

DATE: OCTOBER 14, 2020

KIND OF MEETING: BUDGET

WHERE HELD: SCHODACK TOWN HALL

CLERK: DEBRA L. CURTIS

PRESIDING OFFICER: DAVID B. HARRIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: JAMES E. BULT
MICHAEL KENNEY
SCOTT SWARTZ
TRACY REX

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ATTORNEY:

COMPTROLLER: PAUL HARTER

OTHERS: DAWNE KELLY, ASSISTANT TO THE SUPERVISOR
KEN HOLMES, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT
NADINE FUDA, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ZONING

Supervisor Harris called the October 14, 2020 Budget Meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance and dispensed with roll call. All present as noted above.

Highway

A5010.4 Superintendent of Highways Contractual: K. Holmes said this budget remained static from 2020 except for a few minor decreases, such as fuel. C. Swartz asked why \$450.00 was removed for tires. K. Holmes said the purchase had been made in 2020 and was not necessary for 2021.

A5132.2 Town Garage Equipment: K. Holmes said the current phone system at the Highway Garage was unreliable. An addition was made for 2021 to replace it with a similar one to the town hall. P. Harter added it was the intention, that as the systems at the other town locations broke down, they would be replaced to match the town hall system. C. Bult remembered that the town hall system was substantially more than the amount budgeted for the Highway system and asked if the funds were adequate. P. Harter said yes as the system would be considerably smaller.

DB5110.4 Road Maintenance Contractual: K. Holmes noted that he was able to decrease the amounts for grass seed, topsoil and patching for 2021. C. Bult asked if there was an anticipated decrease in the funds from CHIPS. K. Holmes said the amount remained unchanged but in the event of a decrease, he felt a second year of decreased paving would offset the cost. C. Bult said he had received many compliments on the new method of full width paving of the roads and asked if there was a discount. K. Holmes said no but noted it was a more effective method.

DB5112 Road Construction: K. Holmes noted a slight increase was made for paving for 2021 but felt, if a reduction was needed, there would be no issue. C. Kenney saw no issue

with the increase and recommended making no change. All board members agreed. K. Holmes thanked the board for filling the vacant position at the Highway Garage as it was very helpful. C. Kenney said he had been contacted by residents about difficulty seeing down roads at night and asked what was entailed for striping all roads within the town. K. Holmes said a contractor would be hired but warned that there would be a large amount of maintenance required. C. Swartz asked, if the board chose to begin the process, what roads would they start with. K. Holmes felt roads with a speed limit of 45 m.p.h. would be best. C. Kenney felt the town-owned portion of Miller Road should also be considered. He realized that research would be needed before a decision could be made and a budget would need to be established. C. Bult asked if the town could face liability if the lines were not maintained. K. Holmes said potentially.

DB5130.2 Machinery Equipment: K. Holmes said there were only a few increases for 2021 which included parts/supplies and uniform services. He noted that the \$5,000.00 increase for parts and supplies was the first time in years and was due to an increase in truck repairs. With regard to the 2021 truck purchase, K. Holmes said the purchase would be made using capital funds and would include a custom-made shoulder machine to fit the truck. He explained the previous machine was twelve years old and worn out.

DB5140.4 Brush & Weeds Contractual: K. Holmes noted there was an increase for fuel for mowing in 2021. S. Harris complimented Mr. Holmes on the mowing and brush removal by the Highway Workers on Carney Road.

DB5142.4 Snow Removal Contractual: C. Kenney asked if the salt supply was sufficient to begin the season. K. Holmes said he did not anticipate needing salt until January 2021. He estimated having 1,000 tons currently and planned to use around 2,500 tons for the winter. Under their contract for salt purchases, they were required to buy a minimum of seventy percent of the contract but could make purchases of up to 125 percent without penalty.

C. Bult asked why the salary for wing persons for DB5142.1 was omitted. P. Harter said it was included in other budget lines. C. Bult asked, as the minimum wage was set to increase in 2021, if the hourly rate for flaggers would need to be adjusted. P. Harter said an increase to \$12.50 would be necessary. K. Holmes asked the board to consider raising the hourly rate for wing persons, flaggers and grounds employees. He noted that the wing persons and flaggers were very valuable to the safety of the highway crews and the grounds employees had plenty of work to keep them busy for forty hours a week during the summer.

K. Holmes proposed a solution for a request by B. Goodall, Director of Transfer Station Operations, for a third employee. He felt hiring an employee to cover both the water/sewer department and the transfer station would be of great benefit to the town. He explained with the added growth within the town, it was a matter of time for water and sewer districts to be extended and an additional employee that could be used for both departments would be cost effective.

Planning/Zoning

B8010.4 Zoning Contractual: N. Fuda explained that the town was seeing an increase in growth including businesses and homes. She anticipated the acquisition of the roads within the Hidden Pond Housing Development requiring the town to plow the roads. She said plans

were in the beginning stages for construction at the intersection of Route 150 and 9&20 which would require water and sewer connections. The extension of Blueberry Meadows would also require sewer connection and solar projects were in the planning process down Reno Road. She explained that funding had been encumbered since 2014, with \$20,000.00 being added each year, which was intended for use on studies to allow for further growth of the town including a GEIS study for the Route 9 Corridor. She noted that changes to the zoning code had been completed and the next step was for town board review. A quote was received from General Code which would increase the book size to a full-page version (8.5" x 11"). The estimated cost for reproduction was \$20,000.00. She added that more changes needed to be made to the town code including regulations on landfills (as the placement of fill on sites was different than sanitary landfills).

C. Kenney said he had spoken to the Town of East Greenbush regarding sewer and with the system being closed to the maximum of 45,000 gallons allowed for effluent to be sent to their sewer plant, further discussion would be needed. He noted the current agreed upon amount would need to be doubled to allow for expansion. C. Rex asked if there had been any discussion for the town to create their own sewer. C. Kenney said they were moving forward but still lacked access under the railroad tracks to continue down Maple Hill Road. C. Bult asked if the capacity from the Village of Castleton would be maxed out if the golf course on Schuurman Road was sold and developed. C. Kenney said it was dependent on the amount of homes. There was potential, with money acquired from the project for soil removal, to fund an on-site sewer treatment plant. He added that there were many proposed projects within the town and with the limited sewer capacity, further discussions would be needed.

N. Fuda explained, due to executive orders by the Governor on the Open Meetings Law, she had been utilizing a stenographer for both the Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings to create verbatim minutes. She noted that she had not placed additional funds in either the B8010 or B8020 budgets for future costs and asked if an addition was necessary. C. Kenney stated that as of the October 13th budget workshop, the meetings were open to the public and felt additional funds for a stenographer was not needed. All board members agreed.

B8020.4 Planning Contractual: N. Fuda noted this budget remained constant except for a few increases in the MS-4 Program, Tax Maps and Training. C. Swartz asked why funds were removed for the standard operating procedure (SOP). N. Fuda said the funds were incorporated into MS-4 and added that the SOP, which illustrated job duties for the Highway Superintendent and Director of Planning and Zoning, had already been completed.

Open Discussion

Revenue Forecast: P. Harter informed the board that the projected sales tax distribution (B1120) for 2020 was \$1,275,000.00. C. Kenney asked if the actual amount for 2020 was less due to COVID-19. P. Harter said, at the time of the budget preparation, the amount received for sales tax was approximately \$1,100,000.00 but advised there was more anticipated. He said this was due to commercial businesses remaining open during the pandemic and the threats of COVID-19 decreasing. C. Bult asked if the town, was or would be in the future, receiving any money from the county sales taxes collected from Amazon, Inc. P. Harter said it was his understanding that, in order for a county to receive sales tax from an online purchase, the purchaser would have to reside in that county. He anticipated potential for sales tax to be

received from such purchases but did not have an estimate.

A1450.4 Elections Contractual: C. Bult asked if the hourly rate for election inspectors would be increased to meet the state minimum wage of \$12.50. The Town Clerk said the decision would be up to the County Board of Elections but felt that it would have to increase in order to comply with state regulations.

A8389.4 Water Miscellaneous Contractual: P. Harter said, at the time of budget preparation, the amounts had not been calculated for the Route 20 water services. He noted the cost of water usage would increase from \$350.00 to \$450.00 annually and the capital charges would decrease from \$2,960.00 to \$2,008.00. He added that the decrease for capital charges was mainly due to the added revenue from previous water sales and charges for out of district users being used to offset costs for the debt service.

B1990.4 Contingency Contractual: P. Harter noted that the funding amount had been omitted for the 2021 budget. It should have been \$50,000.00. He assured the board that the amount had already been factored into 2021 the tentative budget.

East Schodack Fire District/Nassau Lake West Fire District: P. Harter informed the board that an increase of \$1,350.00 had been requested by the East Schodack Fire District for the Nassau Lake West Fire District. C. Swartz asked if the increase would affect the town budget. P. Harter said no as the districts were their own taxing jurisdictions.

Nassau Ambulance: P. Harter noted that the Nassau Ambulance also submitted a funding increase of \$1,500.00.

P. Harter stated that, based upon the 2021 tentative budget, there was \$112,000.00 remaining to keep under the tax cap. C. Kenney was pleased at the findings as this meant there was more revenue coming in to allow for a potential decrease in taxes.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business before the Board, C. Bult made a motion to adjourn the 10/14/2020 Town Board meeting at 8:28 p.m., seconded by C. Kenney, with all voting in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra L. Curtis
Schodack Town Clerk