

**SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE  
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
CALLED BY THE CLERK AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHAIR  
HELD AT THE  
PUTNAM COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER  
112 OLD ROUTE 6  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Thursday                      March 15, 2012                      7:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Conklin. The Sheriff's Color Guard presented the flag. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Karl Rohde, Putnam County Director of Veterans Affairs. Upon roll call, Legislators Tamagna, Oliverio, Othmer, Albano, LoBue, DiCarlo and Chairwoman Conklin were present. Legislators Gross and Birmingham were absent. Also present was Legislative Counsel Van Ross.

Chairwoman Conklin opened the meeting by thanking the Sheriff and the Sheriff's Color Guard. She stated that 2012 is a historic time for Putnam County. Putnam County is celebrating its Bicentennial. In marking our 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, a very busy Bicentennial Committee has been working diligently to plan numerous events all over the County. June 12<sup>th</sup> is the actual anniversary of Putnam County becoming an independent municipality. There will be many activities planned for that date including the opening of our time capsule. This year also marks another historic event in Putnam County. For the first time ever we have a woman as the Chair of the Legislature and as County Executive.

Chairwoman Conklin further stated that the Legislature and the residents eagerly await County Executive Odell's first State of the County Address. Not only will she let us know the current status of the County's affairs but she will also present us with her future vision for the County, what initiatives she will be bringing forward and what she plans to accomplish during her tenure.

Chairwoman Conklin then introduced Deputy County Executive Bruce Walker to begin the 2012 State of the County Address. Mr. Walker introduced all the elected officials in attendance, all of the County's Department Heads and representatives from outside organizations whose organizations will be a part of the State of the County Address.

Mr. Walker continued by introducing a simulation of a video arraignment. He introduced Judge James Reitz who presided over the arraignment and Assistant District Attorney Lisa Orlando, along with Patrick Brophy from the Putnam County Legal Aid Society, Undersheriff Convery and the "Mayor of Whoville", a/k/a, the Director of Personnel, Paul Eldridge.

After the video presentation, Judge Reitz stated that this state of the art technology has so many applications for so many departments. Money and time can be saved. Employee productivity can be increased by not having to go to court. This also solves many safety issues involved in transporting inmates to court hearings and appearances. He then introduced the County Executive, MaryEllen Odell.

County Executive Odell presented the Legislative Clerk with the Administration's Annual Report. She further stated that the vision for her Administration is to promote a transparent, effective and honest local government dedicated to meeting the needs of its citizens. To achieve this goal, her strategy is to effectively manage our assets and optimize the use of our resources. It is a misconception that the State

funds County programs. The reality is that the County funds State programs. Putnam County can fund all our services including all of our outside agencies if we did not have to pay Albany's bills. If the Revenue and Operating expenses were to remain on the current path, the County's General Fund Balance will be drawn to zero within five years.

County Executive Odell continued by stating that the County's sales tax is up slightly due in part to the increased price of gasoline and fuel oil. Residential property values have decline and assessment roles have fallen which is driving property tax revenue downward. State and federal reimbursements are decreasing and Albany is shifting costs to the counties. Medicaid costs and projected statewide pension expenses along with other unfunded state mandates require reform in Albany. The 2% property tax cap that claims to protect New York State taxpayers is actually resulting in counties having to drain their fund balances to zero. Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Erie Counties are already in trouble. The County does not have the time to wait for Albany to fix what is broken. The only way the County can survive this economic challenge is by resetting County government and taking control of what is ours to control by effectively managing our assets and optimizing the use of our resources.

County Executive Odell stated that all of the resolutions she was forwarding to the Legislature for approval had to meet one or more of the following criteria: It must

- a. Optimize resources
- b. Manage assets
- c. Be a public/private partnership
- d. Decrease expenses
- e. Increase revenue

County Executive Odell forwarded the following resolutions to the Legislature in concept and requested that they expedite their review and approval:

- a. Resolution Supporting the Consolidation of the Department of Social Services, mental Health and the Youth Bureau
- b. Resolution Supporting the Consolidation of Highways & Facilities with Planning, Development and Public Transportation
- c. Resolution Supporting the Expansion of the Office for the Aging Space
- d. Resolution Supporting the Liquidation of 34 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, New York
- e. Resolution Supporting Leasing a Portion of the Former Butterfield Site
- f. Resolution Supporting the Use of Project Agreements for Major Construction Projects
- g. Resolution Supporting Improved Notification to Local Contractors of Economic Opportunities
- h. Resolution Supporting a New Direction of Tourism Promotion
- i. Resolution Renaming Route 301 to Hudson River Turnpike
- j. Resolution Promoting Mentoring Day
- k. Resolution Supporting the Women's Resource Center
- l. Resolution Supporting the Creation of an Emergency Storm Response Task Force
- m. Resolution Supporting the Tax Assessment Coalition
- n. Resolution Supporting the Governor's Mandate Relief
- o. Resolution Promoting Sales Tax Free Holiday Through Home Rule Legislation

County Executive Odell welcomed Ms. Libby Pataki. She stated that Mr. Kevin Bailey and the EDC has supported Ms. Libby Pataki to be the Project Director of the Putnam County Visitors Bureau.

County Executive Odell again thanked Chairwoman Conklin and the Legislature for hosting her State of the County Address. She also thanked the dedicated law enforcement personnel, the fire and EMS personnel and all the individuals and volunteers who protect the residents of Putnam County. Sheriff Smith has reported to the Administration that according to the DCJS statistic, Putnam County is now ranked number one as New York State's safest county.

She concluded by stating that God bless America and keep safe all those serving in the Armed Services both at home and abroad. She also thanked the Stephen P. Driscoll Memorial Pipe Band to welcome an early St. Patrick's Day.

Chairwoman Conklin thanked the County Executive for her State of the County Address. The Legislature will work the Administration and give careful review to the resolutions presented this evening. She requested any Legislator who wished to make a comment to come up to the podium.

Legislator Albano stated that he looks forward to reviewing the resolutions in Committee.

New York State Assemblyman Steve Katz stated that he is working diligently in Albany to provide true mandate relief.

Legislator Tamagna stated that he wished to congratulate the County Executive on a brilliant Address. The media promotes "gloom and doom". As the County Executive said, we have so much to be grateful for here in Putnam County. We have more opportunities than other counties and we are small enough to manage our resources. We have talented people with core values. The Legislature is ready to work with the Administration to accomplish our goals.

There being no further business, at 8:15 P.M., Legislator Tamagna made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Oliverio. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Marrone, Clerk.