

**PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
ON THE  
2019 TENTATIVE BUDGET  
AND  
REPORT OF THE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE  
TO BE HELD IN THE  
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE  
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

**Thursday                      October 25, 2018                      7:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Castellano who requested Legislator Albano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Scuccimarra, Gouldman, Addonizio, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairman Castellano were present. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

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

Chairman Castellano stated that this Public Hearing gives the Legislature the opportunity to hear from you, the public, about your views of the proposed 2019 Tentative Budget. Your concerns are very important to us and it is our responsibility to approve a fiscally responsible budget that provides for the health, safety and quality of life for our residents, while also not exceeding the tax cap. I would ask that anyone wishing to speak regarding the proposed 2019 Tentative Budget should come up to the microphone, state their name and the town in which they reside. Please keep in mind that there is no comment period for the Legislators and therefore no cross discussion. If you do have a question, please leave your name and contact information with the Clerk and we will get back to you promptly. This Public Hearing will assist the Legislature in making informative decisions during our Legislative meeting on Tuesday evening, October 30<sup>th</sup> when we will Adopt the Budget.

Janet Gomez Canaday, Town of Carmel resident, stated she is a Putnam County employee and the CSEA President. She stated CSEA contract negotiations started with the County on February 15, 2017. She stated the CSEA wanted to start negotiating earlier. She stated there were multiple cancellations by the County and the County was not prepared to discuss proposals during early negotiations. She stated the CSEA and the County met with a mediator in July 2017 and then followed the procedures recommended by the mediator and met with the County several times, the last being June 28, 2018. She stated the members of the CSEA need a fair contract. She read a paragraph from an article that appeared in the Putnam Examiner newspaper on October 24, 2018. She stated that she wanted to clarify some of the statements made in the article and proceeded to do so. She stated the next meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2018. She stated in the 2019 tentative budget there is no proposed increase in CSEA salaries. She stated there is a 2% increase for management positions, as there has been for the last two (2) years. She stated she was advised that the Legislature would be mad if there was a CSEA rally outside this meeting, but that is not their intention. She stated the CSEA members feel disrespected and are upset that the contract process has taken so long.

Laura Bromfield, Town of Kent resident, stated she works at the Putnam County Department of Social Services (DSS). She stated she would be reading from a package put together by the service workers at DSS in response to County Executive MaryEllen Odell's statements regarding staying under the tax cap and reducing the County's short and long-term debt. She stated it is disheartening that the County Executive is sacrificing county employees to help balance the budget by saving money that should be covering an expired CSEA contract. She stated CSEA workers have been without a contract since 2016. She stated the Legislators received a 14% raise in 2017 and management has received 6.375% from 2016 to 2018, along with an additional 2% slated for 2019. She stated other workers throughout the State have settled their contracts already. She stated the cost of living has continued to rise while their wages have remained the same. She stated the Donald B. Smith Campus buildings are very old and an unhealthy environment to work in. She stated there was a new worker who quit due to her doctor's concerns over mold and her allergies. She stated employees have expressed concerns over the working conditions. She stated the DSS office has dirty, worn carpeting that has not been repaired in over 20 years. She stated people continuously tripped over this carpeting. She stated the restrooms are in deplorable conditions. She explained many of the conditions and stated there is only one (1) remaining working sink and four (4) stalls in the main restroom, for over 60 employees. She stated in the past the building has had mice and bats, but the workers have carried on. She stated the building is barely handicap friendly. She believed the buildings used more by residents should get priority in renovations. She stated there has been no talk of renovating the DSS building. She stated visitors have commented on the state of the building. She stated there is only one (1) visiting room for children to play in and it is small, with inadequate ventilation. She stated despite the fact that employee morale is at an all-time low, they continue to show up and take pride in their work.

Frank Caruso, Vice President of the PCSEA (Putnam County Sheriff's Employee Association), stated the budget address failed to mention that there are three (3) County Unions currently without a contract. He stated the County and CSEA have reached an impasse in negotiations. He stated the Putnam County PBA (Police Benevolent Association) has a PERB (Public Employment Relations Board) action against the County and is currently awaiting a decision by the Public Employer Relations Board. He stated the PCSEA is currently in its second year without a contract and the County has yet to negotiate. He stated PCSEA lawyers have contacted the County to set up negotiations but there has been no response, and this has been detrimental to the morale of the union members. He stated that there is a reason Putnam County ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> in New York State property taxes. That statistic is built on the backs of the hardworking men and women of the County workforce.

Todd Schmidt, Regional Vice President of CSEA, stated he is not a Putnam County resident. He stated the CSEA members deserve a fair contract. He believed that the apparent working conditions expressed earlier were unacceptable. He stated it is the Legislature's responsibility to fund these areas appropriately, whether they are working conditions, fair raises, etc. He requested that the Legislature urge the County Executive to get this contract settled.

Jane Meunier, Local CSEA President for Putnam County, stated she has been Local President for 22 years and a County employee for 32 years but is not a resident. She believed that the Legislature should be a part of the contract negotiation process. She stated the unions in the County, along with management, are the ones who make the

County work. She stated a few years ago the terms of the retirement health insurance were changed. She stated CSEA wants to be treated fairly. She believed that the nepotism in Putnam County is out of control. She stated everyone needs to work for a common goal for a better Putnam County.

Anthony Adamo, CSEA Statewide Political Action Committee Chairman and Ulster County resident, stated all public workers provide services to the community. He stated he would like the Legislature to help the union negotiate a contract. He requested the Legislature urge County Executive Odell to put forward a contract for ratification.

Lynne Demagouchi, Mahopac Resident and County Employee, stated she works with abused children. She questioned who cares for the workers who take care of everyone else's children and elderly.

Lionel Turner, President of the Yonkers School District, stated that the American workers are the backbone of our economy. He stated that when workers are not treated fairly, it has a direct impact on the economy.

John Stein, Westchester CSEA President and Town of Kent Resident, stated he is shocked at how the workforce is treated. He stated this is about fairness and they deserve a raise.

Chairman Castellano thanked the public for their comments and stated they will be taken into consideration. He stated the public can feel free to reach out to the Legislative Office anytime.

There being no further business, at 7:29 P.M., Chairman Castellano made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Edward Gordon, Administrative Assistant.