

**Public Hearing of the Putnam Town 2021 Budget  
Public Hearing of Local Law #2 of 2020 Exceed the Tax Cap  
&  
Regular Meeting  
of the  
Putnam Town Board  
October 8, 2020 6:30 P.M. - Putnam Town Hall**

**6:30 P.M. Meeting called to order**

Supervisor Darrell Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

**Members present:**

Supervisor Darrell Wilson  
Councilman Christopher Mallon  
Councilwoman Carole Schneider  
Councilman Larry Shiell  
Councilman Charles Bain

**Others present:** Mary Jane Dedrick (Deputy Clerk, P.O. Box 14), Gary Treadway (Highway Superintendent, Treadway Lane), Peter Leyh (Resident, 5560 Evergreen Shores Way), Bob Coulter (Resident, 547 Gull Bay Road). **Present via ZOOM:** Cee McKenzie (BAR Chair, 526 Gull Bay Road), Bob Rudt (Planning Board, 526 Gull Bay Road), May Drinkwine-Shiell (Resident, 439 County Route 3), John Breitenbach (Town Attorney, 23 Father Jogues Place, Ticonderoga, NY 12883), Nancy Wolf-Fisher (Resident, 5183 Sagamore Road), Dave Manchester (Resident, 5177 Sagamore Road), Galen Seerup (Planning Board Chair, 17360 State Route 22),

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2021 TENTATIVE BUDGET (6:33)**

Supervisor Wilson called the public hearing to order. Budget Officer John LaPointe covered two possible budgets, one based on the Fire Departments increase of 35.5% should it be approved by ballot in November, and one based on a standard 2.5% if the increase does not pass on the ballot. Supervisor Wilson opened the floor for comments. Bob Rudt commented first. Mr. Rudt expressed concern about salary increases. Supervisor Wilson explained looking at the trend lines and what has happened in past years the wages are relatively flat. Mr. Rudt commented he did not feel the members of the Board had been serving long enough to merit an increase in wages. Dave Manchester commented he noticed an increase of over 10% for health insurance. He inquired about the carrier and asked if any other options have been explored for better rates. The Town Clerk answered Mr. Manchester explaining the only employees on the Town payroll who get health insurance are the men at the Highway Department. Their insurance is provided to them through the Union, who self-insure. The Union does not give members a choice of insurances, and members are forced to participate in the Union's plan. May Drinkwine Shiell address the Board saying she felt sometimes people ask questions that she felt did not get answered before moving on. She felt this was the case with Bob Rudt's question about an increase in salaries. Supervisor Wilson displayed graphs, prepared by Councilman Mallon, giving a visual comparison of salaries over time, and that they have been relatively flat. Councilman Mallon expressed that the Board never had a

discussion about an increase of their salary, the increase was in the prepared budget presented to the Board. There was never an intentional move by the Board to give themselves raises.

Councilman Shiell commented “I’m not here for the money”, Councilman Bain, Councilwoman Schneider, and Councilman Mallon all agreed.

**Resolution #96**

**Remove Town Board & Planning Board salary increases from the 2021 budget**

On motion of Councilman Larry Shiell, seconded by Councilwoman Carole Schneider; all in favor. Resolution unanimously adopted.

Salary increases for the Town Board and Planning Board will be removed from the 2021 budget by order of the Putnam Town Board.

Supervisor Wilson asked if there were any more comments, there were none.

Public hearing closed at 6:59 P.M.

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING ON LOCAL LAW #2 EXCEEDING THE TAX CAP (7:00)**

Supervisor Wilson opened the public hearing. Supervisor Wilson explained that Local Law #2 of 2020 would allow the budget of 2021 to exceed the tax cap imposed on municipalities by the State. He continued that this is necessary if the Fire Department’s 35.5% increase passes on the ballot in November. Local Law #2 of 2020 would be in effect for one tax cycle only. Supervisor Wilson opened the floor for comments and questions. There were none.

Public Hearing closed at 7:01 P.M.

**OPEN REGULAR MEETING OF THE PUTNAM TOWN BOARD**

**Resolution # 97**

**Accept the minutes of the September 10, 2020 meeting**

On motion of Councilman Chris Mallon, seconded by Councilman Larry Shiell; all in favor, Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Resolution #98**

**Accept the Budget Officer’s report for the month of September 2020**

On motion of Councilman Charlie Bain, seconded by Councilwoman Carole Schneider; all in favor, Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Resolution # 99**

**Accept the Town Clerk’s report for the month of September 2020**

On motion of Councilman Larry Shiell, seconded by Councilman Charlie Bain; all in favor, Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Resolution #100**

**Accept the Town Justice’s report for the month of September 2020**

On motion of Councilman Chris Mallon, seconded by Councilman Larry Shiell; all in favor. Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Resolution # 101**

**Pay bill as audited**

On motion of Councilman Larry Shiell, seconded by Councilman Charlie Bain; all in favor, Resolution unanimously adopted.

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

General Fund	# 258-280	\$9714.82
Highway Fund	# 90-94	\$242,919.32

**Correspondence** (7:04)

None

**Courtesy of the floor** (7:04)

Supervisor Wilson opened the floor with condolences to Irv Cumming's family. He continued, Mr. Cummings was a long-time member of the community and a leader in the Church, "our thoughts and prayers go out to his family".

Peter Leyh advised the Board, in a rather humorous way, that a backhoe that had been parked on Sagamore Road and has garnered many complaints from Sagamore Road Residents in recent years, has been removed from the property. He indicated the residents are "delighted" over the equipment removal. Mr. Leyh suggested the Town may want to look at regulating equipment, old cars, trailers etc. From being stored on property for extended periods of time. Mr. Leyh changed topics addressing his recent visit to Cummings Park. Mr. Leyh complimented the park on its beauty and suggested a community gathering at some point in the future when it's feasible. Mr. Leyh also suggested a deck with chairs so that residents can sit and enjoy the beauty overlooking Lake Champlain. Councilman Shiell replied to Mr. Leyh that there is a Parks and Recreation Committee working on long term plans for development at the park. Councilman Bain, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, advised that some of the items Mr. Leyh had suggested are indeed items on the Committee's list of things being considered.

Supervisor Wilson thanked Mr. Leyh for his input. Dave Manchester joined the conversation saying he concurs with Mr. Leyh's assessment of Cummings Park, and that he would take part in a community gathering. He also agreed that residents are very happy with the removal of the backhoe on Sagamore Road. Mr. Manchester echoed Mr. Leyh's assertion that regulations regarding nuisance properties would not be "unreasonable".

**Highway Report** (7:07)

Highway Superintendent (HS) Gary Treadway reported the crew worked on Liddle-Harris Road taking care of brush and problem trees. The crew also worked ditching and trimming on Peterson Road. There are additional areas that need trimming and ditching, the crew will continue to work at. HS Treadway continued they are preparing for winter, hauling stockpiles on rainy days, and preparing the equipment for winter. HS Treadway reported the equipment is in good shape and he is not anticipating any problems. Councilman Shiell asked HS Treadway if he could straighten some of the road signs as they are working around Putnam, for aesthetic purposes. HS Treadway agreed that could be done.

**Planning Board report** (7:13)

Planning Board Chairman Galen Seerup advised the Planning Board meeting has not yet taken place this month, he anticipates a heavy agenda this month, with a returning application and a subdivision.

**Fire Department report** (7:14)

Councilman Shiell reported the Fire Department is having an open house on Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 A.M. Supervisor Wilson encouraged everyone to attend to hear what the FD has to say so that they can

make an informed choice on November 3. Bob Coulter suggested the FD use the marquee in front of the firehouse to advertise their open house saying it was blank when he drove by.

**Old business** (7:15)

**Local Law #2 of 2020 Exceed the tax cap.**

Supervisor Wilson re-introduced Local Law #2 of 2020 recapping it's intended purpose. Should the Fire Department's increase request pass by proposition on the ballot on November 3, it will be necessary to exceed the tax cap imposed by the State on municipalities. Should the proposition not pass, Local Law #2 of 2020 will lay dormant until it expires at the end of the 2021 budget cycle.

**Resolution #101**

**Motion to adopt Local Law #2 of 2020 Exceed the Tax Cap**

On motion of Councilman Larry Shiell, seconded by Councilman Charlie Bain:

**Roll Call**

Councilman Christopher Mallon	YES
Councilman Larry Shiell	YES
Councilwoman Carole Schneider	YES
Councilman Charlie Bain	YES
Supervisor Darrell Wilson	YES

All in favor; Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Real Property Tax Law 487** – Supervisor Wilson reviewed RPTL487. Real Property Tax Law 487 incentivizes commercial solar projects by exempting them from Real Property Taxes. Opting out of RPTL487 under the Home Rule Law would eliminate the Real Property Tax exemption in Putnam. A discussion took place about the positive and negative effects of opting out.

**Resolution #102**

**Opt out of Real Property Tax Law 487**

On motion of Councilwoman Carole Schneider, seconded by Councilman Larry Shiell:

**Roll Call** (7:18)

Councilman Christopher Mallon	YES
Councilman Larry Shiell	YES
Councilwoman Carole Schneider	YES
Councilman Charlie Bain	YES
Supervisor Darrell Wilson	YES

All in favor; Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Garbage sticker price increase** – Supervisor Wilson reviewed the history of the garbage program in Putnam. Sticker prices have remained the same price since the inception of the program. Currently the garbage collection program in Putnam runs at a deficit of over \$20,000 annually. Wheelabrator has notified the Town that the price per ton of garbage disposal will increase. The price of a sticker would increase from \$1 per sticker to \$2 per sticker effective January 1, 2021. The increase would alleviate the operating deficit of the garbage collection program in Putnam. Councilwoman Carole Schneider expressed concerns about raising sticker prices along with the potential tax increase if the Fire Department's increase passes on the ballot. Ms. Schneider also pointed out that some people may use the increase as an excuse to begin dumping along the roadsides in Putnam. Councilman Charlie Bain

commented that it's still more expensive to use a service, even with the price increase. Councilman Larry Shiell raised the issue of the age and size of the current garbage truck, noting that a replacement will be necessary in the near future. Highway Superintendent Gary Treadway joined the conversation saying the truck is an 18 cubic yard model year 2003. He stated it is still a good truck, however with the age of the truck it is reasonable to expect maintenance costs to increase as time passes, also, Putnam has outgrown the small truck, when a purchase is eventually made a larger capacity truck should be considered.

**Resolution #103**

**Increase the price of a garbage sticker to \$2 (two dollars) January 1, 2021**

On motion of Councilman Christopher Mallon, seconded by Councilman Charlie Bain;

**Roll Call** (7:25)

Councilman Christopher Mallon	YES
Councilman Larry Shiell	YES
Councilwoman Carole Schneider	NO
Councilman Charlie Bain	YES
Supervisor Darrell Wilson	YES

4 – YES

1- NO

Resolution adopted.

**Champlain Hudson Power Express** – Supervisor Wilson gave an update saying that CHPE was approved by the State to begin preliminary work to prepare for the power line to exit the water to land. The powerline itself has not been approved by the Canadian government. Supervisor Wilson showed a PDF presentation of the project itself, and the path it will take through New York State. 47 Miles of the project will be within Washington County. Supervisor Wilson spoke about negotiations with CHPE, stating some towns downstate have negotiated PILOTs (Payment in Lieu of Taxes), however Putnam does not have the authority to negotiate a PILOT. The Warren Washington County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is the only entity that has the authority to enter a PILOT with a project such as this. Supervisor Wilson has been in communications with the IDA, Ellen Smith and the County. CHPE has already engaged with the IDA in Washington County. A PILOT has advantages such as a guaranteed rate of return. Supervisor Wilson put the scope of the project as it relates to Putnam in perspective, pointing out the small percentage of the project that goes through the Town of Putnam.

**New Business** (7:50)

**New York State Legislation, Emergency Plan for Public Workers**

Supervisor Wilson advised the Board he had attended a webinar about the requirements of the legislation. The Town must develop an emergency plan to protect essential public workers in future emergency situations. The State will prescribe what will be in the plan, and the plan must be completed by April, presented to the Union by March for review. Supervisor Wilson advised the Board that the County is working on a plan that Putnam will use with some revision.

Councilman Shiell thanked Councilman Mallon for his work in preparing the visual history of salaries, and stated he hopes Councilman Mallon can do the same for the Fire Department.

Supervisor Wilson asked if there was any other comments or questions. There were none.

**Resolution #104** (7:57)

**Adjourn the regular meeting of the Putnam Town Board**

On motion of Councilman Christopher Mallon, seconded by Councilman Bain; all in favor.  
Resolution unanimously adopted.

**Regular meeting of the Putnam Town Board adjourned at 7:57.**

**Next meeting November 12, 2020 at 7P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Darlene Kerr  
Putnam Town Clerk

Darrell Wilson \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor

Christopher Mallon \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman

Larry Shiell \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman

Carole Schneider \_\_\_\_\_ Councilwoman

Charles Bain \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman