

TOWN BOARD PUBLIC BUDGET WORKSHOP
October 10, 2013

Town Board Workshop – Board Room – 6:00 pm

Paul L. Hotaling, Councilman
Craig A. Hayner, Councilman
John P. Wasielewski, Councilman
Matthew J. Chauvin, Deputy Attorney
Lynda A. Bryan, Town Clerk

Melinda A. Wormuth, Supervisor - Excused
Walter F. Polak, Councilman- Excused
Lyn A. Murphy, Town Attorney- Excused

TOWN OF HALFMOON
NOTICE OF BUDGET WORKSHOP

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Budget Workshop will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Halfmoon at Halfmoon Town Hall, 2 Halfmoon Town Plaza, on the 10th day of October at 6:00 PM, for the purpose of conducting a Workshop for the Budget of said Town for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2014.

A copy of the Tentative Budget is available at the Office of the Town Clerk of the Town of Halfmoon where it may be inspected by any interested persons during regular office hours.

Dated: October 2, 2013

Lynda A. Bryan
Town Clerk, Town of Halfmoon

Councilman Wasielewski: Asked all to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Wasielewski: Thanks everyone for attending tonight. As the Supervisor and Deputy Supervisor are not present, I would like to make a resolution to authorize the Town Board to appoint Craig Hayner, Chairperson of this workshop for the purpose of conducting this Town Budget Workshop Meeting this evening.

RESOLUTION NO. 234

Offered by Councilman Wasielewski, seconded by Councilman Hotaling: Approved by the vote of the Board: Ayes: Wasielewski, Hayner, Hotaling

RESOLVED, that the Town Board appoints Craig Hayner, Chairperson of this workshop for the purpose of conducting the Town Budget Workshop Meeting for October 10, 2013

Chairperson Hayner: Thank you, Mr. Wasielewski. Welcome to the October 10, 2013 Budget Workshop. This was set forth by the Town Supervisor to discuss the budget that was prepared by her. We are looking to take public input tonight that is the purpose of this meeting.

The meeting was opened at 6:02 pm

Doug Goglia: Councilman, Ms. Bryan, I have a number of questions. Deanna Stephenson could not be here tonight, so she asked that I read some questions for her and you could answer. Once I have asked the questions, I will step back and let you expound.

I want to start by asking; you just indicated that Miss Wormuth is not going to be here today and you indicated, stated that she authored this budget. Is it really appropriate to proceed with this workshop in her absence given that she is responsible for preparing the budget in large part?

Chairperson Hayner: I understand your question, but as we have committed to, we are going to get public input. There is a lot of work being done by every individual within the town to take a look at this budget. So if you have any questions based on what you've seen so far, we will be happy to do the best that we can to answer them

Doug Goglia: I absolutely understand and I appreciate the work that you've been doing on the budget. I know that there is a quorum, there is no issue. I know you're looking at the budget, again, if there is going to be another opportunity I gather, to comment, another workshop at some point where either Miss Wormuth, or Mr. Tollisen, to the extent that he is elected, will be present to discuss the new budget.

Chairperson Hayner: As we understand, November 7th is the day that we have to have a Public Hearing by and the other date would be to have it adopted by November 20th

Doug Goglia: Right.

Chairperson Hayner: But we are on a day to day basis, taking a look at everything right now and so as we go through that, I can't speak for what the future is, I can only speak for what we have today.

Doug Goglia: OK. As I go through these questions, I will try to refer to the actual budget that was on the website so we can try to follow along, and excuse me if I get a little bogged down. I will try to make it understandable.

Chairperson Hayner: Great, could you refer to the page numbers too?

Doug Goglia: Absolutely

Chairperson Hayner: Thank you.

Doug Goglia: The first question, and this is one of Deanna's questions, so I will start with those. It pertains to page 1 of the proposed budget, which is just a blank page. It is her understanding and my understanding that the budget typically contains a Summary from the prior year on this page of the budget when it is actually adopted. Deanna was asking whether last year's budget is going to be included in this year's budget where this blank page is.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: It would show total appropriations, less the estimated revenues, less the expended balance and the amount to be raised by the taxes. All of that information is within the budget. It just pulls forward to that page. It is a summary page. I didn't put it in because it is not adopted.

Chairperson Hayner: So when it is adopted, it would automatically go on that page.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: Yes, it just pulls from within. The same numbers that you are going to see on the front page, you would see within that budget.

Doug Goglia: Just to be clear, it is just a budget summary from this existing year, a summary of this budget, not the prior year's budget.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: Correct

Doug Goglia: Miss Stephenson asks how the Tentative Budget addresses the concerns raised by the Office of the State Comptroller and the audit report with respect to sales tax estimates.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: The sales tax estimates are based on what Saratoga County told us we can expect for next year. So we are staying within what's expected.

Doug Goglia: Again, it is based on projections though and not past years' experience?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: It is based on past years' experience, it comes right down from the county saying what we are going to expect to receive for this year with a 1% increase on top of that, right from the county.

Chairperson Hayner: Right, so the county would be using that information as well, past information, to give us that information

Doug Goglia: OK. Miss Stephenson asks the same question with respect the Highway fund deficits and I will repeat it: How has the Tentative Budget address the concerns of the State Comptroller with respect to the Highway fund deficit that they noted, or the Comptroller noted?

Chairperson Hayner: Those are some of the things that we are continuing to look at. We have a balanced budget. That is what was presented to us to start, but we are still taking a look at everything that we can do to make sure that we get everything back in its proper place, and so that's a work in progress. But we do have a balanced budget to start here.

Doug Goglia: OK, and again to repeat the same question: How was the Tentative Budget addressed or how does it address the concerns of the Comptroller with respect to the deficits in the General Fund? And I gather it is a similar answer that it is still under consideration?

Chairperson Hayner: Everything is on the table right now. We are having several conversations a day with phone calls going back and forth and I would like to commend of Finance Director Bonnie, who has been terrific in answering all sorts of questions. If she doesn't have the answer, she gets us the information. So I really can't comment exactly if there are any changes, what they will be, but we are looking at everything, we are turning every stone.

Doug Goglia: I take it that this budget somehow addresses the deficit in the General Fund, however?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: There is no deficit in the General Fund. I do not know what you are referring to.

Doug Goglia: Well, if I am not mistaken, in the Comptroller, in his audit mentioned the deficit.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: Not in General Fund. Not that I am aware of. You want to produce it I will look at it, but not that I am aware of.

Chairperson Hayner: I am unaware of it as well

Doug Goglia: OK. Miss Stephenson asks; the budgeted sales tax revenues for the general and the highway funds, they are 8% higher than the 2012 actual amounts reported. Are the 2014 budgeted amounts based on 2013 collections to date, or is it something else?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: It is what I answered earlier. Saratoga County gives us a spreadsheet, it tells us what we are expected to get in 2013, added 1% on to that for our 2014 estimate. That is what we based it on.

Chairperson Hayner: Certainly we are hoping that it is much higher than that but we are being conservative.

Doug Goglia: On page 36 of the proposed budget, there is an entry for an installment purchase and it lists an expense of \$111,583.00, and Miss Stephenson asks what that installment purchase relates too.

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: We purchased two Mack trucks, a dump truck and a loader this year for the Highway Department. A lease that has been out in the meetings, as it was public knowledge; these are the payments for them next year.

Doug Goglia: OK, so these are the installment purchases that were all capital items purchase through the 2013 year?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: Correct.

Doug Goglia: Ok. I am going to direct you to page 38 of the proposed budget. The intra funds transfer entry at the bottom third of the page, references \$80,000.00 transfer. Miss Stephenson asks from what fund this transfer comes, or what is the origination of this \$80,000.00?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: The \$80,000.00 comes from monies that are left from a bond that we did for Brookwood Road. You can only use those monies that remain to pay down the debt that is the remainder of that money.

Doug Goglia: On page 48 of the proposed budget, pertaining to water districts, the proposed budget references what appears to be an increase in metered sales? Are these projected increases from additional usage or increased rates for water?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: This is a revenue item, so it would be, the rate didn't increase from us, and this SW fund is what we pay the City of Mechanicville for water. We expect an increase from them, therefore we would have to give an increase to our residents.

Doug Goglia: Is there any plan for the use of the fund balance within the water districts?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: No, it comes down to zero. What we expend, the revenue coming in and the expenditures equal.

Doug Goglia: Back to page 38. There is a notation for unappropriated, unexpended balance of negative \$536,754.00. Can you tell us what that is?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: In the Comptroller's AUD, that is the unexpended fund balance, all of the stuff that was in the report from the Comptroller, same numbers.

Doug Goglia: Is there anything that you can attribute to the negative balance too? Where does it come from? I mean we are showing

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: You can see that in the 2012 Annual Report. It is the same number that the State talks about.

Doug Goglia: In the Budget Highlights that is posted on the town website, Miss Wormuth quotes the 2012 Moody's rating. My understanding is that Moody's issued a 2013 rating which actually had some negative aspects. Is there a reason that Miss Wormuth quoted the 2012 Moody's Report and not take into account the 2013 report?

Bonnie Hatter, Director of Finance: I can't answer what

Chairperson Hayner: We'll have to get the answer for that. I do not have an answer for that.

Doug Goglia: I don't think that either I or Deanna had any other questions. Thank you for your time.

Chairperson Hayner: Thank you.

Mr. Hayner asked if anyone else from the audience had any more questions. No one came forward. He then asked if anyone on the Board had any comments.

Councilman Wasielewski: I would just like to say that in a budget as complicated as this one, public input is critical to us to make proper decisions and we appreciate you taking the time to be here tonight. Thank you.

Oa motion by Councilman Hotaling and seconded by Councilman Wasielewski, the workshop was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

