

## **ADDITIONAL \$3.2 MILLION NEEDED TO HOUSE OUT INMATES AND PAY OVERTIME COSTS AT DUTCHESS COUNTY JAIL**

**POUGHKEEPSIE** — This afternoon, the Dutchess County Legislature’s Public Safety Committee authorized \$3.2 million to be taken out of the County’s general contingency fund as well as out of general fund balance to pay for increasing costs relating to the Dutchess County Jail including overtime costs and inmates housed in other institutions.

Of the \$3.2 million required, \$2 million is additional appropriations necessary to pay other county jail facilities across New York State to house Dutchess County inmates. With an daily inmate population that has exceeded 500 individuals in the past year and jail capacity for just over 250, Dutchess County “houses out” as many as 200 or more inmates in other facilities across the state each day, at a cost to taxpayers that is currently over \$8 million per year and continues to increase.

\$1.2 million is required for increased overtime costs. The additional cost is due to the increasing rate of constant supervision for inmates needing 24 hour watch relating to mental health issues or drug/alcohol withdrawal issues.

The 2013 Dutchess County budget included just over \$2.8 million for anticipated overtime and \$4.2 million for inmates housed in other county facilities.

“These continuously increasing costs demonstrate the importance of moving forward to address the costly issue of housing-out inmates,” said Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro. “The County Legislature made the necessary decision in June with the bipartisan authorization to enable us to enter the Project Definition phase for the potential development of a new transition facility in Dutchess County. This will enable us to achieve short term savings as we head into 2014 through the

utilization of temporary POD housing as well as long term savings with a more efficiently designed jail/transitional center.”

The Dutchess County Legislature authorized a \$1.2 million bond in June with bipartisan support for a Project Definition Phase, following the Dutchess County Criminal Justice Council’s recommendation for the construction of a new, larger jail facility to address the long- term issue of housing out inmates and expansion of its nationally-recognized Alternative to Incarceration programs. The Project Definition phase will include a comprehensive assessment of Dutchess County’s criminal justice system needs including the necessary number of beds, types of housing units needed for various special populations, recommendations for specific evidence based programs and services needed in the transition center to address behavioral and criminogenic issues. Additionally the assessment will include a detailed analysis, to be done in conjunction with the New York State Commission on Corrections, to determine a final staff to inmate ratio that can be achieved in a modern design facility. Using new design concepts, it is believed the County can improve its current 1 to 1.3 staff to inmate ratio, which is one of the highest in New York State, to potentially a 1 to 3 ratio, which has been achieved in other facilities throughout the state.

During the Project Definition phase, the County will pursue temporary housing at the current jail facility on North Hamilton Street in the City of Poughkeepsie. The temporary housing, known as PODS, will allow inmates to be housed in the County, providing savings of more than \$2 million a year. Temporary housing will also provide inmates with the opportunity to participate in various rehabilitation and Alternatives to Incarceration programs that they are currently unable to access in out-of-county facilities.

The County is currently working on site plan development for the temporary POD housing and is coordinating with the New York State Commission on Corrections for approval of those plans.

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