

Tentative Budget meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Chester was held **October 1, 2012** at 7:00 pm in the Town of Chester Municipal Center, Chestertown, NY.

Roll Call: Frederick H. Monroe, Mike Packer, Edna Wells, Karen DuRose, and Steve Durkish. Also in attendance, John West - Parks & Rec., and Jason Monroe - Highway Superintendent.

2013 Tentative Budget review:

The projected combined tax rate for General and Highway Fund for the 2013 Tentative Budget is \$1.31 per thousand. For the General Fund the tax rate is \$0.41 per thousand, and \$0.90 per thousand for the Highway Fund.

Supervisor Monroe stated that he has worked with Jason and John, as well as others, trying to stay within the tax cap, and he believes that can be accomplished this year. He feels that the rate of \$1.31 is very reasonable for the town tax, but knows that everyone also looks at the County and Special Districts that they might be in, for a combined tax total, which makes the rate look a lot higher.

Board reviewed the budget notes and brief discussion on various issues ensued:

1. Revenues for General Fund discussed, with decrease in the budget due to Assessor changing his status to part time. Town of Horicon, under the Cooperative Assessing Agreement, pays a portion of the Assessors salary. Interest revenue is very low, and the Star Aid Program only paid \$1,000 in 2009 for joining the program, and another \$1,200 for training, after which they stopped.

2. General Fund expenses, Mr. Monroe explained that we are in the 3rd year of the CSEA contract, with personnel wage increases having been held at 2% for the first two years of the contract, and for the next three years, this being the third year, will be at 3%. Discussion over having a property reval, but Town of Horicon has to agree with it due to the cooperative assessing agreement. Mr. Monroe has spoken with Supervisor Ralph Bentley, who is pretty sure that the Town of Horicon will not agree to a reval in 2013. We also have to have money put aside for a new roof for this building. If a reval does not take place, those designated funds will be put toward the infrastructure of the Municipal Center building. Energy saving equipment, recommended by the energy audit, (new lighting), and the solar equipment, should save us some money.

Mr. Monroe recommends the ambulance contract be kept at \$60,000, rather than the increase of an additional \$4,000 that they had requested. There appears to be some discord in the ranks of the squad, and the town would like to monitor the situation and be sure that everything is operating correctly before giving them the

taxpayers money.

Mr. West, Parks & Rec, is requesting a new pick-up truck, the old one being a 2005 with 92,000 miles on it. Garbage expenses were down, no doubt due to the increase in "per bag" fees at the landfill, which became effective on January 1st of 2011. Recycling may also be improved.

3. Highway expenses were increased this past year due to paving of Vanderwalker Road, and installation of guard rails on Pine Street, Riverside Drive and two locations on Bird Pond Road. Jason is proposing only \$75,000 for equipment this year, as opposed to almost \$200,000 spent between 2011 and 2012. This proposed \$75,000 would purchase a pick-up truck, a one-ton dump truck and an articulating roller.

4. Revenue from the Water Departments was discussed, and the savings in salary for Jason was noted, that as he had received \$14,000 for Chester Water District in 2011, he now receives \$8,160, and for Pottersville Water, from \$12,439 down to \$6,630.

Jason would like the Chestertown tank inspected and repainted, and money put aside for the pump in case it fails. Mr. Monroe spoke of increasing the water rents in the Pottersville District, as most of the operation and maintenance should be on the water rent bill and not on the property tax. Jason spoke of the need for a soda ash pump, as the life expectancy of one is about 3 years. He has purchased used and refurbished pumps to save money, and the bottom line is, they do not work or they do not last. A new pump runs about \$5,000. Money has been budgeted for one in the event that it is needed.

5. Loon Lake Park is looking at tax revenue of about \$82,825, and expenses, which include work on solutions to milfoil problems, amount to about \$81,000. Mr. Monroe added that if we get the south basin under control with the milfoil using the "Renovate" herbicide, we should be able, according to Lycott, to reduce future expenses. Aside from the south basin, most of the lake is under control. Since we had \$81,000 budgeted for this year, the bill is actually a lot less, which will leave us a surplus of about \$30,000.

6. Our share of expenses for the milfoil project on Schroon Lake Park District amounts to \$7,000. Good news on the Starbuckville Dam. We have been paying about \$10,000 per year, and this year, we owe only \$13,877 in Principal, so we will be paying it off!

7. Questions about the Mealsite, and about the Town of Horicon contributing a little more, since we will not be charging the County rent for the site, and we will be paying their propane expense. The Mealsite is an important amenity for our Seniors, and both towns have residents who benefit from it being here.

John West had mentioned to Mr. Monroe that our compacter may need replacing at the Transfer Station in the future, and he thought funds could be set aside for such an event. The cost for a 6" cylinder diameter compacter is approximately \$38,565, and a 7" cylinder diameter compacter is approximately \$41,550. Both are double ram systems.

Mr. Monroe asked Jason to get him some figures on the roof for the Municipal Center, and between that and the compacter, we might be able to use some of the money that would have been charged for a reval, in the event that one is not done in 2013.

Mr. Monroe stated that he had met with some of the Veteran's, and they had mentioned that they are taking down all but the American Flag for the winter, so the lights for the other flags will be shut off. Additionally, the Veteran's area will not be plowed for the winter.

Following discussion, Mr. Monroe stated that he would appropriate some of the funds set aside for the reval toward the roof of the Municipal Center and for the compacter, and increase the amount for the Loon Lake Park District for the milfoil to \$84,000 from the surplus. Other than that, the Board was happy with the tentative budget.

Authorization to advertise for the date of the Public Hearing for the Preliminary budget will be decided at the Regular meeting on October 9th.

Barbara Repp was in attendance to request a resolution for the Town of Chester Youth Commission to submit an application for a Grant for the Children's Opera.

RESOLUTION #160: APPLY FOR LARAC GRANT.

Introduced by Mrs. Wells, seconded by Mr. Monroe, authorizing the Town of Chester Youth Commission to submit application for a grant through LARAC. Grant would enable Youth Commission to provide funding for Seagle Colony children's Opera program. Tentatively, program is "Three Little Pigs" for 2013.

AYE 5 NO 0

RESOLUTION #161: REAPPOINT CAROL RAPP TO BOAR.

Introduced by Mrs. Wells, seconded by Mrs. DuRose, reappoint Carol Rapp to Board of Assessment Review. Term expires in 2017.

AYE 5 NO 0

Health Insurance.

Supervisor Monroe stated that our current provider, MVP Trivantage, Option 3, is no longer going to be available. At this point, what they will be offering will not be as good, and will cost 7% more. Discussion on using Blue Shield over MVP Trivantage Option 6, (which replaces Trivantage Option 3), and the savings could be passed on to

the employees in the form of an HRA. Discussion ensued, and will be continued until resolved. Union representative Jamie Dunkley will discuss with the membership if the Board is interested in pursuing this.

On a motion by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Packer, meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully,

Patricia M. Smith
Town Clerk