

Special Meeting
Of the
Putnam Town Board
July 28, 2020 at 7p.m. - Putnam Town Hall/Zoom

7:00 Meeting called to order

Supervisor Darrell Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

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|-------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Members present: | Supervisor | Darrell Wilson |
| | Councilman | Christopher Mallon |
| | Councilman | Larry Shiell |
| | Councilman | Charles Bain Sr. |

Others present: Mary Jane Dedrick (Deputy Clerk, P.O. Box 14), Gary Treadway (Highway Superintendent, Treadway Lane), John LaPointe (Budget Officer), Carole Schneider (Resident, 358 Pulpit Point Road), Bert Windle (Resident, 5211 Sagamore Road). **Present via ZOOM:** William McCarty (Putnam Sole Assessor), 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), Jodi Frasier (President, PVFD, Resident 123 Hutton Square Road), Cory Granger (PVFD, Resident, 123 Hutton Square Road), Sue Tucker (Treasurer, PVFD, Resident, 104 County Route 2), Daniel Tucker (Chief, PVFD, Resident, 104 County Route 2), Allen Moore (Planning Board, 974 County Route 2), Mike Wallace (2nd Lieutenant PVFD, Resident, Clemons Lane), Mike Bruce (PVFD, Resident, 104 Putnam Center Road), Chris Grill (PVFD, 202 Schwerdtfeger Road), Mike Alteri (PVFD, address unknown), Kahley Alteri (PVFD, address unknown), David Hayes (PVFD, Resident, 560 Gull Bay Road), Brett Moore (PVFD, Resident, 1007 County Route 2), Allan Johns (PVFD, Resident, 108 County Route 2)

Supervisor Wilson opened the meeting by introducing Jodi Frasier the Putnam Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD) President.

Ms. Frasier spoke for several minutes reviewing the Fire Department's 2021 budget, speaking specifically to the following points.

- 2020 Budget was \$122,555.67.
- 2020 Budget without fundraising is approximately \$14,000 in the red.
- Unplanned truck repair pushing the shortage to \$17,000.
- 2121 proposed budget \$161,000.
- No major updates to the building expenses. Utilities relatively unchanged.
- Building maintenance, relatively unchanged.
- Loans from the Town, \$29, 733 current balance with a \$10,000 per year payment.
- 2121 budget allocates \$0 to building maintenance and repairs.
- Fire Protection costs increased \$5728.21 for new members turnout gear.
- \$6,000 combined with a \$6,000 grant from IP for digital radios, equaling \$12,000 in expenditures for digital radios, expected expense for radios in 2021 \$6,120.
- Truck 431 unplanned repair \$12,000.
- 2121 budget has \$15,000 for truck repairs
- 432 Vehicle payment \$30,640 per year
- 435 Vehicle payment \$10,100 per year

- Ms. Frasier stated that the Fire Department did request, and received, a 27% increase in 2018, with a 2% annual increase, but the Fire Department has been unable to get out of the red without using fund raising money. Fund raising monies should not be used for operating costs, but thus far the FD has had to use fundraising money to support operational expenses of the Fire Department.

Ms. Frasier advised that the Fire Department will be pursuing 2 grants in 2021. One grant is for an inhouse washer for turnout gear, with a cost of \$38,000, if awarded the grant, the FD would be responsible for \$1,900. No expected maintenance costs thereafter were provided by the FD.

Line items not included in the proposed 2021 Fire Department budget.

- Truck replacement fund
- Building maintenance fund
- Funds covering grant requirements

Budget Officer John LaPointe explained that the Town gave the Fire Department two separate loans on two occasions at 0% interest. After the second loan, the annual payment to the Town was increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000 annually. The Town Board concurrently increased the annual payment to the Fire Department by \$10,000, the amount of the loan payment. The loan payment was structured so as to not have a negative impact on the Fire Department's "in hand" funding. The increase was not intended to remain in the funding, but was intended as temporary assistance to help the Fire Department cover the loan payments. The Fire Department currently has just over \$29,000 remaining on their loan balance with the Town.

Supervisor Wilson expressed concerns about the discussion jumping over capabilities and going straight to financing. There appears to be unanswered questions. Going forward there will be discussions about, for example, why does the department need five trucks? Can the Putnam community sustain that level of equipment going forward without significantly hindering the taxpayers? He stated no one is disputing that fire fighters need protection and equipment. A discussion about actual requirements and what can be afforded will be a part of later discussions. Sizing capabilities to what can be afforded is a missing step in the current discussion that needs to be addressed in future discussions.

Councilman Chris Mallon asked Ms. Frasier if they had comparisons to other companies of similar size from towns of similar size. He expressed he would like to see comparisons like how many and what type of trucks, how many members, what their location is like etc.

Cee McKenzie joined the conversation stating that it would also be of interest to know what kind of calls and how many calls those comparison departments have. Ms. Frasier replied that David Hayes was collecting that data for the FD, and his findings will be shared.

Supervisor Wilson expressed that the Town's budget has a mandated cap of 2%, equaling approximately \$18,000 for the Town's 2021 budget. Out of that \$18,000 mandated contractual salary increases are paid, along with standard budget inflationary increases. Other than these few increases the Town's budget remains flat. The increase sought by the FD exceeds expected increased collections of the standard 2%, pushing the increase to just over 4%.

Town Attorney John Breitenbach recommended the Town Board enact a local law to exceed the tax cap if the Town budget will be over 2% with the added increase of the fire services line. He stressed that time may be an issue for proper procedure.

Putnam Sole Assessor Bill McCarty advised that the Town get the actual number for the tax cap, "2%" is a generic term used for the cap. The State has a formula used to determine the actual percentage a town's

budget should meet. The actual number may be lower/higher than 2% after using the formula to determine the actual percentage applicable to Putnam.

Bob Rudt inquired about a possible penalty for exceeding the tax cap. No one in the discussion knew if, or what, the potential penalty for exceeding the tax cap might be, that is to be determined.

Resolution #79 (9:09 pm)

Place the Putnam Volunteer Fire Department 2021 budget request of \$161,000 on the November 3, 2020 ballot with approved ballot language

Approved language:

“Yes” vote approves the Putnam Volunteer Fire Department request of \$161,000 for the 2021 budget. This request represents a \$38,000 dollar or 31% increase from the 2020 budget (\$122,600). This increase raises the individual fire tax rate from 42 cents to 56 cents per thousand.

“No” vote approves a budget of \$125,052.00. This budget represents a 2% increase from the 2020 budget (\$122,600)

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

Resolution #80 (9:32)

Enact a Local Law #2 of 2020 allowing the Putnam Town Budget for 2021 to exceed the State mandated tax cap, up to 5%

On motion of Councilman Charles Bain, seconded by Councilman Larry Shiell; all in favor

Roll Call:

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Darrell Wilson | Aye |
| Councilman Christopher Mallon | Aye |
| Councilman Larry Shiell | Aye |
| Councilman Charles Bain | Aye |

Resolution unanimously adopted.

Resolution #81 (9:40)

Adjourn the special meeting of the Putnam Town Board

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

Special meeting of the Putnam Town Board adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Kerr
Putnam Town Clerk.

Darrell Wilson _____ Supervisor

Christopher Mallon _____ Councilman

Larry Shiell _____ Councilman

Charles Bain Sr. _____ Councilman