

Special Meeting / Budget Workshop, Hillsdale Town Board
Tuesday October 13, 2009, at 5:30 PM

The following persons were present: Supervisor Baer, Ann Baldwin, Augie Sena, and Carmen Barbato, Highway Superintendent Richard Briggs, Planning Board Chair Hank Henward, Tom Carty, Vivian deGeorges as acting secretary

Absent: Peter Cipkowski

Topic: Budget

Discussion about building department salaries, moving people under different lines? Ed Feratto should report to Glen Smith. Mr. Baer said they should talk to Glen first before moving Ed.

Mr. Briggs said he could offer \$5000 from garage from contingency, from heating and bills. Push the wood for heating. Tentative was \$20,000 but can be \$15,000.

Mr. Baer said there is uncertainty about the library, too. Once it's taken over (the building), there will be operating expenses to be absorbed, plus maintenance. He asked Mr. Henward if there is a handle on heating in the building. Mr. Henward – there's only one zone.

Mr. Baer reported that Peter suggested supplies can be reduced by \$1000. On page 6, retirement acct. There is a big problem in the state, county, town. Retirement contributions from the town, from 2009 to 2010, are double. Because they've determined that part of the income to pay retirement comes out of investments and if their investments aren't making money, they have to make it up. So that's one of the biggest increases for the town. That's general fund.

Mr. Briggs asked how many retirees we have now. Mr. Baer said 4 or 5.

Mr. Henward said that last year, the planning board did a 25% increase but this year maybe it could be 15% or 10%.

Mr. Baer and Mr. Briggs discussed special event fees Mr. Briggs – logging permits, driveway permits. Mr. Baer suggested maybe increase in fees - planning, driveways, etc. - will allow a cushion. He asked Mr. Henward to put some ideas about this together for next board meeting.

Ms. Baldwin said that she has a problem with the comprehensive planning figure of \$7000. She remarked that she likes to see a Hamlet planner but doesn't think it should be a priority in this economy with people losing their houses.

Mr. Baer expressed his opinion that people say how can you put money into development at a time like this, but I feel that if you don't put in money now, we'll wind up putting in more money later. He said that we have momentum in the Hamlet now.

Tom Carty - development is what I'm interested in. Historic development will maybe cause businesses to be interested.

Mr. Sena agreed that planning will help business development.

Mr. Baer asked if there were any questions about revenues. We have 500,000 in the fund balance (reserve) now; we have 150,000 in 2009 budget. We may only use 50 or 100 this year and have 400-450 left. We don't want double-digit tax increases. These are uncontrollable but how much do you pass on to taxpayers?

There was then a discussion about park and recreation fees. (What I wound up with after all the figures were flying was this. Please correct and clarify as I couldn't keep up with it: Planning is separate from park and recreation on the budget. Subtracting 13,950 from 25,900 is 12,000. "Youth fees" is a separate line. What did Peter put in as a revenue line for the park? He had a number for the \$50/person. Could that be the 3,000? I asked him in an email what the revenue is for the youth program. So that's the 3,000. The change is Mr. Henward's number — put the 3,000 back in. We have a separate bank account for the planning fees.)

Mr. Sena said that what Mr. Henward's collecting can go towards parks or any land we want to purchase but can't be for staff.

A discussion about Mr. Fitzgerald not making an adjustment for snow removal, and about how many people are receiving or are nearing qualifying for retirement payments, and Mr. Briggs said that for the highway figures, everything else should be the same, that he kept the figures for 6 or 7 employees

Mr. Baer asked are we expecting any more reimbursement from FEMA for the ice storm.

Mr. Briggs the FEMA money may not come in this year. We just submitted 325,000. The only thing I didn't see is the bond. So this is the last year for the bond for the truck?

Mr. Baer – We borrowed 105,000.

Mr. Briggs – if we paid it off, we'd save 4,800 in interest.

Mr. Baer – we have to see about a prepayment penalty, if we have the money to prepay it now.

Mr. Baer – we have to add it all up the FEMA checks and see that it equals what we submitted. Your budget (highways) is about 60% of the total tax levy. If FEMA can

make up some of it, I can reduce the amount I have to raise from taxes. Then next year your fund balance would be higher because of FEMA.

Mr. Briggs – I'll ask Mark ahead of time and see if we can figure out how much we got from FEMA. We'd like to get a little bit ahead with the money. We took a big chunk of that out for the flooding.

Mr. Baer – Philmont Fire Protection – chargeback to the residents from the county so it's not part of the town budget. Sewer budget – it's fine and we'll have to work within it.

Mr. Baer – we'll make these changes and bring them to the board next week.

Mr. Henward - should have report on the library meeting next week. Old library building.

Done around 6:30 Mr. Sena to adjourn seconded by Ms. Baldwin all ayes

Minutes submitted by: Vivian deGeorges, Acting Clerk