott moved to adjourn, seconded by Nicholas Salomone. The Executive Committee adjourned at 9:43AM.