

**PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE
TENTATIVE BUDGET
AS PRESENTED BY THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
HELD BY THE
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
HELD IN THE
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Thursday

October 5, 2023

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

The meeting was called to order at 8:11 P.M. by Chairman Jonke who requested Legislator Ellner lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Addonizio, Nacerino, Ellner, Castellano, Sayegh, Crowley and Chairman Jonke were present. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

Chairman Jonke requested that the Clerk read the Public Notice.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Budget and Finance Committee of the Legislature of the County of Putnam will hold a Public Hearing on the Tentative Budget for the year 2024 on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at 8:00 P.M., or immediately following the County Executive's Budget Presentation to the Committee, whichever occurs first, at the Historic Courthouse, Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, New York.

NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN that any interested persons may review a copy of the Tentative Budget for the year 2024 at the Office of the Clerk of the Putnam County Legislature, Room 321, 40 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, New York, any time during regular business hours after October 2, 2023, or on the Putnam County Finance Department's website by close of business day October 3, 2023.

BY ORDER OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Diane Schonfeld
Clerk of the Legislature

Chairman Jonke stated that anyone wishing to speak this evening on the proposed 2024 Tentative Budget, he requested that they come up to the microphone, state their name and the town in which they reside and to please fill out the same information on the sign in sheet on the podium.

Jeff Mikkelson from the Village of Cold Spring stated that he is the Advocacy Chair on the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce Board. He proceeded to read a letter that was signed by the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce and 25 Putnam County businesses. The letter urged the Putnam County Legislature to renew and make permanent the sales tax revenue sharing that was enacted by the County last year by Resolution #133. The letter explained that Resolution #133 of 2022 called for \$5 million of the County's 2021 sales tax revenue to be allocated to towns and villages for use on projects related to

infrastructure, mental health, substance abuse, food insecurities, and other local priorities. In their view, the temporary revenue sharing was a success and the letter identified areas throughout the County where these funds were allocated. They believed that by allowing local governments to help by directing surplus funds where they are needed most would be good not only for municipalities, but for the County as a whole.

Eliza Starbuck, Village of Cold Spring Trustee, stated that she was excited about the proposal for the Municipal Partnership Initiative Program, and how the funds would be shared in a more effective way than it has been done perhaps in the past. She stated that they were looking forward to seeing how that would work and how they would apply for it. She stated that the Village of Cold Spring has a tight budget and a small staff. She stated that they have one (1) person to manage their finances. She stated that they do not have a grant writer or anyone that could put together complex plans. She stated the current Mayor has made a big push to add engineering expertise. She stated that they do not have a lot of resources to build plans and most of their budget is to maintain a status quo. She stated that they are sitting on a crumbling infrastructure and do not have the appropriate staff to address it. She stated that they would do everything in their power to apply for the Municipal Partnership Initiative funds, but she wondered if there would be any staffing support to help the municipalities that do not have the staff to put together an effective plan that would be competitive with a larger municipality. She explained that they are currently experiencing stormwater drainage issues and they do not have the funding to address it. She stated that they are in need funding and/or staff to work through these problems.

Kathleen Foley, Village of Cold Spring Mayor, stated that in speaking about stormwater damage, they are currently working with a consultant that was identified by the County. She stated that they are working with one (1) of the members of the Meridian group through a different corporation that he has. She stated that he has been invaluable, and they have their site visits scheduled for tomorrow. She stated that they have received strong support from the Bureau of Emergency Services and the County Executive's team. She believed that they were finally in a position to put forward a problem request to FEMA. She stated that if it wasn't for the County Executive's staff and our Legislator, we would not have had that connection. She explained of the positive shift in how they are communicating with the County, and there has been direct engagement with Department Heads. She thanked the County Executive for selecting Barbara Barosa as the Commissioner of Planning. She stated that Ms. Barosa has been a fantastic partner to the Village of Cold Spring in the last year. She stated that she was deeply disappointed to see the consolidation of Transportation positions into one (1) position and the salary bump for that particular employee. She stated that they still do not even have signs on the Trolley.

Larry Wiesler from the Town of Philipstown, stated that he has resided in the area for 21 years. He stated that he was excited about the County Executive's transparency plan that will be coming out in 2025. He believed it would help to better understand how government works. He looked forward to understanding how Deputy County Executive Burpoe helped to streamline the budget in saving money. He stated that for the size of our County and with the infrastructure we have, he believe the budget was high.

There being no other member of the public that wished to speak on the proposed 2024 Budget, at 8:31 P.M., Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislators Nacerino and Ellner. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.