PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE
TENTATIVE BUDGET
AS PRESENTED BY THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
HELD BY THE
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
TO BE HELD AT
PUTNAM GOLF, INC.
187 HILL STREET
MAHOPAC, NEW YORK 10541

Thursday October 3, 2019

(Beginning at 8:00 P.M. or immediately following Budget Presentation)

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 P.M. by Chairman Castellano who requested Legislator Gouldman lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. 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.

Chairman Castellano requested that the Clerk read the Public Notice (attached).

Chairman Castellano stated that anyone who wished to make any comments about the 2020 Tentative Budget should come up to the microphone, state their name and the town in which they reside.

Kathleen Foley from Legislative District #1 stated that the County Executive said that she and the Legislature takes into consideration our public employees. She stated that the Sheriff's Deputies do not have a contract and she was not sure if the other unions had contracts. She believed that the needs of our public employees were not being met. She explained that they were the employees who run the snow plows and patrol cars. She stated that the County eviscerated the health department by removing the WIC program (Women, Infants and Children); now privatized. She stated that in the midst of an opioid crisis, all evidence shows that the answer is a public health. She did not see where the County has the interests of public employees or public health in mind. She hoped that the Legislature would reconsider the choices being made. She stated that it is the public employees who are actually serving the people of this County.

Scott Reing from Legislative District #7 stated that he believed CSEA, PCSEA and deputies deserved contracts. He stated they are the ones out doing the work. He stated that he is the Chairman of the Democratic Committee; however he did not believe it was partisan to say that our police officers, dispatchers, laborers or workers deserve a contract. He stated that even though he has a position that is not a partisan position, he believed if people were putting their lives on the line they deserved a contract. He stated that he was sure that everyone sitting in this room respects our police; however we have nine (9) individuals who have the ability to show their respect by voting. He stated that the PowerPoint presentation stated that we are providing for the needs of employees and retirees. He stated that one way of providing needs for employees is to support them

financially and fairly. He stated that he is also a tax attorney by trade. He stated that there was a 28% debt reduction over 8 years which amounts to approximately 3.5% annually. He stated that having the general fund reduced by 11.8% over a one (1) year period, yet our debt reduction overall has decreased 3.5% annually, he stated that he did not care what credit bureaus give ratings, he did not believe this was good economics. He stated that a 2% property tax increase from 2018, 2019 and 2020 is much greater if you compare it to the 2011 budget. He stated that it is not a 2% increase over that budget, but a 2% increase over an increased budget year after year. He stated that the numbers do not work long term. He stated that we have to make them work or else we will be in trouble whether we get good ratings from credit bureaus or not.

Legislator Sullivan thanked the individuals for coming to the meeting tonight and for their feedback; we do appreciate it. He also thanked the County Executive and her staff for working so hard to provide us with what looks like a very sound and fiscally responsible budget. He stated that we looked forward to going through the budget in great detail, looking at all line items and seeing if we think there is any need for change.

Legislator Montgomery thanked everyone for attending. She thanked the County Executive for the Budget Presentation. She stated that she hoped that we come to a point where we can bring you closer and come to the table with our public and have a budget where we can provide for you as well. She stated that her hope for this budget, which she will advocate for, is the priority of our County employees and the need for a contract, but also the need for climate action and the need to combat the opioid crisis. She stated that she has not seen yet in the budget where we have increased our funding to address these issues. She was hoping we could reconsider putting some funding towards dealing with both these issues.

There being no further comments on the proposed budget; at 7:47 P.M., Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislators Nacerino and Sullivan. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.