

2019 Budget Hearing
November 8, 2018
6:30 pm

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

Absent: None

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

Supervisor Deming opened the Budget Hearing at 6:30 pm and asked Attorney Campbell to read the published legal notice required on behalf of the Town of York for the 2019 Budget. Upon completion, Supervisor Deming then asked if those in attendance had any questions.

Mr. Richenberg again stressed that the Town Board should have more opportunities and time to structure budget changes despite his understanding that numbers are always fluctuating. Mr. Bennett then asked Mr. Richenberg if he was proposing that the Board should have been able to cut \$86,000 from this budget and noted that “this budget certainly does not have \$86,000 worth of fluff to cut.”

6:40 pm Justice Dan Koch arrived.

Both the Supervisor and Mr. Bennett concurred that all Town Board members have had a copy of the working budget in hand since October and that a couple of questions had already been asked by members and addressed by the Supervisor.

Mr. Richenberg asked if Supervisor Deming could share any of the Board Members questions. The Supervisor did so by noting that one in particular was in reference to the Entertainment line item.

Mr. Richenberg inquired as to the reason for the increase in that line. Mr. Deming stated that additional funds were placed there and are being earmarked for the Town’s Bicentennial celebration. If not spent, the money would then go back in to the fund balance. Mr. Richenberg asked for clarification that the funds were not being used for the York-Leicester Field Day Association held each year but allocated for the upcoming Town celebration and was given assurance that the funds were in fact for the Town’s 200th celebration.

Mr. Richenberg inquired as to a Town Board line item of 1010.4 and asked if there was any equipment purchased from this line. Mr. Bennett mentioned this was a Town Board allocation for which fees associated with schooling and publication of legal notices for town board related issues would be taken from this fund.

Mr. Richenberg then asked for an explanation for the increase in the Justice line item. Mr. Bennett replied that it was for court mandated schooling. In addition, Supervisor Deming

mentioned that we had a newly elected judge that attended school and therefore his expenses were included in this line.

Mr. Fuller inquired as to the budget allocation A7320.4 (Youth Contractual) and noted that there were no expenses in 2017 and now we have \$6700.00 in there for 2018.

Supervisor Deming mentioned that this was the Youth program that is funded jointly with the assistance of the Town and Village of Leicester. Despite other donors, the Town of York is the lead agency in terms of contributing funds and maintains all the operating costs of the program. This year, the program was able to receive donations from the WNY Cheese Plant which allowed 100 youths from YCS to participate in the annual field trip to Seabreeze Amusement Park over the summer.

Mr. Fuller inquired as to the salaries that are posted within the budget and asked why clerks were not included on the report. Attorney Campbell noted that only elected officials are required to be reported and posted. Mr. Fuller then went on to say that “he was not the swiftest” and was not sure how to read this portion of the budget. Mr. Bennett said that anything that ends in a .1 is for payroll and therefore you would be able to derive at an employee’s respective wages by reading that particular line item for each title. Mr. Fuller then mentioned that it would be easier to read a list of all employee wages and suggested that in the future one be stapled to the current elected officials list. Mr. Bennett did say formulating a list at this time would not work as the wages of those employees other than elected are determined at the Organizational meeting held in the beginning of January where people are appointed and their rates of pay are determined at that time.

Mr. Richenberg asked how the Board comes up with wage increases that we have and why the disparity in wages from the people working at Recycling from the ones that work in this office at the Town Hall. In addition, he inquired about the increase in Highway wages.

Supervisor Deming answered those questions by saying that the increase in wages stays generally at 2% across the board with Highway employees set at 2.5% per agreed upon by contract. Noting that the current Highway contract which includes W/S employees was in place until December 2019.

Mr. Fuller asked about \$500.00 for engineering fees in the General account to which Mr. Deming stated that would be for something above and beyond as most engineering fees/costs would come directly from the fund it was being appropriated to.

Mr. Fuller asked what \$4942.00 figure was in Buildings and was told it was the salary for the Town Hall Custodian. Mr. Fuller asked if “that was the same guy that changes the letters up on the board?”

Councilman Parnell replied “ No, it’s whoever rents the Hall.”

It was then noted that Councilman Gates volunteers frequently and is instrumental in getting notices up on the board for the community.

At this point Mr. Richenberg spoke up and said he would like to reiterate that the community needs to be aware as they drive by and by posting all meetings on the sign board it's extending an invitation for residents to participate in the discussion.

Mr. Fuller then addressed Mr. Bennett thanking him for providing the same piece of paper to the group this year that he and the Board were using as a guide in reviewing the budgetary figures. Mr. Fuller indicated that the last 2 years there was a discrepancy in numbers due to some having budget worksheets and others having budget history sheets.

Councilman Smith asked Supervisor Deming about the increase in the court/judicial line item. Mr. Deming mentioned it was for the addition of a metal detector as well as a deputy sheriff to man it which is required by law. The costs the for a deputy is \$40/hour incurred by the Town and primarily used for DA court nights.

Attorney Campbell did say that going forward we will be seeing more safety mandating as unfortunately it is a sign of the times and is being required from the NYS Office of the Courts Administration and not from the County level.

Councilman Smith inquired if members of the Liv Co. Sheriff's office already get paid for this service with Mr. Bennett stating no, as it's on their off hours.

Mr. Richenberg mentioned that this was similar to the SRO at a school and asked about the current dollar amount in A3120.1 noting the differences from one year to the next and wondered after listening to Mr. Campbell is \$2000.00 going to be enough.

Supervisor Deming said that the figures are based on DA night being only one evening per month and went on to explain the new centralized court arrangements in Geneseo for arraignments and bookings that judges currently do on a rotational basis lessen the need for a deputy to be here on site.

Mr. Smith asked when this would start and was told that it has been ongoing since earlier this year.

Mr. Fuller asked why a new court was necessary for our Town and the Supervisor noted that topic would be addressed as it was one of the items on the agenda for this evening's regularly scheduled Board Meeting. Mr. Fuller then wanted to know what the allocation for A1220.1A was for. Both Mr. Deming and Mr. Bennett said it was for Supervisor's Clerk Patti Barefoot. Mr. Fuller then noted the difference in the clerk's wages to that of the assessor when he is not in the office every day and the clerk is here on a daily basis. Supervisor Deming shared that the Assessor's pay is based on number of parcels.

Mr. Richenberg then expressed his excitement with our assessor by saying.. "Well then we got a good one...he found \$17 million in increases this year."

7:00 Gary and Joanne Graham arrive.

Mr. Fuller asked the Supervisor how he figures in the dollar amount for the York Fire Co. in his budget and asked if the town had the right to look over their bookkeeping.

Supervisor Deming said they he had not done a review of the fire departments accounts and noted that they usually ask for more money than they are actually given.

Mr. Fuller then asked about the Fire Dept's fundraising practices and Fire Chief Dustin Geiger was able to address those points by reiterating that they do not get the funds that they ask for as it was the departments hope for 5% in the 2019 budget. Mr. Geiger continued to say that due to numerous mandates and the increase in insurance, their costs were also rising. He asked Mr. Fuller if he had noticed all the chicken BBQ's, cash raffles, yearly parade and carnival that were done for the purpose of generating funds. Mr. Geiger also noted that all events are staffed strictly by volunteer workers. Mr. Fuller asked how many members are in the department with Mr. Geiger answering approximately 25 active members.

Mr. Richenberg looked for clarification as to the exact amount the York Fire Company would be receiving according to the 2019 budget as there seemed to be a bit of confusion with the figures that were provided in the copies distributed. Mr. Bennett and Supervisor reviewed the figures and both agreed that the York Fire Co would be receiving \$192,526.00 for 2019. Mr. Richenberg suggested that going forward a new summary page reflecting correct figures should be put together. Ms. Curran did note that the figures were correct.

Mr. Fuller then noted that under the Water and Sewer portion of the budget there are 3 different categories for a new truck. Supervisor Deming was able to confirm the planned purchase of a vehicle for the W/S Dept. and explained that it is only 1 truck but the costs are divided out as each district will pay a portion of the cost. Mr. Fuller asked what the cost of the new truck would be and Mr. Deming said around \$50,000.00 to which Mr. Fuller questioned and believed it to be much higher. Mr. Richenberg asked if the Town was replacing a vehicle in that department or adding a truck. Highway Supt George Worden who oversees the W/S Dept. spoke up and said that we have budgeted for another employee hence the new truck. The Supervisor added that we will need a new truck as we are not going to put 3 guys (employees) in 1 truck. At that time, Mr. Bennett provided the exact figure of \$57,000 that was budgeted for the new vehicle.

Mr. Richenberg directed a question to Mr. Worden regarding the purchase from the Sewer budget line item of a new separator that would be costing approximately \$80,000.00. Mr. Worden confirmed the purchase as currently this process is done twice daily manually and the new equipment will make the Sewer plant run more efficiently. Mr. Deming noted that this expense has been budgeted for years and now just being purchased. Mr. Richenberg then asked the men what the extra \$13,000 in equipment charges were earmarked for. Mr. Worden answered that the funds were to purchase pumps and for additional electrical expenses. Mr. Richenberg wondered why nothing had been budgeted for this in previous years. Supervisor said that it had just was not allocated in to the proper line item.

The group continued to discuss the differences in the allocation breakdowns within the Water/Sewer budget for contractual vs equipment noting what constitutes an expense categorized in both.

Mr. Fuller then asked Mr. Bennett about the numbers on the heading in the budget book on pg 34. According to Mr. Bennett what Mr. Fuller was referencing were dates plugged in from a computer formulation giving the dates as 9999 instead of the actual year. Mr. Richenberg interjected by questioning Mr. Bennett asking him to remind us as to how much of an increase in his accounting fees were for the coming year and saying “when I break the law I have to pay.” Mr. Richenberg then directed this to the Supervisor and said “So I’ll ask this Jerry... what are the fund balances?” Mr. Bennett asked Mr. Richenberg if he would like all of them and proceeded to provide him with \$202,000 from General Fund with \$185,000 projected to come in. At that point Mr. Richenberg looked at Supervisor Deming and said “so read my mind Jerry..” The Supervisor looked at Mr. Richenberg and stated that he knew he was being questioned as to why he was not applying the fund balances to offset the 2% tax cap spoken of earlier in the evening. Mr. Deming detailed that if he was to use the funds, he would not be comfortable with going below \$150,000. The Supervisor stated that amount was important as given the scope of the current water projects and updates we could easily need to dip in to the fund for emergency purposes.

The group continued to discuss the town accounts and the projected fund balances noting the budget being reviewed was based on Aug/Sept 2018 balances.

7:20 David Deuel arrives.

Mr. Richenberg asked if it were possible to get a copy of Fund balances for next year’s Budget Hearing. Mr. Bennett replied that you can ask but that it is not a legal document and typically not given out. Mr. Bennett did state that the information can be found online and provided Mr. Richenberg with the web site to look up fund balances in all Towns/municipalities if he wished to do so.

7:22 Jim Mayes & Larry Lacy arrive.

Mr. Richenberg asked why the Town was not using more water fund balance to offset the increases in the budget. Supervisor Deming said that Consolidated Water and Sewer is a moving target right now. Given all the ongoing projects he was more comfortable keeping it. Attorney Campbell shared an example by saying that in the midst of a local water/sewer project here in our county, unexpected expenses nearly jeopardized the project from being completed. It is scenarios such as these that can easily derail a project or cause major setbacks.

Mr. Richenberg moved on and asked where the \$250,000 payment came from for the water tower. The Supervisor replied that the town took out a BAN with Mr. Richenberg asking what that was. The Supervisor said it is a Bond Anticipation Note from the Bank of Castile. Mr. Richenberg said that Mr. Deming mentioned in an earlier conversation with Mr. Fuller that there is revenue coming from WNY Cheese... where does that come from? Mr. Bennett took that question and said the revenue is in Sewer rents. Mr. Richenberg asked where does it go under? Mr. Bennett said Sewer #1. Mr. Richenberg asked if it was the \$154,000 and Mr. Deming confirmed that it was. Mr. Richenberg

inquired in the future whether there would be separate districts for which the Supervisor replied “No.”

7:25 pm Carl Peter arrives.

Mr. Richenberg continued to ask for clarification as to what accounts the revenue from WNY Cheese is deposited in as well as operational expenses. Mr. Bennett stated that it is included in the Consolidated Water/Sewer, as it’s own district has not been established. Mr. Richenberg questioned as to why no property taxes collected yet from them but they have been using the system for 1 whole year. Supervisor explained that we could not tax them last year as the deadline for the tax roll had already been prepared.

Supervisor Deming then announced at 7:30pm that the Board would need to proceed with opening of the scheduled Town Board meeting with a continuation of budget questions allowed and with both the Public hearing and Budget Hearing to be closed at the end of the Town Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Barefoot
Deputy Town Clerk

