

**BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
HELD AT
PUTNAM GOLF, INC.
187 HILL STREET
MAHOPAC, NEW YORK 10541**

Thursday

October 3, 2019

7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. by Chairman Castellano who requested that the Director of the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency, Karl Rohde lead in the Pledge of Allegiance and Legislator Sayegh lead in the Legislative Prayer. Upon roll call, Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairman Castellano were present. Legislator Addonizio was absent. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

Item #3 – Committee to Meet with the County Executive and the Commissioner of Finance to Discuss the Proposed 2020 Budget.

Chairman Castellano introduced Commissioner of Finance, William Carlin.

Commissioner Carlin introduced the elected officials and representatives in attendance, individuals running for office, Putnam County Justices, party chairs and Election Commissioners. Commissioner Carlin then introduced County Executive MaryEllen Odell for her Report of the 2020 Executive Budget.

County Executive Odell presented her 2020 Budget Message which was the Administration's 8th Budget Address (copy attached).

County Executive Odell stated that the budget meets the needs of the citizens of Putnam County and as always is delivered and adopted before Election Day. She stated that her Administration has always shown a strong commitment to Putnam County's Financial Health such as; Debt Management, Pension Amortization and maintaining the General Fund. She stated that during her Administration the County has always maintained the Aa2 credit rating. She stated that this year the County has been upgraded to the superior rating of Aa1; which is only held by five (5) counties in New York State. She explained how the County received this rating. She also stated that Putnam County recently issued \$3.3 million in refunding bonds; saving taxpayers \$151,000.

Highlights of the County Executive's Presentation included a breakdown of expenses. She stated that \$9.1 million was designated to fund Quality of Life Services such as; \$5.2 million for Parks & Recreation, \$700,000 for the Youth Bureau programs and \$1.5 million for Outside Agencies. County Executive Odell highlighted many of the Outside Agencies such as; the libraries, Community Action Program (CAP), Putnam Arts Council, Putnam Humane Society, Putnam History Museum, Putnam County Fish & Game, Southeast Museum and Cornell Cooperative Extension. She explained that the Putnam County SPCA would receive an additional \$36,000 in the 2020 budget which would allow them to move into a new office. She stated that the budget also earmarks \$12.1 million for Infrastructure Maintenance & Improvement such as; \$2.8 million for Putnam Moves Transportation System and \$3.8 million for Maintenance of Roads & Bridges. She stated

that Putnam County also has an estimated \$53 million budgeted for projects over the next few years. She stated that there is \$1.6 million budgeted for Snow Removal. She explained that the budget includes \$25.1 million for Health & Education such as; \$5.7 million for Immunizations, Environmental Services, Public Education & Awareness and Solid Waste Management & Recycling Program, \$10.6 million for Early Intervention – Pre-K and \$3.2 million for Community College. She stated that there is \$37.9 million earmarked in the budget for Public Safety such as; \$20 million in the Sheriff's Department which includes Road Patrol, Civil, Bureau of Criminal Investigations, Narcotics and Youth & Community Services. \$10.6 million for Jail which is a State mandated facility and \$4.5 million for the Bureau of Emergency Services which includes the 9-1-1 Dispatch. She explained that with the closure of Indian Point scheduled for 2021, the Bureau of Emergency Services will face financial challenges as the closure will remove over \$400,000 in annual revenue. She stated that \$38.8 million designated in the budget for Economic Assistance and Promotions such as; \$523,000 for the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the Putnam County Tourism Department. She explained that another Economic Assistance and Promotions example was Medicaid for \$9.6 million which is 100% mandated. She stated that it is the largest line item in our budget that we have no control over.

County Executive Odell continued and stated that the budget also includes \$42.3 million for General Government Support. She provided a description and a breakdown of the following services: \$5.7 million for Retiree Health Care, \$29.6 million for County Departments & Support Services and \$7 million for Debt Service. She stated that the total expenses are \$165.3 million. She stated that of the \$165.3 million amount, \$113.6 million are for mandated services, which the County has no control over. She explained that the balance of \$51.7 million are for discretionary services.

County Executive Odell continued with the revenue sources and explained how the budget is balanced. She explained that \$3.1 million will come from Fund Balance, \$23 million from Department Revenue, \$30.2 million from State & Federal Aid and \$44.6 million from Real Property Tax. She explained that there was a need to increase property tax since expenses have mostly been driven by mandates that increase every single year. She explained that for the 8th year in a row, Putnam County will meet the New York State Tax Cap. She stated that Sales Tax Revenue will be \$64.4 million. She explained the numerous factors that influence, both positively and negatively, the sales tax revenue.

County Executive Odell believed that the budget checked all the boxes by delivering Quality of Life Services, provides mandated services, provides the needs of employees and retirees, it keeps Putnam healthy and maintains a fiscally responsible vision. She also mentioned some of the important initiatives such as: the Household Hazardous Waste Day, the PILOT Program (Putnam Invests in Leaders of Tomorrow), Veteran's Day weekend where we will be remembering the historic event which took place 100 years ago. She invited residents to attend the event at 2:00 PM on the Historic Courthouse steps, as the Chairman of the Putnam County Legislature and the Putnam County Veterans' Service Medal Advisory Panel issue medals to our Veterans who served our nation with honor and dignity. She also requested help to support Putnam County Veterans by supporting the nationally recognized Row of Honor by purchasing a flag in honor of a loved one.

County Executive Odell ended her presentation by thanking the Legislature for their support and hard work. She stated that the Administration will be available to the Legislature during their review of the budget and will respect any modifications they wish to address. She acknowledged the Department Heads and especially the employees who work every day to do their very best for this County. She stated that we are blessed to have a tremendous team of bright and articulate individuals who deliver the services, that we together believe are important to the quality of life, to the taxpayers of Putnam County who we serve. She stated that she was honored to serve the people of Putnam County and honored to work with such fine people.

Chairman Castellano thanked County Executive Odell for her presentation on the 2020 Tentative Budget. He stated that we look forward to reviewing this proposed budget in the Legislative Committee meetings that are scheduled this month. He explained that there will be a public hearing after this meeting. It will give the public the opportunity to make comments on the proposed 2020 Tentative Budget.

Legislator Montgomery recognized Philipstown Judge Camille S. Linson who was not mentioned at the beginning of the meeting.

There being no further business, at 7:33 P.M., Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.