

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steven J. Walters	Supervisor
Michael Quinn	Councilman
Cheryl Potter-Juda	Councilwoman

ALSO PRESENT: Catherine A. Rybczynski, Town Clerk; Mary Dosch, Sr. Account Clerk; Walter Rooth III, Town Attorney; Drew Reilly, Planning Consultant; Luke Malecki, Financial Consultant; Michael Williams, Police Chief; Amy Ziegler, Deputy Supervisor

Supervisor Walters calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Supervisor Walters comments that he has the proposed Budget for 2015 and he gives a copy to Councilwoman Potter-Juda and Councilman Quinn.

Supervisor Walters comments that there is a slight increase in the proposed Budget. For Village residents it is about a 3% increase and for Town residents it is about a 1.3% increase. The increase in dollars for both groups amounts to about \$12.00 for a \$100,000 home. He then explains the difference between the rate for Town and Village residents.

Supervisor Walters comments that this is the tentative Budget and now they as a group have the chance to go through it and make changes. There are a couple of new things in the Budget. In the Police Department they budgeted for three transitional Officers. The two Unions that represent the Police Department sent the Town Board a letter stating that they expect a significant amount of retirements in 2016 and asked them to hire the replacements now so they would have a chance to gain experience. After that he reminded the Police Department that the Town has a standard policy that when an Officer gives a letter of retirement they will fill the position one year prior to them leaving. Since he reminded them of that he has received three letters from the Police Department from individuals indicating that they will be retiring in 2016. It takes one year to train an Officer and they only have two times throughout the year to hire, January and August because that is when the academy is held. So, they budgeted for three transitional officers for next year. They are not permanent positions. When an officer retires and a cadet passes probation, that cadet will move up into a permanent position.

Supervisor Walters explains the timeline for hiring a Police Officer.

Supervisor Walters explains that the second expenditure, not normally in the budget, is for South Creek Road. The road is in bad condition and the Highway Superintendent has been grappling with how to fit it in the budget for a long time. What they did in the budget was to make a one-time allocation of Sales Tax to the Highway Department in the amount of \$200,000 specifically earmarked for the re-paving of South Creek Road. He then explains why South Creek is different than other Town roads.

He then explains that there was a 27% increase in the cost of salt for town roads. The experts are predicting a harsher than normal winter and a lot of the increase in the Highway Department budget is for product, such as gas, oil, etc.

Supervisor Walters explains that, while it is reflected in the tentative budget, the Town Board discussed creating an insurance reserve fund for health care. In the beginning of the year they had to do a rather large amendment to the budget because there was a spike in the Highway Department health care costs. At that point they discussed creating a reserve account for health care so that they would not have to amend the budget in the future.

Luke Malecki explains further, in the 2015 budget, the process for funding the reserve account for health care.

Supervisor Walters comments that, as pointed out in the budget letter, pension costs continue to rise. Over the last eight years they have increased to about 5 % of the total budget. In that same period the cumulative tax increase for the Town of Hamburg has gone up 5%, less than 1% a year. The entire tax increase over the last 8 years has been driven by the pension increase. There is a slight decrease this year but they are still at historic highs. This is a state mandate that the Town does not have a choice on. The State has not fully addressed the inequities of the State Video Lottery revenues that the Town continues to fight for. When the new casino was built the State told the Town that they would receive 2.5% of the net winnings. If they did receive that amount this past year it would have been over \$2,000,000 and this year the Town received around \$860,000. Other places haven't taken as big of a hit. The Upstate video lottery terminal locations took the hit. The downstate video lottery terminal locations they did not touch and the casino revenue sharing agreements they had made with those locations they didn't touch. They only went after the 7 upstate Towns. They have been fighting the State but are still receiving less than 50% of what the initial promise was. Between the loss of the video lottery revenue and the rise in pension costs the Town has lost \$3,000,000 out of a \$40,000,000 budget. That is why the increase is what it is. They have not cut any programs for seniors or youth and there were no cuts in the Police Department. The increase is in compliance with both the tax cap and the tax freeze that the Governor put into place. Mary Dosch has agreed to sit down one on one with both Councilpersons and review the budget and Mr. Malecki has agreed as well.

Councilwoman Potter-Juda comments that it would be beneficial if they could all sit down together.

Supervisor Walters responds that it would have to be a special meeting.

Catherine Rybczynski comments that it would have to be open to the public.

Supervisor Walters comments that they have called special meetings in the past to talk about the budget. After they have a chance to review it they could call a special meeting and sit down and discuss it.

Supervisor Walters comments that they were able to reduce the General fund subsidy to the Enterprise funds this year by about \$60,000. That was primarily due to the positive direction that both Woodlawn and the Ice Arena continue to move in.

Mr. Malecki comments that there are 6 people in the general fund lined up to retire and with that comes some Union mandated payouts.

Councilwoman Potter-Juda comments that there needs to be some changes in the future.

Supervisor Walters comments that over the years they have been trying to chip away at that expense. Some things they have negotiated is that some of the employees agreed to a reduced amount of accumulated sick time. The unions have also agreed to a reduced amount of comp time on hold in the bank which is paid back at retirement.

Councilwoman Potter-Juda comments that the State has put a 10% cap, for the last 3 years worked before retirement, on earnings.

Mr. Malecki comments that the Budget Hearing will be on October 27th so there will be time for the Town Board to review and meet with him and/or Mary Dosch so they could get any changes into the budget. They have until the third week in November to adopt the budget.

Supervisor Walters comments that it was filed 8 days early to give them time for review.

Supervisor Walters comments he will be introducing late resolutions calling for the Fire Budget Hearing and Town Budget Hearing both to be held on October 27th at 7:00 pm.

Drew Reilly comments that he has one resolution on the Agenda for this evening. A letter was received today from an attorney representing a neighboring property. There is no hurry on the rezoning. If they would like to table it he would have no problem with that. There are two public hearings with one on Zoning Code changes. They will be working with the Town Attorney's Office to change the format for the rezoning notices that go out to the public which are very confusing. This is a standard format letter they have used for 25 years and need to be looked at. The other public hearing is on the Code revisions and those revisions will be changing. They received comments from the Police Department and Town Clerk concerning the snow plowing code and he received some verbal comments concerning the screening of dumpster law. The dumpster law will not only affect new dumpsters but also existing dumpsters will have to conform.

1.

On a motion of Supervisor Walters, seconded by Councilman Quinn the following resolution was

ADOPTED	Ayes	3	Walters, Quinn, Potter-Juda
	Noes	0	

RESOLVED, that the Town Board move into Executive Session on a personnel matter on a specific employee for a specific department.