

2020 Budget Hearing
October 29, 2019
5:00 P.M.

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

Absent: Frank Rose Jr.

Others: James Campbell (Town Attorney) Kirk Richenberg, Henry Fuller, Vince Burroughs, Justin Bennett, Sandra Curran (Baldwin Business Services).

Supervisor Deming opened the 2020 Budget Hearing at 5:00 p.m. and asked the public to express any questions or comments on it.

Mr. Richenberg asked for copies of fund balances prepared in the worksheets. Mr. Bennett explained that the projected numbers are not official. Mr. Richenberg stated that the Town Board gets to look at the numbers why can't the public. Mr. Bennett explained the sheets are just working numbers, not projections, which are not official numbers.

Mr. Richenberg questioned from the tentative budget, the numbers have been trimmed down \$13,000.00 and asked what was altered.

Supervisor Deming and Mr. Bennett explained that some was cut in Highway brush/ weeds, personal services and \$8,000.00 in part time wages. The Supervisor stated that General is the same and in Highway what was cut was projected number of hours.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we cut back because we now have a full crew? Supervisor Deming replied, yes it was because of a full crew now.

Mr. Richenberg asked on pg. 2 of the budget under "Appropriations & Provisions", 5 water districts are listed but with no projected revenue.

Mr. Bennett answered that we were originally showing as separate districts but is now Consolidated Water. We do still separate out the different debt services.

Mr. Richenberg stated that Consolidated Water was separate districts in the 90's and McVean Road is much newer, how can you separate debt services with different interest rates.

Mr. Bennett explained in detail the breakdown of O&M and how to keep the debt services separate.

Mr. Richenberg stated that McVean Road was a separate district two years ago. Supervisor Deming stated all are part of the Consolidated Water District.

Attorney Campbell added, all are part of Consolidated Water but are set up differently/separately for debt service purposes. Any additional monies from O&M is used for typical maintenance or for future projects.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we will have a breakdown of the debt service in the budget? Mr. Bennett replied it is reflected in the budget. Mr. Richenberg questioned if it was grouped together? Mr. Bennett stated that it is in the revenue section.

Mr. Burroughs asked if the water purchase rate is the same for all? Supervisor Deming answered that the rate is the same for all customers.

Mr. Burroughs asked if the debt service is different? Supervisor Deming answered that there are different debt service amounts. We have debt service for some at \$200.00 and some at over \$500.00 per unit.

Mr. Richenberg asked for the reason for the increase on the equipment line item under Supervisor? Supervisor Deming replied for computer upgrades.

Mr. Richenberg stated on pg.4 under Town Clerk, the large increases for the Deputy and Town Clerk which are roughly 8% and 20.8 respectively?

Supervisor Deming stated that we looked at surrounding towns and payment of their staffing and felt it was warranted based on the number of years of service which is 30 years for our Town Clerk. Both the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk do a great deal of work for us and the community.

Mr. Richenberg questioned why 8% for one and 20.8% for the other? Supervisor Deming replied we felt the percentages were fair compensation.

Mr. Richenberg asked with the Supervisor's salary staying the same for a number of years at \$10,000.00 will we be looking at a huge increase for that at some point? Supervisor Deming stated he is unsure at this time.

Mr. Fuller commented that 21% is a pretty high increase what caused that much of an increase? We could have hired additional help. Supervisor Deming stated that \$32,000 for 30 years is warranted as well as the increase for the Deputy who has also been here for over 20 years.

Mr. Fuller asked what the increase was for the Highway Department? Supervisor Deming stated 2%.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg.6 "Central Data Printing" Contractual expense, why the increase?

Mr. Bennett responded, although we have not spent anything in 2019, we would have a cushion to work with.

Mr. Richenberg suggested trimming it in half.

Councilman Smith replied if we were to buy a new copier it would be quite costly, it is better to plan ahead.

Mr. Bennett commented that the General Fund balances are up from \$202,000.00 to \$231,000.00.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 7 “Constable” reason for increase.

Supervisor Deming stated we are required by State Law to have a Deputy here for court night. Currently we have 1 DA night per month but they may require a DA night to be held within a 20-day period going forward which will now mean twice per month.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 11 “Garage” expense in the amount of \$1,600.00.

Mr. Bennett stated that the expense is for mowing, split between all departments.

Mr. Fuller asked who the Clerk is to the Highway Superintendent?

Supervisor Deming replied Patti Barefoot.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 13 “Playground/Cemeteries, the \$1,600.00 amount?

Mr. Bennett replied mowing purposes.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 15 “Refuse/Garbage”, \$15.00 per hour for (2)

people at Recycling Center, is there a need for both there at the same time? Supervisor Deming answered yes, the need is there and it is very difficult to get workers and keep them at recycling.

Mr. Fuller questioned, on pg. 15 “Home/Community Services”, what exactly is this?

Mr. Bennett responded that Home and Community Services is how the State labels or breaks down the rest of the page.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we have an actual figure of how much has been spent so far on mowing?

Mr. Bennett stated that we did do a breakdown previously based on the sheets provided by the lawn care service.

Mr. Richenberg asked if the Highway budget was decreased because of that?

Supervisor Deming answered that was a factor as well as some others.

Mr. Fuller questioned once again Home & Community Services?

Supervisor Deming explained that this is only a label at the top of the page to show what categories will be following. It is not a line item in our actual budget.

Mr. Richenberg asked what it was grouped under last year?

Mr. Bennett stated that it was listed in last year's budget as well. (Mr. Richenberg then confirmed in his copy of last year's budget that it was listed.)

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 18 "Payment in lieu of Taxes"?

Mr. Bennett answered it is for WNY Enterprise.

Mr. Richenberg asked what year are they in for their abatement?

Supervisor Deming & Attorney Campbell replied they are not completely certain but believe it is year 3 or 4.

Mr. Richenberg also addressed "Non-Property tax by County"?

Mr. Bennett stated this is sales tax. Mr. Deming added it was very low last year and will be even less this upcoming year.

Mr. Richenberg asked about "Licenses & Permits"?

Mr. Bennett stated it is now getting split out more accurately in this line item.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 21 "Highway Appropriations-road repairs"?

Mr. Bennett reported that more work was done with CHIPS money on road repairs. \$191,000.00 on CHIPS was spent in 2018, in 2019 it was \$159,000.00. We are not able to roll over town money from year to year but can with CHIPS money.

Mr. Richenberg asked if \$86,000.00 is a bit high? (General Repairs contractual)
Councilman Smith replied \$86,000.00 will not go far for repairs. Any repairs can be costly.

Mr. Burroughs asked, so the work that was completed, we are done for 8 years?

Mr. Bennett stated any work completed sooner than the 8-year period will have to be paid for by town funding.

Mr. Burroughs commented if we really want to improve the roads, we need to stop putting down so much salt.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 21 "Misc. Brush" (weeds) reduction of \$8,000.00?

Mr. Bennett replied that we discussed earlier the reduction in the Highway due to mowing now and reduction in part time wages.

Mr. Richenberg questioned if we were still mowing cemeteries in 2018?

Supervisor Deming answered yes, we were mowing cemeteries in 2018.

Mr. Fuller asked if we receive reimbursement by the County if we mow their roads?

Supervisor Deming replied we do.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 22 Why a drop in NYS Retirement (DA 9010.8)?

Mr. Bennett responded that we have a number of retirees going off the books.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 23 "Distribution by County", there is a huge decrease?

Mr. Bennett stated we do not know what the County will ask of us in the upcoming year, we can't anticipate revenue.

Mr. Richenberg asked, on pg. 24 "Deputy Personal Services" (SW 8310.1b), who is this allotted for?

Ms. Curran replied the amount is for the Water/Sewer Billing Clerk, Connie Burger.

Also, on pg. 24, "SW 8320.4A" (Highway)?

Supervisor Deming stated when Highway works on Water projects, we pay back the Highway Department from this line item.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we anticipate another truck purchase?

Supervisor Deming replied Yes, we do for the Water Department.

5:55 P.M.-

Councilman Rose arrived at this time along with resident David Sliker.

Mr. Richenberg asked if this is the last year for the Fire Department Contract?

Supervisor Deming reported that it is the 2nd year. The contract will expire 12/31/2021.

Mr. Burroughs commented that the Public Hearing notice reflects that the hearing will be held to consider contracting with the Fire Department and is the reason why he is in attendance this evening. Mr. Deming stated we already contract with the department, but actual funding is addressed each year.

Mr. Richenberg questioned if we had any idea the number of Fire Department members?

Supervisor Deming answered he does not have that information.

Mr. Richenberg asked if any performance standards are outlined in the contract?

Supervisor Deming stated that we contract for fire protection service.

Mr. Burroughs stated, previous contracts stated Fire and Ambulance Service?

Supervisor Deming stated that they are now two separate contracts. Attorney Campbell added, in both contracts it does discuss if service cannot be conducted.

Mr. Burroughs asked what if they fail to answer a call?

Attorney Campbell answered there could be potential action taken.

Mr. Burroughs commented that the increase to the Fire Department has gone up \$6000 per year for years and projected further. The number of volunteers has decreased but the calls have increased, they will not be able to continue this.

Mr. Burroughs asked about a new Fire Hall?

Supervisor Deming stated that we are not financing the new fire hall.

Mr. Burroughs stated that we are getting less service and spending more money each year.

Mr. Burroughs commented that the department wants to build a 6-bay station but does not believe they can man what they have currently let alone something larger, for not providing a service.

Supervisor Deming stated to Mr. Burroughs that he is the first person that has made reference to the fact that the fire department is not making their calls.

Mr. Burroughs stated that this issue is not a local issue only, it is all over. Through no fault of their own, they can't handle the increased need for services. This is the time to look at it seriously, to pay this kind of money we need a real return.

Supervisor Deming reported that he will contact Kevin Niedermaier in the morning to inquire as to the actual numbers for calls and response in order to obtain factual information.

Mr. Burroughs commented, instead of 6 trucks that you can't man, buy 1 good one that you can. Mr. Burroughs added this is the only town that does not have a mutual aid with other towns. Some things are controllable some things are not but the Town Board can control the funds you offer in a contract. Why pump money into an organization that can't be manned.

Mr. Fuller asked if the Town Board ever received a financial statement from the Fire Department?

Supervisor Deming replied we can ask for a statement but they are not required to submit one.

Mr. Fuller commented, if they won't open up their books, what are they covering up?

Mr. Richenberg stated that you spoke of two separate contracts, one for ambulance and the other for fire, there was a breakdown of \$5,000.00, what is the breakdown of services (ambulance)?

Supervisor Deming replied that we are under contract with the County from 6pm to 6am. No money is paid to the County or York ambulance for services. The York ambulance is on call from 6 am-6pm, mutual aid is always available.

Mr. Richenberg asked if we are paying for duplicate services, which Supervisor Deming replied we are not, the county is covering.

Mr. Richenberg asked how much of the \$198,000.00 goes to the ambulance? We can't seem to chime in on financials but the Town is collecting tax money from us which funds their contracts.

Mr. Burroughs commented that we support an ambulance (through the fire department) but the fact is they are trying to run an ambulance with 3 EMT's and 4 drivers. In this budget you are handing over money to the Fire Department, hand over a little less and make them more accountable.

Mr. Richenberg stated, last year Attorney fees were listed differently. Supervisor Deming replied that we needed to breakdown the Attorney fees between water/sewer and then transfers take place.

Mr. Burroughs commented in the Public Hearing notice, in #3 of the Fire Department contract, "the Town shall be responsible for payment for injury or death of fire personnel in connection with such calls" ...you are creating a liability for the Town.

Mr. Richenberg commented he feels there are several areas (revenue from the County) that the Board could trim down for this upcoming budget.

Supervisor Deming stated that based on a \$100,000.00 home, an \$8 increase would take place in the 2020 Budget which is minimal.

After no further questions or comments from the public...

RESOLUTION offered by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Gates to close the Budget Hearing at 6:16 p.m. Voted on and approved, Yes-5, No-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine M. Harris,
Christine M. Harris, Town Clerk

