

Regular Meeting of the Putnam Town Board

PUTNAM TOWN BOARD
SEPTEMBER 8, 2016
7P.M. PUTNAM TOWN HALL

The meeting opened with the auditing of bills, the Supervisor's monthly report and the Town Clerk's monthly report.

7:00 Meeting called to order

Councilwoman Shirley Randall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Members present:	Supervisor	John LaPointe
	Councilman	Greg Harris
	Councilman	Kevin Hart
	Councilwoman	Cathie Burke
	Councilwoman	Shirley Randall

Others present: Mary Jane Dedrick (Deputy Town Clerk, P.O. Box 14), Gary Treadway (Highway Superintendent, Treadway Lane), Cee McKenzie (BAR Chair, 526 Gull Bay Road), Bob Rudt (Planning Board, 526 Gull Bay Road), Bert Windle (Resident, 5209 Sagamore Road), Wayne Busby (Planning Board, 11 Charter Brook Lane), Dennis Johnson (Putnam Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief, 17019 State Route 22), Peggy Ives (Resident, 13 Notch Hill Lane), Bob & Sandy Coulter (Residents, 3512 Gull Bay Ridge Way), Peter Leyh (Resident, 5560 Evergreen Shores Way), Mike Fordyna (Address unknown)

Resolution # 80

Accept the minutes of the August 9, 2016 joint meeting of the Town Board & Planning Board

On motion of Councilman Greg Harris, seconded by Councilwoman Shirley Randal; Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution # 81

Accept the minutes of August 11, 2016 meeting

On motion of Councilman Greg Harris, seconded by Councilwoman Shirley Randall; Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution # 82

Accept Supervisor's monthly report for August 2016

On motion of Councilwoman Shirley Randal, seconded by Councilman Kevin Hart; Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution # 83

Accept Town Clerk's monthly report for August 2016

On motion of Councilman Kevin Hart, seconded by Councilman Greg Harris; Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution # 84

Pay bills as audited

On motion of Councilwoman Cathie Burke, seconded by Councilwoman Shirley Randall; Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolved, the bills on the following are paid as audited.

General Fund	# 268-293	\$20,321.06
Highway Fund	# 121-142	\$12,840.71
Royal Anchorage Sewer Dist.	# 2	\$6212.92

Correspondence (7:02)

New York State

Correspondence from New York State, states the equalization rate will remain at 100%

Royal Anchorage Sewer District waste water inspection report

The waste water was deemed acceptable and in compliance.

E-mail from Meghan (Tobin) Gudelsky received Monday September 5, 2016

The body of the email, as read into the record by Supervisor LaPointe:

Dear John LaPointe, Shirley Randall, Cathie Burke & Kevin Hart,
My name is Meghan Gudelsky and I have loved Gull Bay all of my life, until this summer. John, as per our conversation in July, my family experienced the ugliest of encounters with the Head Life Guard at the Bull Bay Beach. I will not recount the entire experience as we did on the phone, but my intention of this letter is threefold.

One is to provide a summary. I have two children, three years old and fifteen months old. As I arrived at the beach with my children in July, the head life guard immediately and aggressively approached us. She loudly raised her voice to "take that and that" off of my children. Please see attached photos labeled "Coast Guard Approved Flotation Device" and "Bathing Suit". She then proceeded to tell me that I was against New York State Law to wear such devices, which is completely untrue. She then had the audacity to tell me that she "did not want to have to go in and rescue them". Is this how you want tourist to be treated? The entire situation defied all rationality and safety, not to mention caused me mental stress and anguish, all while we are supposed to be enjoying our summer vacation. Needless to say not only was the experience far from pleasant, but completely unsafe.

Two, John explained to me that the "rule" of no flotation devices (including life jackets) was devised because "it gave children a false sense of security" and "he didn't want parents falling asleep on the beach

while their children are in the water”. I understand that floats (such as rafts and tubes) are prohibited. Items that are blown up and can pop, none of which are essential for children learning to swim or overall safety. All other beaches on the lake not only allow but also encourage life jackets and floatation, for the safety of the community. There has to be a misunderstanding somewhere along the line. For the Gull bay Beach to prohibit Coast Guard Approved Floatation Devices, including Life Jackets, is grossly negligent by design.

Three, my intention of writing you this letter is to ask the group collectively, to look at the rules that are in place. As it stands, you are cultivation a very dangerous environment. Not only is the negative, negligent and boorish attitude of your lifeguard infecting the natural beauty and serenity of the gorgeous bay, but also you are enticing a tragic accident to occur. In good conscience, I could not move forward from the summer without writing a written plea for you to revisit your rules. I guarantee if you take your own children or grandchildren to your beach (especially if they are learning to swim), with the rules you currently have in place, instinctively you would change the rule immediately, as it is inherently dangerous.

(A full copy of the email and photos can be viewed at the Putnam Town Hall during the Town Clerk’s regular office hours)

Courtesy of the floor (7:05) (4 minute time limit)

Bob Coulter addressed the board saying that Megan Gudelsky is his niece. Mr. Coulter stated his niece has been coming “up here” for four or five years renting from (unintelligible), spending a lot of money. Mr. Coulter said he’d been coming “here” since he was 8 years old and he has never seen the conditions of the beach as it was this year citing the attitude of the Head Lifeguard. “They’ve become, excuse the expression, like the Gestapo and people are actually afraid to go to the beach”. Mr. Coulter stated the Town has spent a lot of money to build the beach and to have people with “this attitude is wrong”. He stated he believes the beach has gone beyond “common sense rules” and the life guard is trying to dictate people’s every move. He added “I don’t think it’s right”. Mr. Coulter said the beach was set up so that the part beyond the ropes could be used to beach a kayak. **Supervisor LaPointe** responded that kayaks should be launched at the boat launch. Mr. Coulter stated he didn’t think that was right. Mr. Coulter also inquired about the beach closed sign that was occasionally put up on part of the beach, and under whose authority the sign was put up under. **Supervisor LaPointe** responded when there was only one lifeguard half the beach is closed. Mr. Coulter further said that Adirondack Camp kids used to come to the Putnam Beach on paddle boards, but no longer do that because they have been forced to use the same area as power boats. Mr. Coulter closed by saying “ I think you have to look at the whole situation and how it’s deteriorated, thank you”.

Bert Windle (7:10) referenced a discussion about the trailer ordinance, and the use of trailers in Putnam, at the previous month’s meeting. He said he’d been asked by a number of people in the LCP (Lake Communities of Putnam) if any direction has been given to the Code Enforcement Officer regarding the septic of the trailers that have been “popping up”. Mr. Windle also referenced a property that had five separate buildings built on sleds, presumably to avoid taxes. The property is on Evergreen Shores Way off from Sagamore Road. Mr. Windle stated it had been brought to him so that he could bring it to the attention of the board. Mr. Windle raised the point, whether a building is a trailer or on skids, the people using those structures still need to use a bathroom, making septic an issue. **Supervisor LaPointe** responded the Code Enforcement Officer is, and will be, checking on those issues. Mr. Windle then visited the topic of school tax and the current situation regarding a refund as a result of some figures not being handled correctly, a new company is now handling the figures. “That brought people’s attention to the tax issue again” resulting in the following questions being raised. Do we have a contract with the new assessor, and if we do is that contract available for public viewing? **Supervisor LaPointe** responded that Mr. McCarty is hired for a salary of \$18,000 a year. Mr. Windle asked what Mr. McCarty does for that salary. Supervisor LaPointe listed Mr. McCarty’s duties as revaluing properties once a year; he assesses values to new

structures and buildings. Mr. Windle stated “we would like to know what he does”. Mr. Windle brought to the discussion the topic of new docks that were put in Glenburnie three years ago, and then in turn sold. Mr. Windle stated “they still haven’t been put in the tax rolls”. The docks are attached directly to the land. Supervisor LaPointe asked where those properties are, Mr. Windle stated “Davis property”. Mr. Windle said that the previous assessor always placed a value on docks, or covers and never had any arguments from the people; they all agreed there was a value to the docks. Councilman Hart clarified that those docks were sold to people who had properties; the docks were to be attached to the deeds of those properties and cannot be resold solely as docks. Mr. Windle pointed out that others who have docks are paying taxes on those docks, but the docks being discussed remain untaxed. The next issue brought to the board by Mr. Windle was the Eliopoulos lawsuit and the current status of that lawsuit. Supervisor LaPointe answered the inquiry by saying that particular issue was still in litigation. Mr. Windle then inquired about the Adirondack Camp owned by Alex Levitch and Linda Goodwin. (Mr. Levitch built a house and separated it from the Adirondack Camp property for estate reasons) Supervisor LaPointe responded that case has been to court, testimony has been taken from assessors on both sides of the case, and it’s now in the judge’s hands. Mr. Windle continued in years past people have gotten renovation on their houses. In years past when renovations were done properly there was a building permit and the assessor was notified for reassessment of the property. Mr. Windle asserted that now renovations are being done without permits hence no changes on the taxes. Mr. Rudt added to the discussion saying the planning board had 3 site plan reviews this year, and he believes there is a lot more “going on” than what’s being tracked. He added Mr. McCarty has no way to keep track of that, as for the assessor he only has three properties on paper to go and look at. Mr. Rudt added there is a “big disconnect” regarding that issue. Supervisor LaPointe pointed out there is certain criteria to require a permit; also, the town doesn’t police what people do to the inside of their homes, renovations can be done inside without a building permit. He went on further to say that the Code Enforcement Officer should be involved in additions. Mr. Windle raised the topic of the equalization rate. Mr. Windle said he checked the equalization rate in Dresden for 2016/2017 and it’s still at 46%. He went on to say the assessor that approved a rate increase for people on Lake George in the Town of Putnam has never changed the value of properties in Dresden. Supervisor LaPointe responded that there is a formula used to multiply those numbers. Bob Rudt joined the conversation saying “you’re incorrect” adding a piece of Lake Front in Putnam is worth \$8,000 a foot according to the assessor, a piece of Lake Front in Dresden is worth \$5,000 a foot. Councilman Hart joined the conversation by suggesting the Assessor be invited to a meeting or a forum to take questions and explain how taxation of the properties works. Supervisor LaPointe said he would invite Mr. McCarty to next month’s meeting for that purpose.

Peter Leyh (7:20) Mr. Leyh began by complimenting the work being done on the Town Hall. He continued saying he thought now would be a good time to install an overhead device to project things like maps and documents so that everyone in a meeting could view what’s being discussed, particularly at Planning Board meetings. Mr. Leyh asserted that everyone attending meetings are not always aware of particular areas that are being discussed and that it would be helpful to assist people in fully understanding discussions. Mr. Leyh then turned his topic to the beach. He said he noticed the bathrooms at the beach are in “bad shape”. He suggested perhaps volunteers could be used to paint and fix the bathrooms. Also, Mr. Leyh said he’d taken on the responsibility from the LGA (Lake George Association) of sampling water running into Lake George from the streams. Those samples will be tested for organisms in the streams; those organisms will be analyzed by a company in Syracuse to determine what those streams are bringing into the Lake. Mr. Leyh brought up the issue of having some mud removed from the boat launch so that the boats can get in and out. Mr. Leyh suggested contacting Dave Decker (Program Manager, Lake George Watershed Coalition) to ask him to assist in taking out the mud and debris that prohibits boat launching, adding that Mr. Decker is extremely difficult to contact and get a response from. He continued by asking Supervisor LaPointe to try to contact Mr. Decker. Supervisor LaPointe advised Mr. Leyh to contact Ronald Conover (Committee person of the Lake George Watershed Coalition, Bolton Town Supervisor). Supervisor Lapointe also said he deals with Randy Rath (Lake

George Association Project Manager, GIS Coordinator). Supervisor LaPointe said he'd contact Randy Rath. Mr. Leyh said he would also contact Ronald Conover.

Dennis Johnson (7:35) Assistant Fire Chief (AFC), Putnam Volunteer Fire Department, AFC Johnson reported that the Fire Department had 10 Calls in the month of August, 2 fire calls, 8 EMS calls for 31 man hours. 88 man hours for standby for Bucket's Bog, 157 man hours in drills for August. The beginning of September, 64 man hours on a forest fire, also a call for Lake Champlain for a boat on fire. The Fire Company did not have access to the boat that was on fire, which raised the question how would EMS get a person from Champlain? AFC Johnson asked for donations for a small boat for the purpose of rescue from the Lake Champlain. AFC Johnson reported the Fire Department received a grant for \$74,000 for air packs. Also in August, the insurance company audited the firehouse. The only thing the insurance company noted was that the firehouse didn't have any smoke alarms in the building. (Chuckles from the audience) he went on to say the insurance wants a monitor system. Mr. Windle asked AFC Johnson to write a letter to be distributed to various monitor companies in search of donation.

Highway Department Report (7:40) Highway Superintendent (HS) Gary Treadway reported the stock pile was finished. The roadside mowing was finished for the season. The 550 pickup was repaired; the bill will be coming next month. HS said he was still looking for a truck; he felt taking local bids would be beneficial as there wasn't much savings from using the state contract. He would like to put the truck purchase in the paper for bid, interested parties could contact him for the specs. Bidding would end before next month's meeting then brought before the board for approval. Mr. Windle suggested contacting Elise Stefanik's office to inquire about homeland security grants that might apply to the current need in the highway department. HS Treadway continued next week the highway department would resume work on the Cummings Park completion.

Planning Board Report (7:45) Bob Rudt reported the coming meeting for the planning board would consist of the White property, also Royal Anchorage. He expected it to be a big meeting, as some of the properties on the agenda have been in the works for several years. Mr. Rudt raised the issue of the planning board struggling to make quorum as there are members who do not regularly attend coupled with the vacant seat. Supervisor LaPointe offered to send a letter to members stating expectations of board members. Councilman Hart suggested the Town Board should get a list of the roll call from the Planning Board meetings, so the Town Board could deal with the individuals not attending.

Old Business (7:55)

Cummings Park

Supervisor LaPointe reported that the park is moving forward. The fencing to separate the property has been ordered. The crossing arms are installed. Mr. Windle suggested photos of the park be posted on the Town website.

Town Hall Repairs

Supervisor LaPointe reported an oak floor was installed in the meeting room. The kitchen, Clerk's office, bathrooms and hall have new tile. The meeting room and hall have been painted; the two porches have been replaced. The roof will be repaired in November.

New Business

Planning Board Interviews

Supervisor LaPointe reported interviews for the Planning Board applicants will be conducted September 12, at 3pm.

Budget Workshop 2017

A budget workshop will be held September 12, at 4pm following the Planning Board interviews.

Courtesy of the Floor Revisited (7:59)

Bob Coulter revisited the lifeguard “situation”. The board agreed that before the 2017 summer season the rules will be reviewed.

Bert Windle complimented the boat launch and thought it was working well; he also suggested the beach rules be posted on the Putnam Town website.

Bob Rudt added that he had tenants that commented on the number of rules imposed on visitors , and the trouble at the beach was not isolated to just one or two people.

8:20 motion to adjourn

On motion of Councilwoman Cathie Burke, seconded by Councilman Kevin Hart;

Meeting closed at 8:20 pm.

Next meeting October 13, 2016 at 7pm

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Kerr
Putnam Town Clerk

John LaPointe _____ Supervisor

Greg Harris _____ Councilman

Shirley Randall _____ Councilwoman

Cathie Burke _____ Councilwoman

Kevin Hart _____ Councilman