

Special Meeting Adoption 2011 Budget November 19, 2010 2 p.m.

Present: Sup. S. Reiter; Council Members A. Bax, M. Marra, E. Palmer & R. Winkley; Budget Officer M. Johnson; Accountant K. Farnham; Atty. M. Dowd; Highway Supt. D. Janese and Town Clerk C. Brandon.

Also Present: Bldg. Insp. T. Masters; Adm./Op. T. Lockhart; Rec. of Taxes J. Stephens; Rec. Dir. M. Dashineau; Assessor G. Virtuoso, 5 residents and 1 press rep.

The Supervisor opened the meeting at 2:02 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent reflection.

Supervisor Reiter: Today's meeting concerns the final budget with a retirement issue and a consolidation issue to assist the budget. Mr. Johnson will give a brief detail of what we are doing.

Johnson: We have a recycling district that was created many years ago. It was created based that at one time they would separate recycling from garbage pickup with a separate fee. Over the years we have accumulated about \$99,000 with interest in that account. Working with Atty. Dowd the contract originally that was there for whatever company they were going to go with at the time said refuse, garbage pickup and recycling was all in one. If we take the recycling and merge in with the refuse and call it a Refuse/Recycling District (all in one). Then we take merged money which can be used towards the garbage tax which was originally \$35.00 can be reduced to \$15.00 by doing that. Mr. Dowd researched that and also on the drainage side, we are going to take the Drainage Dept. and merge in with the Highway Dept. By doing that we will save money on overtime, etc. Mr. Dowd received word this week that we can merge the departments. The drainage is a separate dept. even though it was referred as a drainage district which it is not and it was never created. By merging we can put the personal services into one category with the Highway Supt. being able to utilize all the employees. It is a consolidation effort on our part. We had to go through the legal channels to do this. I need 2 motions before we can adopt the budget.

Bax MOVED that the SM Recycling District be moved to the SR Refuse District to be renamed Refuse and Recycling District and use the fund balance for Recycling SM to fund balance SR with a portion to be used to offset the 2011 refuse tax which is set at \$15,2848.* Seconded by Marra and carried 5-0. *(Which is about 29¢ per week.)

Reiter: By consolidating the Drainage Dept. SD into the Highway Dept. BD this would eliminate some of the costs and gives the Town the opportunity to use funds from the NYPA for capital expenses in the Drainage Dept.

Bax MOVED to consolidate the Drainage Dept. SD into the Highway Dept. BD Seconded by Palmer and carried 5-0.

Reiter: With respect to the budget, Mr. Johnson and Ms. Farnham have done a yeoman's job and the department heads and the town employees also came to our aid along with all of the organizations that we support through the last many years and everybody shared the pain equally to a degree. We are a little over \$95,000 less in total budget from last year. I wouldn't call it a bare bones budget but we are close and we have done a nice job in keeping our services intact. No services have been cut. I believe the budget is ready to be passed.

Palmer: I would like to thank everyone involved Mr. Johnson, Ms. Farnham and Mr. Janese and all of the town employees that kicked in and did their fair share. This was the most difficult budget that I have faced in my four years on the council and to the extend that we called in some of the beneficiaries of our budget process like the community organizations

who receive annual stipends. Everyone came in with the full understanding of what task we had ahead of us and accepted the changes that had to be made. I can't think of a better illustration of how the Town of Lewiston operates is the collaboration between everyone involved. Thank you all.

Marra: I know that everyone is complimenting Mike, Katelyn and the supervisor for their work but I put together a list of what actually they had to work with from the revenues from the 2010 budget and some of the shortfalls. I have given a list to the press. In the "A" fund, there was \$300,000 of revenue budgeted in the hazardous waste and the actual is \$220,000. Interest and earnings in the "A" fund was budgeted at a revenue of \$28,000 it was \$1846.00. The fines and forfeited bail from the courts was budgeted at \$290,000 and actually to date is \$189,887.00. STAR program which ceased a couple of years ago was budgeted at \$3500 and is at .00. From the "B" fund, interest and earnings were budgeted at \$12,000 and the actual was \$713.00, a difference of \$11,286. There was a \$39,000 shortfall with the police consolidation. I just gave you about 7 examples and of those 7 examples the total shortfall from just those seven that the budget that these individuals had to work with was \$268,134.00. Also you have to deal with things in this budget such as worker's comp going up \$50,000, state retirement costs \$100,000, employee's benefits increasing at about 12% and these things all played into it. For example, how responsible this budget is that in the "A" fund the use of the fund balance in 2010 was \$364,000 and in this current budget it will be \$314,000. While in the "B" fund the fund balance in 2010 was \$226,000 and in 2011 will be \$41,000. I really feel that this is a lean and efficient as transparent budget that is possible and it should be the goal of all municipalities and it is definite example of being a good steward of the peoples' money and again I just want to thank Mike, Katelyn & the Supervisor and my other colleagues for their work. I just wanted to give examples instead of people sitting up here just complimenting department heads and other people. It really was a team effort and they all certainly deserve the thanks from the Town of Lewiston.

Winkley: I just want to reflect what Mike said and we used realistic revenues. It is easy to say our expenses are this much and we will just make up revenues this much. We used realistic revenues and told department heads to go back and cut their budgets and they came back with cut budgets and we told them to go back and cut again. They did it. It is going to be a very hard year on the department heads and I appreciate it and understand from my years but we will get through it and hopefully the revenues will come back some day. I would rather be lean than too far in the hole to start. I think you did a great job and I think we really have a true budget this year.

Johnson: We also appreciate all of the department heads. Every department head that came in said that they did not want to pay any taxes. We also looked at some other avenues for 2011. We are finding that some of these energy audits will help us. The Highway Supt. is working on some items at the highway garage and also looking at a new project that could be used out of the NYPA monies with respect to the muckland pumps. I think this whole budget process which started at 90¢ and got it down to zero opened everybody's door and made them think about what do we really need for our budgets. I think it is a learning curve and all of the department heads seem to be very happy with the process. They are watching what they are spending.

Bax: It was a great job and I appreciate the help from each of the department heads. The truest thing that Mr. Johnson said today was that the adversity of this budget kind of brought everyone together. I think that is accurate. Nice job.

Reiter: We didn't even budget for the possible savings in the health insurance that we might realize.

Johnson: With this budget, we stayed with less than the fund balances that we could. You do not want to delete the fund balances. There is no set rule on how much you have to have.

Reiter: With the health insurance program there maybe more savings for next year. We decided not to include that in the budget as more savings because we have to wait and see. It looks like a significant savings.

Palmer MOVED to adopt the 2011 Budget as presented. Seconded by Marra and carried 5-0.

Reiter: I have to transfer \$2000 from Highway Personal Services A 8510.0100 to Highway Administrative Contractual A8510.0400 to cover miscellaneous contractual costs.

Bax MOVED to transfer \$2000 from A8510.0100 to A8510.0400. Seconded by Marra and carried 5-0.

Reiter: Mrs. K. Stafford, Court Clerk for Judge Sheeran is retiring. The judge has asked to hire Rhonda Koban-Sortore as part time clerk at the rate of \$15.20 per hour to begin training.

Marra MOVED to hire Rhonda Koban-Sortore, part time justice clerk at the rate of \$15.20 per hour. Seconded by Palmer and carried 5-0.

Motion made by Palmer and seconded by Winkley and carried.

Time: 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted and Transcribed by:

Carol J. Brandon
Town Clerk