

DRAFT

COUNTY OF GREENE
TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
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OPENING OF MEETING

Supervisor O'Rorke called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Also attending: Councilwomen Benway and Finke, Councilmen Meredith and Norris, Highway Superintendent Jordan, Town Clerk Brooks, and 15 members of the public who signed the attendance sheet. Absent: Attorney for the Town Wukitsch.

Supervisor stated the purpose of the meeting is for the Board to work on the 2013 Preliminary Budget and reminded that cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off as they cause interference on the digital recorders.

DISCUSSION OF 2013 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Supervisor reminded that, unless the Town Board overrides, there is a 2% property tax cap, including all special sewer, water, and lighting districts that charge a property tax in addition to fees. Supervisor noted items missed on Tentative Budget: system did not pick up assessor's salary in formula, currently \$20,553 to \$20,758, pushing over tax cap by \$221. Supervisor asked to reduce A1620.4 Buildings Contractual \$22,500-\$15,000 for pole barn (error) = \$7,500 and increase A5132.4 Garage \$13,500+\$15,000 for pole barn = \$28,500.

Supervisor heard from Ginny Pearson/Ravena Ambulance/Ambulance District 1, needs a little more money, wanted another \$5,000; (Coeymans has agreed to pay \$141,000, which is up from their last year's \$80,000). Supervisor suggests 1/2 of that, \$2500, going to total of \$23,300, due to property tax cap, and would discuss it with the Town Board. That will need to come from their Fund Balance. This puts the Board at \$2,721 over tax cap, or can take additional amount from \$3,300+\$3,519=\$6,819.

Supervisor asked the Board's feeling on the Ambulance District 1; Councilman Norris asked what that Fund Balance was; this year we have \$2,300 being used, that's \$6,800, or \$9,000 used out of that Fund Balance. Supervisor said the tax there could be lowered, or take from the taxes with the General Fund's Fund Balance; bringing overall taxes down. Supervisor reminded that now the Board is \$579 over the tax cap, add \$250+\$6,819 = \$7,069. Taking taxes down from \$25591 to \$24541, difficulty in calculation, down \$1,050 should have taken the property tax cap down. Now up to \$829 over, Assessor was \$221, then \$579 over. Why now over \$829, entire tax levy shows \$1,138,567, we must stay under \$1,139,386. Councilman Norris asked about the Buildings Contractual.

Member of the public asked to speak; Supervisor reminded that this meeting is for the Board to work on the 2013 Budget, maybe when Town Board is done they can accept questions, and there will be a public hearing on the Budget, and suggested a phone call or FOIL if she is unable to stay; a great deal is posted to the website.

Regarding the health insurance, Councilman Norris asked will the rates go down; Supervisor answered that the premiums are going down, but with higher deductibles, Town is not fully funding for the entire 'what if every enrolled family reached their maximum'. Councilman Norris asked is there wiggle room to go up or down, how much is Town is covering; Supervisor answered covering \$23,000, with about \$27,000 unfunded, and asked to keep in mind the Town does not budget for the total number of individuals who could enroll in the plan. Supervisor reminded that, due to HIPAA laws, the Board cannot talk about who is enrolled and there is potential for more enrollees, and a variety of things could happen, including a single to married status change. Supervisor said the Town could fund more and could fund less; this budget represents funded for 40% of it, Councilwoman Benway said we're figuring a little higher than it was and picking up a higher deductible for HRA.

Records Management has \$500 increase, Supervisor's increase in Personal Services is due to extensive amount of FOILs into Town Clerk's office, represents searching time in many records series not scanned, time in vault, and nothing of payroll or Board minutes serving 'baby boomers' retirement searches has been scanned, all searches are manual and very time-consuming. An individual in their early 20's may have worked within summer recreation park program or animal control, later in life became involved in county or state work and retirement system, and wants to 'buy back' time to improve their retirement. Last year the Town's

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accountant performed one search and charged several hundred dollars for time. In Town Board minute books, the search is for the date of appointment, salary records, this addresses all the time needed to read, and is overdue; Councilman Norris wishes to revisit.

Councilman Norris asked Sewer District No. 1, Serial Bond Interest, \$13,895 looks like 2013 to replace \$15,747; Supervisor believes due to fluctuating bonds, originally put in as static, were carried over in that way. In 2011 the Town paid \$16,130, Supervisor has \$15,747 is budgeted; rates have been going down, Supervisor won't know until next year. Councilman Norris asked if they were fixed rates; answer: no, put into the table at the time. Supervisor used \$16,130 that was paid last year; Councilman Norris asked whether it is worthwhile to come down a little bit, come down \$500? Supervisor said rates were fairly low in 2011; Councilman Norris added that savings rates are going down.

[inaudible] Supervisor said this is the interest we pay on the Bonds, Sewer District No. 1 is all user fees and whatever is not paid goes to the Surplus. Councilman Norris asked regarding the \$10,500 jump in Treatment Disposal Equipment; Supervisor answered that this was planned for 2013 in the event work was needed to be done at the Pump Station, and would also go to the fund's surplus. Councilman Norris asked, regarding Lighting District 1, Supervisor projected \$18,400, but never came close to that number, staying \$16-16,500; Supervisor responded that the rates are only increasing and through July the Town was more than 50% there. \$500 change from last year, Councilman Norris thinks good to lower a couple of hundred if the rest of the Board is in agreement. Supervisor reminds there is no fund balance, if left in a hole it could be a problem. Councilman Norris offered to look at records from last 12 months. Supervisor said now we're at \$14,927, Clerk Brooks reminded that vouchers in front of the Board are from recently incurred usage, and do not include October-December. Councilwoman Benway asked if \$14,927 was end of year; Supervisor answered that was result of her budget calculations from August and, if continue, it will be \$19,901. Supervisor budgeted \$19,500. Using what has been paid so far, averaged for the next three months, Clerk Brooks asked for clarification that MEGA is not for unmetered service such as lights; there will be no saving for the lighting district. Supervisor asked Clerk when Central Hudson had billing glitch; Clerk Brooks remembered the different color invoices, perhaps beginning of year. Supervisor said any monies remaining stay in that special district.

Councilman Meredith said we could spend that savings account for new equipment; Supervisor reminded it is taken out of there as a Capital Expenditure. Regarding Summer Rec, \$1900 remains for the director, a little bit for counselor salaries, not nearly funded. Councilwoman Benway reports the Summer Rec stories she's heard haven't been good yet, and if the program remains the same, folks won't send their kids or grandkids. Councilwoman Benway questions whether the problem was in fundraising, if it is possible to put more money in, or cut; something must be done differently in 2013. Supervisor said it was projected in 2013, keep in mind Revenue includes donations, and the salaries \$4,225; \$1900 was budgeted, Youth Contractual of \$4008. Supervisor asked Councilman Meredith about Greene County grant; he said it should be here, waiting for approval. He asked whether state grant arrived; yes, Supervisor said, between donations and what was gotten from state, and if we get the \$2000 from county and asked will that be available for 2013. Councilman Norris asked how much was raised; perhaps \$2800; if we knew for January, they would be able to start. Once the Budget is passed, answered Supervisor, it will then depend on what they want to do. Not much with county grant, must go toward an activity and not for salaries. Councilwoman Benway added that if they aren't going to have a problem raising funds, we'll see how it goes. Supervisor clarified that it is partially funded, there's a great deal at a halfway mark.

Councilwoman Finke wished there was a way to fund it without fundraising, maybe cut to four days per week, hard to do without knowing state and county until state budget passes. Supervisor repeated, the waiting to see it dribble down, depending how many other municipalities have summer rec programs, the other year we were fortunate when all was done to receive another \$400-500. Councilwoman Finke's point, Supervisor said, could be a 1- or 2-week program and depending upon the fundraising, determine the program length. Councilman Meredith felt the Town won't get anyone to direct a short program, keep 3-4 weeks, and make it worthwhile. Supervisor reminded it was 4 weeks and 5 days per week in 2012, asking shall we keep the budget, Councilwoman Benway thought leave where it is adding it would be good not to rely on fundraising; Councilman Norris sees no room to increase by \$1,000.

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Regarding General Fund, Supervisor thought to tackle the pay raises: 1%, except elected officials who do not do this for full-time positions (i.e. town board, planning board, zba); for justices' increase, it will increase hours as their revenue has increased. Councilwoman Finke asked whether staff was still one full-time and two part-time; Supervisor said there had been a request for one part-time to become full-time, but that's difficult due to cost of benefits; Councilman Norris clarified employee would pay 20%. Councilwoman Finke commented that we are overbudget now; Supervisor answered that revenue is coming in higher than what was budgeted; much was old issues that have been cleaned up and addressed, scoff tickets are in, and courts are back in good position again.

Supervisor continued that there is an increase in mandatory retirement contribution; Justice Contractual is up to include supplies, the more they process, the more supplies are needed. With new justice coming on in January, more supplies needed as well. Tax Collector is up \$1200, the fliers and information are now the Town's to do; Clerk's office made phone calls to establish an estimate for printing. Tax Collector reports her old laptop with old Microsoft Works software is okay; Accountant Fitzgerald plans to evaluate it for running Peachtree software, needs to create a spreadsheet from which to print tax, water and sewer usage bills; something to consider. Supervisor asked for other items to tackle on General Budget; any other thoughts on 1%? Councilman Norris has no problem. Councilwoman Finke said it is difficult times, we have dedicated employees. Supervisor reminded there was no raise last year, year before was 1.5%, adding that New Baltimore is one of the few without unions and union contracts, repeating Councilwoman Finke's comment of dedication of employees, who are always willing to pitch in and do what it takes to get the work done. Councilwoman Benway understands, Councilman Norris would like to give more, 1.5%, but this is what taxpayers can afford.

Supervisor reminded that Revenue is up for Court, Justice Farrell is confident with this; she lowered the Transfer to Highway from \$70,000 to \$55,000, although the construction of pole barn does not come from Highway Budget, he will pay it from his budget. Supervisor put in more for next year, in Long-range planning, the Board talked about doing more with less, rather than going out for bonding for the roads, now trying to put more money in the budget when the Board can.

HIGHWAY

Highway Fund also includes 1% for pay increase; no equipment purchases are budgeted but backhoe has a problem. After an easy 2012 winter with Snow Removal, Supervisor hopes it will continue into 2013. The lawnmower will come from Parks, not Highway. Supervisor kept Consolidated Highway Improvement Programs funds (CHIPS), and must begin paying for 5 year bond in 2013. Councilman Norris and Supervisor met with Highway Superintendent, trying to get more revenue in order to do more roads, accumulate funds to do 2-3 miles more roads. Superintendent Jordan reported the cost of oil is in blacktop and stone/oil, difficult to budget for an unknown, and gas for trucks, everything going up. Councilman Norris asked whether he had more bids for backhoe; Superintendent Jordan answered no, going to have to do something knowing estimate of over \$4000 in just parts to repair. Councilwoman Finke asked if that was the one 2-3 years old; Supervisor said, not the loader, this is the 1989. The little tractor is for the parks, steering is going, and is used for York-raking. Councilman Norris confirmed that Superintendent Jordan will try NYS Thruway auction, letter of authorization for \$5000 since could be good one, and last month's auction had one tractor; Highway Superintendent Jordan did not know whether there would be another Thruway auction.

SEWER DISTRICT NO 1

Chief Operator Polverelli reports the other pump is back in and working fine. Supervisor expects to hear review of Preliminary Engineering Study from Delaware Engineering at Work Meeting; the Study will get the Town placed on list for grants and reduced interest funding. In the Budget is a pay increase for Jim Polverelli, whose original salary contract with Board was for 20 hours per week. He has put in significantly more hours; wastewater committee revisited his salary, divided it out and increased by 5 hours/week and includes 1% for 3 part-timers. The Board does not set the Use Fees in the Budget; a number is there as a placeholder. The Board sets the fees in

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November or December by special Town Board resolution, not taxes, they are user fees and do not count toward Property Tax Cap.

SEWER DISTRICT NO 2

Only user is Seta; a voucher has been sent to Village of Cocksackie with which to bill Empire Merchants for the use of the pump station.

LIGHTING DISTRICT 1 AND 2

Check when lights are on during the day, Supervisor wants to be sure they are on at dark.

WATER DISTRICT NO 1

Water District No. 1, Supervisor would like to increase the taxes there, about 60 users, would like to do engineering study there because the district really needs to be realigned, but there is no surplus. If anything broke, we own that infrastructure and have no means of paying for repairs/replacements. If that is increased, increasing the property tax, only way to bring that back down is to take money from General Fund and believes it is not fair to take from General Fund to pay for Water District 1. Councilwoman Benway feels it is never good to wait until something bad happens, either cut from somewhere else, an expenditure. Councilwoman Finke asked if there was any change in users; Supervisor said one new user since 4-5 years ago, and can have Assessor Clerk Fisk pull list. The Town is only charging taxes for fire hydrants; they are billed directly from Village of Ravena for water usage.

WATER DISTRICT NO 2

Currently all user fees, in future this district may have a small tax. Councilman Norris asked why Water District No 1 wasn't user fees; Supervisor explained WD 1 was taxes for the fire hydrants, the fees are billed from Village of Ravena so do not show on our ledger. Town only charges for the fire hydrants. Councilman Norris asked why not a tax, why a fee? Supervisor said the Town of New Baltimore doesn't fee for water, Village of Ravena charges the fee; New Baltimore's Sewer District No. 1 has a fee and not a tax. Councilman Norris thought if it were a fee it would be outside of tax cap and could be restructured. Supervisor thought, regarding Water District No 2, the Board could choose to add onto the user fee, but that addition would only go to the people who actually use water (30+) and would not capture those people who are in district, improved by the district, but not currently using water (45). Councilman Norris believes it is money well spent; those paying for it should get best hydrants possible. Supervisor said the Board could increase the user fee, but not enough pressure currently to use the fire hydrants, and the reason for allowing O'Connors to put in smaller pipe for pressure. If and when the new line is put in to replace the old cast iron pipe, Supervisor talked to president of fire commissioners about the hydrants, and believes it sucks out everyone's water.

WATER DISTRICT NO 3

Kalkberg Commerce is Seta.

AMBULANCE DISTRICT NO 1 has already been discussed.

AMBULANCE DISTRICT NO 2

There is a bill for \$12,000 for which the Town has told Cocksackie they will have to wait 5 years for full payment; the district will try to eat that hole, up \$1600.

With no further questions to come before the Board, **Councilman Norris moved to adjourn, Councilwoman Benway seconded.** No discussion. The adoption of the foregoing Motion was duly put to a vote, and upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

BENWAY-AYE	FINKE-AYE	MEREDITH-AYE
	NORRIS-AYE	O'RORKE-AYE

Motion Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully,

Janet A. Brooks

Town Clerk