

2018 Budget Hearing
October 26, 2017
6:00 pm

Present: Supervisor Gerald Deming, Council Members: Lynn Parnell, Amos Smith, Norman Gates.

Absent: Frank Rose Jr.

Others: Justin Bennett, Sandra Curran (Baldwin Business Services) Henry Fuller, Kirk Richenberg

Supervisor Deming opened the Budget Hearing at 6:01pm then turned it over to Justin Bennett as a representative of the Town of York's accounting firm, Baldwin Business Services.

Mr. Bennett addressed the group this evening by stating that there are no major changes slated in the budget for the upcoming year. He went on to discuss the fund balances budgeted from previous years through the current year and projections thereafter in to 2018.

It was then that Mr. Richenberg mentioned that he was unable to follow along as the copy he was given a day before the meeting did not reflect the figures Mr. Bennett was referencing. Mr. Richenberg inquired as to what document the Board was using given the allocations and columns did not appear in his copy or the one Mr. Fuller had. It was then determined that due to printing issues there were items in the margins that were left out on the copies provided to the public. Mr. Bennett asked Mrs. Barefoot to take a moment to go in to the clerk's office to make copies for both Mr. Richenberg and Mr. Fuller along with a few additional of what he and the Board were viewing so that all in attendance this evening could follow. It was determined that the budget worksheets being used by the Board provided the fund balance that was being discussed whereas the budget book in their possession did not.

Mr. Bennett then resumed reviewing the last two years fund balances and projected numbers for 2018. It was noted that the Town would be maintaining property taxes with no increase.

Mr. Bennett provided an overview of the Highway budget stating that the Highway Department balances were healthy despite coming off the purchase for a dump truck. Mr. Richenberg asked why so much was left in the Hwy fund given there are only 2 months left in the year. Both Mr. Bennett and Supervisor Deming concurred that the balance projections he questioned were done at the initial budget meeting held in early September when there was still 4 months' worth of expenses left to uncertainty.

Mr. Fuller then asked "what the deal was with the dump truck at the Highway barn that does not have a box that George Worden has been working on for 10 years?" Mr. Worden was not in attendance this evening and the Board was unable to provide an answer Mr. Fuller's question.

6:15: Councilman Rose arrived

Mr. Richenberg asked the Board how do you want us to do this? (Referring to the questioning format this evening) Mr. Bennett reiterated to both gentleman to please ask and encouraged questions as we go.

In the General Fund, Mr. Richenberg questioned whether or not there were any employee raises budgeted. Mr. Deming stated everyone would be receiving 2% with the exception of the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk. They are currently slated to get 4%. Mr. Richenberg referenced a line item that seemed to indicate a 5.9% increase and expressed that he felt the increased amount was a bit excessive.

Mr. Fuller then asked Supervisor Deming how he arrived at that number? And additionally, Mr. Richenberg then asked, is it safe to say you are the budget officer? Mr. Deming answered him by saying "correct".

Supervisor Deming then cited that the increase in work load coupled with the wages for both being on the lower end of their counterparts in neighboring towns was a factor in the increase.

Mr. Richenberg stated that our Highway Dept was currently working with one less employee and indicated that perhaps maybe their work load had increased as well. The Supervisor stated that the (Hwy) wages are set per contract that are negotiated, approved and signed by employees and the Union.

Mr. Richenberg then questioned the increase in line item/amounts in A1620.4 which is earmarked as (Buildings Contractual.)

Councilman Smith confirmed that based on what he was seeing the numbers for this line item are consistent with previous years but had minimally increased in 2017. Again, not certain if the copy he was viewing was indeed accurate, Mr. Richenberg noted that the front page of the preliminary budget made available this evening stated "I certify this as a true and correct copy" for which Mr. Richenberg believed was not completely accurate given the confusion over the items cut off in the margins of the document. He reminded the Board that he took the time a day before to stop and pick up a copy that he used to base his questions on this evening rather than the hand out just given to him.

The discussion continued with questions regarding the term "unallocated insurance" specifically in the General account when Mr. Richenberg asked for an explanation of this line item. Mr. Bennett answered that by saying all insurances come from the General fund whether it is Highway, Water /Sewer etc. If someone was to sue the Town they would not sue the individual department it would be the Town as a whole.

In addition, Mr. Richenberg questioned why the increase in the judicial budget for the upcoming year. Supervisor Deming explained that the increased funds were for a metal detector for which NYS has required all court systems to purchase. According to the Supervisor, the Town of York is one of the last towns to comply and we will push as long as we can not to implement but ultimately, we will need to comply. Also, in some court

systems, deputies are in attendance and the additional funds budgeted could be used for that purpose if/when we are required to do so.

Mr. Richenberg was inquiring as to what A4969.4 (Other Health Contractual) was used for and Mr. Deming replied for drug testing purposes which again is a requirement.

At this time Mr. Richenberg asked who is the Clerk to the Highway Department?

Supervisor Deming replied "Patti" meaning Town employee Patti Barefoot.

Mr. Fuller then asked if part of her salary is paid from that budget? The Supervisor responded with a "yes."

Mr. Richenberg then asked why now are we using a Highway Clerk title and where did it come from?

Ms. Curran was able to provide an explanation saying that as a means to organizing Mrs. Barefoot's duties they (Baldwin Business Services) are separating it out and charging the accounts accordingly based on her titles. Mr. Bennett further confirmed this as a means of accounting practices when there are several duties involved.

Supervisor Deming stated that Mrs. Barefoot's budgeted wages for 2017 were \$27,406.00 and is projected to be \$28,648.00 for 2018 with the position being hourly not salaried.

Mr. Richenberg asked what title does this position currently have?

Both Mr. Bennett and the Supervisor answered the following:

- Supervisors Clerk
- Deputy Town Clerk
- Highway Clerk

After a long pause in the discussion, Mr. Richenberg asked if the group was waiting for more questions from him and they in turn encouraged him to continue with his questions.

At that time, he asked why there was a \$2000.00 increase in the line item A7550.4 (Celebrations)

Councilwoman Parnell responded to the question by saying that the Board increased the amount to save for the Town's upcoming Bicentennial in 2019. Mr. Richenberg replied "I don't buy it."

Mrs. Parnell continued to explain that not knowing what type of funds might be needed in an anticipation of the event they opted to start setting funds aside. She mentioned that the Valley Fest committee has been put in charge to come up with ideas for the Bicentennial. Mr. Richenberg asked if this was going to be done every year and hoped this whole budget was not put together based on decisions such as that.

Mr. Fuller inquired as to the Fire Department and asked how the Board comes up with the numbers reflected in this budget. Mr. Deming stated that it's by contract every 3 years. Mr. Fuller then said he was under the impression it was a 2 year contract and Mr. Deming confirmed that it was in fact a 3 year contract that we will be negotiating again for 2019. Mr. Richenberg asked if all increases are negotiated and Mr. Deming answered

yes to his question and they are approved by the Town Board. Mr. Fuller asked the Supervisor if this would be a public meeting to which Mr. Deming replied “yes.”

Regarding the General Fund again, Mr. Richenberg referenced an insurance line item in which an employee’s last name was noted and asked for the Board or Mr. Bennett to please explain why that appeared as well as the breakdown of figures associated with it. Mr. Bennett answered that particular line item is used for any employee that elects not to take the Town’s medical coverage offered and they are compensated a percentage under that line item. Other insurances were for the health reimbursement account which may or may not get used in its entirety noting that previous years have reflected funds left over each year.

Mr. Richenberg then asked the group to bear with him as he needed to shift gears as he continued to base his questions on the document that had been given to him the previous day rather than the one now in his possession. Mr. Bennett responded by saying that was not a problem adding that Mr. Richenberg had posed good questions thus far.

Mr. Fuller took the opportunity to ask if we ever answered the question about money from the Livingston County Highway Department. Supervisor Deming answered yes in DA2300 and suggested that they stay on one account at a time as they are bouncing back and forth.

Mr. Richenberg inquired as to the allocation DA2665 (Sale of Assets). Supervisor Deming said that the equipment is slated to go to auction but has not yet happened.

Mr. Richenberg then stated that last year you budgeted for 2 trucks, what is the status as to how this will work. The Supervisor said they should be approved potentially at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting and the funds will be taken from this current year’s budget.

Mr. Richenberg then steered the group toward the Water and Sewer portion of the budget mentioning that there is an employee’s name listed alongside the insurance breakdown and he believed he would not appreciate it...noting the name Hodges.

Ms. Curran added that her notes were inadvertently left on the work sheets but did confirm that it was the breakdown of how insurances for that particular employee was allocated and the headings on the document was an older one. She reiterated that it was done as a benefit from a bookkeeping standpoint.

Mr. Richenberg then inquired as to the increase in the Youth budget. Mr. Bennett quickly responded with the phrase “minimum wage...Cuomo...and it will be like that for the next 5 years due to the increase in minimum wage requirements.”

Mr. Fuller spoke up regarding the attendance for the meeting this evening and said “I will say it again...it would be nice if the community was in attendance for these meetings. Chrissy Harris stuck her neck out on a limb and signed her name to this document and it’s not correct. Give us what you have and stop trying to hide things.”

Mr. Bennett reiterated that all numbers in all copies provided were correct and the same except that one copy was a budget worksheet and the other copy was a budget book. Each consistent with the other just in a different format.

At that time Mr. Richenberg conveyed his dismay to the group by asking them if they understood where his frustration was coming from regarding the inconsistencies in the copies of the budget. With just being given the copy this evening he has not had chance to look at the updated document causing him to be at a disadvantage as a tax payer. In addition, Mr. Richenberg clearly expressed that the two job titles that he questioned earlier regarding their increases should be further reviewed and asked that the preliminary budget not be passed this evening. Mr. Fuller then suggested that the whole board be more involved as they seem to not know what is going on and confused with some of the evenings budgeting questions.

Supervisor took a few moments to explain the process that the Board goes through in terms of arriving at a budget that all are comfortable with presenting to the community. He noted the tentative, preliminary and adopted procedures and the dates and timelines for which they are due to be filed. Ms. Curran reiterated that the Town has followed the required procedural process and adhered to all the necessary time lines.

Mr. Bennett did give a final overview of rates based on a \$100,000.00 assessment at which time Mr. Richenberg asked what is an OCV was? Supervisor Deming responded by saying that it was an abbreviation for occupied vacant land. In addition, Mr. Richenberg asked the Supervisor if the Town still had a portion of funds going to the county ambulance to which his answer was no. It was at that time the Supervisor asked if there were any other questions.

There was one last question by Mr. Richenberg inquiring as to the Highway tax rate with Mr. Bennett calculating and providing him with an answer.

After no further discussion...

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mrs. Parnell to close the Budget Hearing at 6:58 pm. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Barefoot
Deputy Town Clerk

Special Town Board Meeting
October 26, 2017

Present: Supervisor Gerald Deming, Council Members: Lynn Parnell, Amos Smith, Norman Gates and Frank Rose Jr.

Absent: None

Others: Henry Fuller, Kirk Richenberg, Justin Bennett and Sandra Curran

Supervisor Deming open the Special Town Board Meeting at 7:00pm and noted that the first item to be discussed was the Standard Work Day Resolution previously passed at a Town Board Meeting but needing to be updated per New York State Retirement requirements.

RESOLUTION offered by Mrs. Parnell and seconded by Mr. Rose to approve the Standard Work Day Resolution based on the record of employee activity for the purpose of reporting to New York State and Local Retirement System. Voted on and approved Yes-5, No-0.

Supervisor Deming then asked the Board if they had any questions, concerns or changes to the Preliminary budget presented earlier in the evening. Mrs. Parnell took the opportunity to state that she thought they should address Mr. Richenberg's concerns over the percentage of the increase for the two employees previously discussed this evening. Mrs. Parnell asked "Is it 4%?"

Mr. Deming replied that it was 4.5%.

After no further discussion. Supervisor Deming asked the Board if they wish to proceed to adopt the 2018 Town of York Budget as presented.

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mrs. Parnell to approve the 2018 Town of York Budget. Voted on and approved Yes- 5, No- 0.

Mr. Gates- Aye

Mr. Smith- Aye

Mr. Rose- Aye

Mrs. Parnell- Aye

Mr. Deming- Aye

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Gates to adjourn the Special Town Board Meeting. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0

Special Town Board Meeting closed at 7:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patti Barefoot, Deputy Town Clerk