

TOWN OF PLATTEKILL
YEAR -2014 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
&
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

November 6, 2013

Time: 6:00 PM

SALUTE TO FLAG

Supervisor Croce opened the Public Hearing and Town Board Meeting with a salute to the American Flag.

ROLL CALL

The following Town Board Members were present:

Supervisor Croce
Councilman Putnam
Councilman Farrelly
Councilwoman Morano
Councilman DePew

PUBLIC HEARING – 2014 TOWN BUDGET:

Supervisor Croce explained that this evening he would be reading through the 2014 Preliminary Budget. He stated that he would read each page and then take any comments or questions on that page.

Supervisor Croce began reading the budget summary and explained that the elected officials would not be receiving an increase in their salaries this year.

On page 4, Mrs. Arocho asked about the funds in the budget line for “indigent burials”.

Supervisor Croce explained that the County insisted that some money be put in this budget line to be available in case someone in Town died and did not have any family to pay for the burial expenses. He stated that he had someone this year who did ask for help with burial expenses, but this person who had passed away was a veteran and the expenses were eventually picked up by the Veterans Affairs.

Mrs. Arocho asked if the seniors had received more money for trips in 2014.

Supervisor Croce explained that the Recreation Director had requested an additional \$200.00 be added to the senior trips funds. He stated that the senior group usually has enough money for three trips and then they have about \$600.00 left that will not be enough to pay for another bus trip. By adding the additional \$200.00, the total should be around \$800.00 and that should be enough to do a fourth trip. So the amount was increased to \$3,200.00.

Mrs. Arocho stated that she wanted to let the Town Board know that the seniors are very appreciative in regards to these funds for trips.

On page 5, Mrs. Arocho asked about the salary increase in the Zoning budget line.

Supervisor Croce explained that the Union Contract agreement is for a 1% increase for next year and there is the retro- increase in salary that all the members of the Union will be receiving now that the contract has been finalized.

Under the "Benefits" section, Supervisor Croce explained that most of these figures were obtained from the agencies involved as estimates of what we can expect to payout next year. The Health Insurance line was an estimate from our agent.

Ms. Valerie Smith asked why the Unemployment Insurance was being reduced from last year.

Supervisor Croce stated that the Town hasn't paid out much so the amount is being lowered. He explained that the agency looks at our history over the past several years and makes a determination as to what we should budget for. He stated that we also have had some changes lately. His suggestion would have been to budget more, but because several people are not using the Town plan or have left employment, the feeling is that we can reduce the Health Insurance somewhat.

There was some general discussion on "Obama care" and how it would affect the Town.

Supervisor Croce stated that it probably will, down the road, but not currently.

Mrs. Laskowsky asked if the Town was having new employees pay partially for the Health care?

Supervisor Croce stated yes. He stated that this is a cost that is costing the Town more and more. And as far as the Union Contract, we have to offer this and if we change our plan, we have to offer a comparable plan. He stated that we did change plans two years ago to CDPHP and it seems to be a good plan. Everyone seems to like it.

Mrs. Laskowsky asked why there were no funds put in the Landfill Debt. budget line?

Supervisor Croce stated that we have enough in the budget line to pay the final two payments with a small amount left over, so we do not have to put any funds in this line.

Mrs. Laskowsky asked what the overage could be used for?

Supervisor Croce stated that the Accountant has informed them that the extra funds can be used to offset any overages in the rest of the budget.

Ms. Smith asked if this was a separate reserve fund?

Supervisor Croce stated yes. He stated that there is \$261,388.33 in this reserve account and the total due is \$229,815.82, which will leave us with \$31,572.51. These figures are from an M&T Bank account as per our Bookkeeper and the Accountant.

Highway Fund:

Mrs. Arocho asked about the "CHIPS" budget line.

Mr. Wager explained that the Town receives money from the State based on the total footage of roadway that we maintain in Town. He stated that we have added a few new roads thus giving us more footage and this increases the amount of State funding. We also are limited to using these funds for projects that have a life expectancy of more than 10 years. So we have to be selective and use these funds for larger projects that make a major impact lasting for many years. The good part about this is

that we can bank the funds for several years to increase the amount. We do not lose it if it sits there from year to year.

Ms. Smith asked what the increase of \$174,537.00 was for in one of the line items.

Mr. Wager stated that this money was used to purchase two new trucks for the Highway Dept. The Town Board approved the transfer of funds a month or so ago from money that was received as reimbursement of FEMA expenses.

Supervisor Croce stated that the money was taken from the reserve fund. Mr. Wager is very frugal about spending money.

Mrs. Arocho asked what "Public Health" was?

Mr. Wager explained that this budget line was for the safety equipment for the Highway employees.

Under the Highway Benefits section, Supervisor Croce explained again that these figures were obtained from the agencies that collect these funds.

Mr. Reynolds asked about the Health Benefits for the Highway Dept. employees.

Supervisor Croce stated that they receive an estimate from the Health Agent that the Town uses, which includes all the Town employees. The Town then breaks it down, approximately in half, to split the cost between the Town Hall employees and the Highway Dept. employees.

Fire Departments – Light Districts – Library - Budgets:

Supervisor Croce explained that the Fire Departments make their own budgets and have their own Public Hearings. The final budgets agreed upon are then given to the Town to be included in the tax levy. The Town Board does not have a say in making up this part of the budget.

For the Light Districts, Supervisor Croce stated that the Town Board looks at the yearly cost for each district and decides whether to increase them or keep them the same. Central Hudson costs are always going up, so these have been increased slightly.

Supervisor Croce stated that the Library Budget is also done by the Library and put to a vote each year. Then the budget amount is given to the Town to add to the tax levy.

Mrs. Byrne asked how many employees the Library has?

Supervisor Croce stated that he did not get a breakdown on the number of employees who work at the Library.

Ms. Valerie Smith stated that she is a trustee for the Library and she could say that there are 10 employees, 5 are part time and 5 are full time. They work 30 hours a week with no overtime. The Library budget was voted on by the residents in the Library District and all the information is on the website.

Councilman Farrelly stated that he has noted that there were very substantial jumps in the Library Budget since 2011.

Ms. Smith stated that there are services that the Library, as a Public Library, must offer. We have to be open a certain number of hours, we have to provide certain services and we have to have a qualified Director. She stated that she felt the Library has to do a better job of letting the Town know what the Library does and how to take advantage of the programs. She stated that the Library is a great value to the community. She stated that the trustees were considering inviting the Town Board to a meeting to

go over what the Library does for the community. She stated that the State is relying on the Library to provide more and more services. There are computer needs, language programs, job searches, free tutor classes and music loan programs. She stated that she is still constantly amazed at all the programs the Library offers.

Supervisor Croce stated that the Town has the same problem as the Library. The State demands more and more from us and we have to find some way to provide those services without major increases in the budget.

There was discussion on what the State mandates that the Library do and why some other Library's do not have these State mandates.

Ms. Smith stated that there are some Libraries that are part of the School District, like Newburgh, and they are different from our Library.

Supervisor Croce stated that this discussion was not part of the Budget Hearing and he felt that a meeting should be set up to discuss this issue at another time. He stated that the Town is not in favor of abolishing the Library, as some rumors have stated, but the budget needs to be under control. The Town Departments have cut back their spending and he is very appreciative of this. We are trying to keep the taxes as low as possible.

Chief Ryan asked a question about the Health Insurance for the Library employees.

Ms. Smith stated that the Library is looking to find more affordable health care; right now they give them money for health care.

Supervisor Croce thanked Ms. Smith for all her information. Maybe we could set up a meeting to continue this conversation.

Supervisor Croce continued reading the budget and taking comments.

Supervisor Croce read through the "Revenues" page and stated that these figures were based on what was taken in over previous years and from information supplied to the Town Board by County Agencies.

Supervisor Croce stated that this was the first time he was doing the budget as the Budget Officer and there was a lot more to it than he had thought. He stated that he had helped Supervisor Loertscher over the years, but had not done as much of the details as he had to do this year. He stated that he wanted to give a special thank-you to his Clerk, Tiffany Galigan, and to the Bookkeeper, Monique Morano. They were most helpful as this first budget, at times, seemed overwhelming. He stated that he also wanted to thank all the Departments for being reasonable with their requests and compromising where ever they could. The Town Board also did a lot of work on this budget and meeting night after night for several weeks and he appreciates all that they have done to make this budget a fair and reasonable one.

Mr. Reynolds stated that it looked like the Town Board was taking money out of the fund balance.

Supervisor Croce stated yes; they are taking \$55,000.00 out of the fund balance and the Highway Superintendent is contributing \$25,000.00 from his reserve.

Mrs. Laskowsky asked about the Safety Net funds.

Supervisor Croce stated that the County has started to take over the Safety Net expenses at a rate of 1/3rd a year. The County took over 1/3rd in 2013 and will be taking over another 1/3rd in 2014 and then the final 1/3rd in 2015. He stated that the County portion of the bill will probably see an increase because of this, but the Town will not have to put money aside after next year’s budget. He explained that the Town was putting in \$80,000.00 for this year, which does not seem like 1/3rd of the amount, but he was at the County Supervisor’s meeting and this is the amount that is suggested. We are not exactly sure how much money will be needed for next year, but this seems to be the amount to put in using the equation the County is using to figure out the projected amount.

There were no further comments or questions from the public.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to close the 2014 Budget Public Hearing at 7:33 PM.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to open the Regular Town Board Meeting.

Councilman DePew seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

MINUTES

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes from the Oct. 7th, Oct. 9th, Oct. 10th, Oct. 11th, Oct. 15th, Oct. 17th, 2013 Special Town Board Budget Meetings.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 7th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: Supervisor Croce	Yes
Councilman Putnam	Abstained (he was absent)
Councilman Farrelly	Yes
Councilwoman Morano	Yes
Councilman DePew	Yes

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 9th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilwoman Morano seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 10th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 11th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilwoman Morano seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 15th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the Oct. 17th, 2013 Budget Workshop Meeting.

Councilwoman Morano seconded.

On the vote: Supervisor Croce	Yes
Councilman Putnam	Abstained (he was absent)
Councilman Farrelly	Yes
Councilwoman Morano	Yes
Councilman DePew	Yes

ADDITIONS

Councilman Putnam stated that he had one addition. He stated that the Town Board had received a memo from the Justice Court and he wanted to read it.

Councilman Putnam read the memo stating that the Plattekill Justice Court had received a notice from the State Comptroller’s Office stating that they had done an audit of the Court Records and Financial Documents of both Town Justices and had found them to be in good shape and full compliance. The Justices wanted to thank both Clerks, Tammy Cavazza and Donna Fuentes, for the great job they do in this extremely busy Department.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mrs. Arocho stated that she wanted to bring to the Town Board’s attention that there is still a bad situation with all the abandoned homes in Town. She felt that they were not being made secure, contained and safe enough and she was frightened to see that young adults and people using drugs have easy access to these homes. She stated that she has one very close to her home and she would like to see it boarded up so that access would be more difficult.

Supervisor Croce stated that he has spoken with the Building Dept. on this issue. He stated that a lot of these homes have been foreclosed on and it has at times been hard to track down who is the actual owner.

Mrs. Arocho stated that someone has to be accountable. We need to write letters to the banks. She stated that the one that is near her house could become a fire hazard or a place for drug addicts.

Supervisor Croce stated that if one is near her house and she suspects there are drugs being used there, then she should call the police. He stated that he doesn't want it to seem that he is putting her off, but if there is a situation going on, the police should be notified.

Supervisor Croce stated that he has spoken to the Building Dept. and he can do so again, but he stated that he would encourage her to also call and make complaints and if she does not see any results to let him know so he can find out what the problem is.

Chief Ryan stated that he would also get in touch with the Building Inspector on this and he stated that he agrees with Mrs. Arocho that these places need to be secured. We have also had a lot of break-ins where they are taking copper pipes and other items. He suggested that maybe Mrs. Arocho could make a list for him.

Mrs. Arocho stated that she would make a list and get it to the Police Station.

There were no further comments or questions from the Public.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to close the Public Input Section of the meeting at 7:44 PM
Councilman Farrelly seconded.
On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 1 – SALE OF POLICE VEHICLES

Supervisor Croce stated that the Town has finally received two bids on the vehicles for sale. The Ulster County SPCA has submitted an offer for the Crown Victoria at \$550.00 and another offer for the Dodge Charger at \$3,500.00. The second offer was just for the Crown Victoria at \$625.00 and was submitted by Ruben Melendez.

* Councilman DePew made a motion to award the bid for the Dodge Charger to the Ulster County SPCA for the amount of \$3,500.00 and to award the bid for the Crown Victoria to Mr. Ruben Melendez for the amount of \$625.00 with both vehicles to be sold "as is" and if Mr. Melendez should back out of his award of the Crown Victoria, then the award will be given to the Ulster County SPCA for their offer of \$550.00.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 2 – DEC – SALES CONTRACT

Supervisor Croce stated that the Town Clerk, Barbara Dawes, has requested permission to sign a new contract with the Dept. of Environmental Conservation to continue to sell Hunting and Fishing licenses. The DEC is setting up a new program with new software and they are requesting that a new contract be signed by the issuing officer.

The Town Clerk explained that the new software will have to be installed on the Deputy Town Clerk's Computer and the licenses will be sold from the Town computer instead of the DEC computer that is

currently used. There is a training class that the Town Clerk will be attending in two weeks and the new system will be started in January.

Supervisor Croce stated that the Town makes a percentage of what the Town Clerk's Office sells in licenses.

The Town Clerk stated yes, and they are going to be giving us more of a percentage when the new system is in place.

* Councilman DePew made a motion to authorize the Town Clerk, Barbara Dawes, to sign the new contract for selling DEC licenses.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 3 – MEMOS FROM HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

1) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting that the Town Board go out to bid for Ice Control Sand with the award of the bid to take place at the Dec. 4th, 2013 Town Board Meeting.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to go out to bid and advertise in the Town Newspaper for Ice Control Sand with the bids to be opened on Monday, Dec. 2, 2013 at 10:00 AM.

Councilman DePew seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

2) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting a transfer of funds.

* Councilman Putnam made a motion to transfer \$46,779.00 from Budget line item #DA5110.4 Highway General Repairs to Budget line item #DA5130.2 Machinery Equipment to cover the cost of the Town Board approved purchase of the 2014 Ford F550 Dump Truck on October 2, 2013.

3) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting a transfer of funds:

* Councilman Farrelly made a motion to transfer \$20,000.00 from Budget line item #DA5110.4 Highway General Repairs to Budget line item #DA5142.4 Snow Removal to cover any unforeseen shortages that this account may accumulate before the end of the year.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

4) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting a transfer of funds:

* Councilman Farrelly made a motion to transfer \$10,000.00 from Budget line item #DA5110.4 Highway General Repairs to Budget line item #DA5130.4 Machinery Equipment to cover any unforeseen shortages that this account may accumulate before the end of the year.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

5) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting a transfer of funds:

* Councilwoman Morano made a motion to transfer \$2,000.00 from Budget line item #A7110.1 to Budget line item #A1640.1 to cover the unforeseen payroll for the remainder of the year.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

6) Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Highway Superintendent letting the Town Board know that the Highway Department employees would be starting their Winter Work Schedule on Monday, November 11, 2013 and that the hours will be Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

SECTION 4 – PLANNING BOARD MEMO

Supervisor Croce stated that the Planning Board has given the Town Board a memo to inform them that Mr. Gorres will be taking a leave of absence from the Planning Board from October 1st, 2013 to April 1st, 2014. Mr. Gorres will be attending a church class and he will not be able to make the Planning Board meetings during this time.

Supervisor Croce stated that he contacted Cindy Hilbert, the Chairperson for the Planning Board, to ask her if she could still proceed without his presence at the meetings. He stated that she has assured him that she could proceed.

* Councilman DePew made a motion to accept the reasonable accommodation requested by Mr. Rich Gorres.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 5 – VOUCHERS

* Councilman DePew made a motion to pay the Voucher Detail Report dated 11/6/2013, which includes the General Fund amount of \$45,499.80, the Highway Fund amount of \$155,383.61, the Capital Projects amount of \$1,166.94, the Clintondale Light District amount of \$826.44, the Modena Light District amount of \$1,430.94 and the Trust & Agency amount of \$292.80 for a total amount of \$204,600.53 recognizing that the Audit Committee has reviewed the claims and found them acceptable for payment.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 6 – ADJOURNMENT

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM.

Councilman DePew seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

