DEAR EDITOR:
Get the facts!
This is only my opinion but I sure hope you think about this before you vote. I am an active volunteer firefighter, and I come from a family of firefighters both past and present.
On the ballot this year there is a county-wide fire levy for one ladder truck, to be in Ottawa and 2 heavy rescue vehicles.
Ottawa feels they are in need of a new ladder truck and new heavy rescue vehicle. The other heavy rescue vehicle is to go to Kalida. They have no money to purchase these, so they want the people of Putnam County to purchase these for them. When was the last time Putnam County bought your local Fire Department a fire truck? Never. When is the last time you saw the need for a ladder truck at a residential house fire? While the truck may be old, it is still operational; it is available to the entire county at this point. There are several neighboring counties that have ladder trucks and are there for mutual aid. As far as being turned down for the use of their ladder truck, this was in instances where it was in use somewhere else. This could occur in Ottawa as well. That is what mutual aid is for.
Why do the people of Putnam County need to buy a new ladder truck that may or may not be used in their fire district? What about the rest of the county? No other village has the county purchase their equipment. Do you realize that if this goes through, you may still be charged extra for the use of this truck?
As for heavy rescue trucks, they want $1.5, million for them. Seems to me the Putnam County Office of Public Safety just bought Ottawa and Kalida heavy rescue vehicles in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Their trucks are getting older but are still operational. Most of the fire departments have their own rescue equipment that was purchased on our own without any help from Putnam County.
Why do we need a countywide heavy rescue? About two years ago Putnam County Office of Public Safety was going to disband the heavy rescue because it was too expensive to operate. Now they want the taxpayers to buy two heavy rescue trucks.
They say it will cost $21.13 per year based on a $100,000 home. How many homes out there are worth more than $100,000? How will they continue to get funding for upkeep on this truck? If you do this for one department, you should do it for all the departments. I can’t see the taxpayers wanting to purchases fire trucks for everyone in the county. Maybe the rest of the county would like their insurance rating to go down also.
Get the facts about the county-wide fire levy. Support you local fire department.
Please talk to your local firemen, even those from different departments and get their feelings.
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