

November 5, 2014 – Workshop Meeting & Budget Public Hearing

The workshop meeting of the Gardiner Town Board was held this evening at the Gardiner Town Hall at 7:00 PM. Supervisor Zatz presided with Councilmen Dukler, Hinson, Reynolds and Wiegand all present. There were approximately 35± audience members.

2015 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

Supervisor Zatz opened the public hearing at 7:05 PM. The Town Clerk read the legal notice. Councilman Wiegand handed out a breakdown of a typical tax bill of the average citizen in the Town of Gardiner assessed at \$250,000. Mr. Wiegand commented that the proposed budget increases 1.5% from last year.

Supervisor Zatz then allowed to the public any questions or comments regarding the budget.

Scott Mosher – what happens if the budget exceeds the 2% tax cap. Supervisor Zatz stated that a property tax rebate will not be sent to the residents of a municipality that exceeds the tax cap.

Paul Colucci – asked what appropriation fund “d” was on the budget cover sheet.

Pam O’Dell – asked where the \$400,000 for the Clove Rd. bridge was in the budget. Ms. O’Dell was told that it was not in the budget and it would need to be bonded.

Jack Habersberger – asked what the balance of each of the unexpended funds were.

Henry Tortora – stated that the town would not have any money troubles if they didn’t giveaway money i.e. cell tower, cupcake festival etc.

Pam O’Dell – how much money is owed to the Town by the State for the sidewalks.

Supervisor Zatz - stated \$126,000

Paul Colucci – commented that his contract with the Town for the sidewalks was not tied to the State reimbursement.

Pam O’Dell – stated it wasn’t a wise decision for the Town to spend before getting the money.

Mike Kruglinski – where will money for the infrastructure work on the building come from?

Councilman Wiegand – stated that it would be difficult to keep under the tax cap if the town chooses to fund infrastructure work in this budget.

Roy Cappellaro – would be in favor of raising taxes above the tax cap to address the infrastructure problems.

Paul Colucci – suggested putting money in reserve funds to address issues for infrastructure.

Councilman Hinson – the Town Board is very cost conscious and have worked together to keep taxes down.

David Toman – asked if this was the correct time in the hearing to talk about the changes at the transfer station over the last year. Town Board members feels it would be best to wait for the transfer station discussion later in the meeting.

Wendy Toman – at what point in the meeting will the budget be voted for adoption? Ms Toman stated that the budget submitted was in balance but the one included in the preliminary budget contains errors and omissions creating an unbalanced budget. Questioned why outside professional services was removed along with other lines. Ms. Toman stated her cause for the increases to her budget.

Carol Richman – cited the evidence of revenues of the transfer station.

Jean Tansey – seen many employees over the years. Wendy is a very good recycling coordinator but on very busy Saturdays two (2) people are definitely needed.

David Straus – suggested investing in the infrastructure. He would rather have the Town exceed the tax cap to invest in the town’s future.

Pam O’Dell – investing is over spending. She commended the Town Board for staying under the tax cap.

John Varriano – anything being neglected now may potentially cost more in the future.

Councilman Wiegand – commented that the Clove Road Bridge is a very costly undertaking.

Councilman Dukler – there is no master plan on maintenance of infrastructure and the Town Board is currently now developing a plan.

John Varriano – likes lower taxes but not at the expense of the infrastructure of the Town.

Katherine Betts – questioned the infrastructure plan and when it will be addressed.

Councilman Hinson – encouraged all in attendance to attend all meetings so there is an understanding of what the Town Board does to come up with solutions.

Rich Keonig – suggested keeping the public hearing open and move onto the transfer station discussion.

Councilman Hinson – stated that we don't want to be pessimistic but optimistic with the revenues. The Town Board must be realistic with the estimates of revenues for next year.

Jack Habersberger – all departments can use more money, but holding the budget line is imperative at this time.

Carol Richman – asked if money could be allocated to the Environmental Conservation Commission. Specifically spoke about the Aquifer Law.

Scott Bittner – asked what the bid amount was for the old library building.

David Straus – commented that the Environmental Conservation Commission raises their funding by grants.

Rich Koenig – once again requested leaving the public hearing open and begin the discussion about the transfer station.

CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING

On motion of Councilman Wiegand, seconded by Councilman Hinson and carried, the public hearing was closed at 8:15 PM. Councilmen Dukler & Reynolds voted nay.

ADOPTION OF 2015 BUDGET

Board members briefly discussed Safety Net and made two (2) changes and decreased 8160.103 Station Asst. to \$2688 and increased 8160.460 Outside Professional Services to \$2240, resulting in a \$1927 increase in the budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Wiegand seconded by Councilman Hinson and carried by aye vote from all members to adopt the 2015 preliminary budget as the final budget with the two (2) changes made.

TRANSFER STATION DISCUSSION

Councilman Reynolds reviewed the history of the transfer station. He stated that it has been running in a deficit as revenues and fees are not comparable. Mr. Reynolds feels this is due to mismanagement.

Wendy Toman was hired in March and he believes that revenues have increased and that the transfer station has become a model for other Towns. He stated that over 1500 items have been sold for reuse.

Looking into a 50% matching grant. This particular grant is an ongoing grant and is awarded on a first come first serve basis. In the future Councilman Reynolds would like to improve existing programs and make room for various recycling resulting in the need for a new building. He has priced this out and has obtained costs of approximately \$15,000-\$30,000. He is in full support of constructing a new building and would like to set up a reserve fund specifically for the building in the amount of \$25,000. After a lengthy conversation among the Board about the construction of a new building and justifying the need for it, Councilman Reynolds, who was not in favor of delaying this any further, made a motion to place \$25,000 in a reserve fund for the building. There was no second and the motion failed. Supervisor Zatz explained that the Town will need to hire an engineer for this project before they can move forward.

Mr. Zatz made a motion to provide funding for an engineer for the construction of a structure at the transfer station not to exceed \$7500. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dukler and carried.

Once this phase has been completed the Town will move forward with the bidding process and then construction.

CELL TOWER

Supervisor Zatz reported that the road has been built on the property that the cell tower will be located and the pad is being installed. The cell tower should be ready to go in approximately one (1) month.

RIVERSIDE TRUST

Supervisor Zatz reminded the Board that the Town will have a public input session regarding the appeal for Riverside Trust.

OLD LIBRARY BUILDING AUCTION

The auction completed, the Town is currently drawing up the contracts to transfer the property to the new owner. The bid/auction price was \$100,000.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mike Kruglinski – Thanked the Town Board for their hard work on the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Councilman Wiegand, seconded by Councilman Reynolds and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Mosher
Town Clerk