

Good Morning Putnam, Township Board

Good afternoon,

I am saddened and disappointed that the Township is not willing to participate in the proposed joint Township / Village meeting on public safety. The purpose of the meeting was not to commit either community to creating a police authority. It was simply an opportunity for elected officials to sit at the same table, answer questions, receive public input, and begin an honest conversation about the long-term public-safety needs of our shared community.

I would also respectfully remind the members of the Putnam Township Board that Village of Pinckney residents and businesses pay Township taxes. They are Township taxpayers, and their concerns and public-safety needs deserve to be heard and considered.

In fact, Village residents and businesses contribute approximately **one out of every five dollars** collected through Putnam Township's general operating and fire millages. Village residents and businesses also pay Village taxes that support the Pinckney Police Department. At the same time, their Township tax dollars help support the Township's contract for 40 hours per week of Livingston County Sheriff's Office patrol coverage, at an annual cost of approximately \$154,000.

Village taxpayers make a significant financial contribution to public safety and other services at both levels. They deserve a voice when the future of those services is being discussed.

I also want to clarify that I was asked to prepare the letter / agenda regarding the proposed joint meeting and send it to the Township Clerk. I did exactly as I was asked. It is disappointing when statements are made without all the facts, especially when I am making a good-faith effort to reach out and work together.

This proposal was never intended to be a short-term fix. It was an effort to begin looking at what public safety should look like in the Village and Township five, ten, and twenty years from now. Both communities will face rising costs and the possibility of reduced revenue. Simply raising taxes is not a sustainable solution.

For too long, difficult conversations have been delayed and important decisions pushed further down the road. At some point, community leaders must be willing to put their differences aside, review the facts, listen to their residents, and work toward a responsible solution.

I am sorry that we do not currently see this issue the same way. I wish the Township Board nothing but success as it determines how to move forward. My willingness to work together remains because I believe our residents deserve leaders who are prepared to look beyond today's political challenges and focus on the long-term future of the entire community.

Take care,
Jeff Buerman
Village President