

TOWN OF SENECA

Budget Workshop

September 30th, 2020

The Budget Workshop of the Seneca Town Board, County of Ontario, State of New York was held at 3675 Flint Road, Stanley, NY 14561 on the 30th day of September 2020 at 4:00 PM.

PRESENT			
Drew Wickham	Town Supervisor	Haley Eagley	Town Clerk/ Tax Collector
Jason Mosher	Deputy Supervisor/ Councilman	Shana Jo Hilton	Assessor/ Bookkeeper
Howard Keeney	Councilman	Kathy Mastellar	Town Historian
Jim Malyj	Councilman	Jim Lawson	Highway Superintendent
OTHERS PRESENT		NECESSARILY ABSENT	
Kate Silverstrim- Jensen	Town Resident	Brian Prater	Water Superintendent
Jim Eldredge	Town Resident/ Town Mechanic	Jerry Hoover	Code Enforcement Officer
		Jesse Orbaker	Councilman

Supervisor Wickham called the Budget Workshop to order at 4:00 PM. The Supervisor led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was passed over as everyone in attendance was acquainted. A note was made for the necessary absence of CEO Hoover and Water Superintendent Prater. Supervisor Wickham made mention that Councilman Orbaker was also necessarily absent this evening.

Supervisor Wickham looked for a motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting. The approval was motioned by Councilman Mosher and seconded by Councilman Keeney. Motion carried.

In addition to the approved agenda, Supervisor Wickham wished to amend that for an addition to New Business. We added "B." Authorizing approval for the Town of Seneca Court to apply for the state JCAP Grant. Supervisor Wickham looked for motion to approve the amended agenda for tonight's meeting. The motion was made by Councilman Keeney and seconded by Councilman Malyj. Motion carried.

Supervisor Wickham gave privilege of the floor and nobody wished to speak at this time.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Wickham presented the 2021 tentative budget discussing each fund, line-by-line. Most all of the funds are lower or very close to the same budget as last year. He commended department heads on their conscientious work with him in preparing a lean 2021 budget. The tentative budget is available to view at the Town Hall upon request.

ALL DEPARTMENTS:

Supervisor Wickham noted a 2% increase in salaries across the board for 2021. He stated that most of the surrounding towns are around the same increase. Saying that he feels this 2% increase is well-deserved as all of our staff here worked through the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our Highway Department moved a few things around and took turns with shifts to keep everyone working. Some of our town employees worked remotely from home and most importantly, the town functioned smoothly through the pandemic.

Supervisor Wickham presented the 2021 tentative budget discussing each fund, line-by-line. He commented on the 2% increase in salaries across the board for 2021. He stated that most of the surrounding towns are around the same increase. Most all of the funds are very close to the same budget at last year. The tentative budget is available to view at the Town Hall upon request.

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TOWN COURT:

We spoke about the Town Court section. Supervisor Wickham made mention that the daily rate for the constable did rise a little bit. We weren't in need of a Town Constable through the pandemic as they weren't having court for a period of time. Now that our court is up and running again, they are looking for a Town Constable. They would prefer someone who lives within the town and are trying to find someone who currently works or has previously worked with the Sheriffs office. Our court officials haven't found anyone who has been interested yet and Supervisor Wickham stated that if they have to use the Sheriff as our Town Constable, then the daily rate would have to go up even more. We didn't receive an exact figure from the sheriff.

AUDITOR:

Supervisor Wickham stated that the dollar figure for our Auditor has come down. We are hoping to complete a justice audit in 2020 and in 2021 the Town Clerk audit of the 2020 books will be done.

ATTORNEY

Supervisor Wickham made mention that we have quite a bit of money in the contractual, non-contract. This is primarily for the Cornell Solar Certiorari that we are involved in. He emphasized that although WE HAVE won that case, Cornell has saved their right to appeal the verdict. Councilman Keeney asked how long they have that right for, to which Supervisor Wickham answered that they will probably appeal it. Supervisor Wickham states that he does not think we will have to spend this much, but that he doesn't want to drop this budget line any until this this case is over.

ZONING

Supervisor Wickham stated that there is a truck in the Zoning budget for CEO Hoover. This topic is to be discussed about by the board members. Generally, the town replaces the Code Enforcement truck every 3 years. At this point, the current truck has a little under 25,000 miles on it. Before discussion- Supervisor Wickham stated that the highway pickup that was just purchased two weeks ago has been ordered for almost a year.

Councilman Mosher wondered if (given the shortage of automobiles) the state bids are less attractive than they normally are. The councilmen discussed that with such low mileage and the truck being under warranty for another year, maybe that is an item that we could sacrifice this year.

Councilman Mosher mentioned that he would like to also discuss the idea of rotating CEO Hoover's truck over to the Highway Department and getting the oldest town truck off the road.

CASELLA:

Supervisor Wickham stated that host fee will be lower in 2021 than it was. He commented that Mr. Sanders (General Manager of Ontario County Landfill) will have his year end numbers to us in a couple of weeks and that the trash intake was lower than they hoped.

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HIGHWAY:

Highway Superintendent Lawson was able to decrease the road expense because of the Lake to Lake road Pavement. Supervisor Wickham stated that the Kidder Road Culvert is not included in this number and we will circle back to that topic later on.

Highway Superintendent Lawson had a 4500 series truck added in there, but they pushed it off the budget this year. Snow removal has gone up in the contractual area as the price of salt came up.

Supervisor Wickham made mention that while it would be nice, they've made the decision to forego the cold storage building to house the grader. This will be kept on the list to come back to next year.

ESTIMATED FUND BALANCES:

Supervisor Wickham reviewed the Estimated Fund Balances. He focused on the water project that is coming in 2021 and made mention that there will be \$3.3 Million spent in 2021. We can reasonably expect that \$1.8 Million of that will be reimbursed. So far, we have spent roughly \$300,000 and Supervisor Wickham stated that at this point we have not been reimbursed anything by the state yet. The remaining balance is \$700,000 and that means that we need to have about \$2.25 Million in cash flow IF we buy the whole thing out of our pocket with no reimbursement from the state. We have about \$1.2 Million in excess reserve in the General fund. If we subtract that \$1.2M from what we need, then that will leave us about \$1M short.

Supervisor Wickham stated that he believes that it is prudent for the Town to let our cash reserves ride a little bit, and revisit once the water project is complete.

RESERVES:

Supervisor Wickham reviewed the Reserve Accounts. He continued by reminding council that we did not make any contributions to it in 2019 because of the water project and in 2020 we have budgeted to put in \$75,000.

Speaking of the water project, Supervisor Wickham stated that out of a \$5 million dollar project, the Town of Seneca's out of pocket cost will be \$1.5 Million. Supervisor Wickham explained that we re-directed our tax stabilization money to this project. Supervisor Wickham advised that we try to maintain the cash flow through the water project and then figure out how to divide the money we have left over.

Supervisor Wickham asked the board if they were all in agreement. Councilman Mosher asked if they could have another conversation about the Tax Buydown. No decisions were made regarding the Tax Buydown and Supervisor Wickham stated that we could revisit this again at the regular October meeting.

Revisiting CEO Hoover's truck, Supervisor Wickham asked if the board had any more thoughts on this. Being that the truck is still under warranty, it has low mileage, and the times we are facing- it was a unanimous decision to take the new Code Enforcement truck out of the 2021 budget.

Supervisor Wickham made mention that the Kidder Road culvert was not in the budget at this time. Highway Superintendent Lawson spoke with a gentleman from the county who was able to look at the Culvert and advise. He confirmed that the culvert does need to be replaced, but as far as timing we just need to watch the shoulder of it. Highway Superintendent Lawson stated that there are some options of what we can do to get through the winter. He stated that at this point we are just going to keep monitoring this area.

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NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Number	Resolution Title	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Motioned	Seconded	Carried?
# 82-20	Notice of Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget for the Town of Seneca for the year 2021	4	0	1	Councilman Moshier	Councilman Malyj	Yes
# 83-20	Authorizing the Town Court to apply for the State JCAP Grant	4	0	1	Councilman Keeney	Councilman Malyj	Yes

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Supervisor Wickham gave privilege of the floor to which Mrs. Silverstrim-Jensen wished to speak. She stated that she did have a few things to speak on, but that the board answered pretty much all her questions that she had. She complimented the board for doing a good job. She gave one more piece of input regarding the Town Board meetings and COVID-19. She explained that some people may not have the freedom to come to the Town Board meetings and with COVID-19 there may be some individuals who do not feel comfortable coming.

Mrs. Silverstrim-Jensen wondered if the Town of Seneca could take the time to review our online presence and see if there is anything that we could do to increase our presence.

With that, Supervisor Wickham thanked Mrs. Silverstrim-Jensen and looked for any other comments. Nobody else wished to speak, so he looked for a motion to adjourn the Budget Workshop meeting. Councilman Moshier made motion and Councilman Malyj seconded. Motion carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:14 PM.

Respectfully,

Haley Eagley
Town Clerk