

A Public Hearing to allow public input on the 2003 Preliminary Budget was held Friday, November 15, 2002 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brighton Town Hall, Paul Smiths, NY, with the following:

PRESENT: Council Members: Alicia Bodmer, Deputy Supervisor
Linda Dobson
John Quenell
Steve Tucker

OTHERS PRESENT: Elaine Sater-Town Clerk

RESIDENTS: There were 4 residents present

ABSENT: Supervisor (Vacant)

Public Hearing was **Called to Order** by Deputy Supervisor Alicia Bodmer at **6:34 p.m. for the Purpose of public input on the 2003 Preliminary Budget.**

Public Notice was published in the Adirondack Daily Enterprise on Thursday, November 7, 2002, and was posted at the three local post offices, at local businesses, and on the Town Clerk’s Sign Board at the Town Hall.

John Quenell gave a general overview of funding the budget. He discussed how the Budget is funded from different sources available to the Town. For example the Highway get revenues from Town services (plowing County Roads) and CHIPS (Consolidated Highway Improvement Program Services), appropriated Fund Balances (dollars left over from previous years) and the tax levy. The tax levy is based on approximately 1,000 parcels of property (total assessed value of \$117 million; up \$12 million from last year’s assessed value of \$95 million).

John Quenell discussed the “lumpy” costs the Town is going to occur in the next few years. These include a new Highway Garage estimated at \$457,000, a salt shed estimated at \$49,500, clean-up of the oil spill estimated at \$5,000 a year, purchase of property for a new garage appraised at \$110,000 (\$26,000 land and \$84,000 building), Replacement of Highway Equipment using Fund Balances already available over the next 5 years, and landfill capping costs estimated at \$39,500 and \$10,000 for yearly water test well monitoring.

John then discussed the previous years’ annual tax levy (1993 to 2202). It jumped up and down from 1993 to 1997 depending on the needs for that year. Over the last five years (1998-2002) the tax levy has been more consistent with a 5% increase in 2002.

In summary the tax levy this year is \$505,159 across all the funds, an increase of \$42,165. The tax burden per parcel should go down based on the increase in the total property assessed value, especially on Rainbow Lake. The cost per \$1,000 is \$4.29, down from \$4.84 last year.

The Floor was opened for discussion

Tom Willis-Garondah Road:

ACCOUNT NUMBER & NAME	BUDGET AMOUNT	QUESTION	ANSWER
APPROPRIATIONS GENERAL FUND			
A1220.4 (Supervisor CE)	\$ 400.00	Is there money included for the new supervisor to go to school?	No, there is money in A1010.4 Town Board for schooling.
A1310.2 (Bookkeeper Equipment) and A1330.2 (Tax Collector Equipment)	\$1,000.00 EACH	Is this for laptops and does this amount cover software?	This is for laptops only, couldn’t afford both software and hardware in same year, both people have a software programs they are using
A1420.4 (Attorney CE)	\$2,300.00	Why is amount lower for next year?	The need for legal council for next year won’t be as great as it was this year
A1460.2 (Records Equipment)	\$2,800.00	Is this the amount for cabinets to store blueprints?	Yes, it is
A1620.4 (Building CE)	\$4,500.00	Can money be added to fix the stone pillars in the front of the Town Hall?	Money for the pillars (\$1,800) was asked for in a grant that was tuned down and will be looked into again.
A3410.4 (Fire Control)	\$300.00	Was a dry hydrant installed this year? What is the long-range plan for more hydrants?	One will be installed on White Pine Road; extra parts are kept on hand to repair the 10 already in

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			place. One will be put in on the Keese Mills Road.
A3620.4 (Code Enforcement Officer CE)	\$11,400.00	Is this the total amount for the Code Enforcement Officer? It had to be increased last year.	The Town of Santa Clara Supervisor, Mike Adams, said the total for the Town's share of the contract should not exceed \$11,400
A5010.41 (Spill Testing CE) and A5132.41 (Spill Testing CE)	\$5,000.00	Why are there two different accounts for the same thing?	Only the A5132.41 is funded, the other is an error and needs to be removed.
A5132.4 (Town Garage CE)	\$5,000.00	Why is this back to \$5,000 after spending \$11,206 this year?	This account now reflects just utilities and not the cost of water testing as it does in 2002
A6460.4 (HUD CE)	\$500.00	Why does this still have funds?	The Town will have to pay to discharge mortgages from HUD projects
A6772.4 (Programs for the Aging CE)	\$0	In the past this has been funded at \$500, and it went to the Brighton Seniors. Can this be used for the Senior Center in Saranac Lake?	The board has to decide if it wants to fund the Senior Center. A service contract would have to be signed with the Senior Center
A7140.2 (Playground Equipment CE)	\$4,200.00	Is the amount of \$4200 correct? Or should it be in A7140.4	This is for lacrosse nets, utilities, etc at the Park, should be in A7140.4
A7310.4 (Youth Programs CE)	\$3,050.00	What does this cover?	This is for Saranac Lake Summer Youth Program (\$1,250), Civic Center (\$1,500) and Snowmobile Club (\$300)
A8189 (Landfill Testing)	\$9,670.00	Do you already have a contract at this price?	Yes
A8810.2 (Cemeteries Equipment)	\$216.00	Is this for a new lawn mover?	This is for flags and markers for the cemetery, no lawn mower needed
A8810.4 (Cemeteries CE)	\$3075.00	Why \$3050 for next year if only \$994 was spent this year?	The extra is to cover planning the new section of the cemetery; the bill for the work this year on Section 3 has not been received yet.
A9040.8 (Workers Compensation)	\$19,171.00	Are they really asking for \$4000 more?	Yes they are.
A9060.8 (Hospital & Medical Ins)	\$60,500.00	Do the changes in this account show the elimination of the dental/optical insurance and different healthcare plan and a 10% co-pay by elected officials	Yes, these are included, except for the Superintendent of Highways who will receive the same as the Highway employees
REVENUES			
A2770 (Unclassified)	\$0	Why is \$2,653 from 2002 unclassified, it had to come from somewhere?	It was from the sale of Town Equipment: a snowplow, a trailer, a computer, and a typewriter
A3820 (Youth Program)	\$0	The Town used to get \$500 a year from the State for this, it should be worth \$500 to fill out the paper work to get this money	This was from a grant that is no longer available, but something else may be
HIGHWAY			
APPROPRIATIONS			
DA5130.2 (Heavy	\$54,122	Is this the new loader since it is so	This is the value after trade-in. The loader's

Machinery)		precise?	total value is \$76,122
DA5148.1 (Services-other gov't)	\$7,500.00	Is this really the overtime for highway employees, don't understand why it doesn't say so?	Yes, it is for overtime, that's they way its listed
ACCOUNT NUMBER & NAME	BUDGET AMOUNT	QUESTION	ANSWER
DA9030.8 (Social Security)	\$6,500.00	This should only be \$6,350 based on the salaries for the Highway	
DA9060.8 (Hospital & Medical Ins)	\$37,100	Is this for four people or three people? If its for three then it is over \$12,000 per person for insurance	It is for three employees. This includes Health, Dental and Optical. The CSEA contract is up for renewal next year
DA9730.6 & DA9730.7 (Equipment BAN & Interest)	\$20,000 & \$ 2,000	Is this for the International truck payments? Are BANs a big deal to obtain, what are to associated costs?	This is the annual payment and interest for the new snowplow. No, Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs) are not hard to obtain, cost will be for legal fees.
REVENUES			
DA2665 (Sale of Equipment)	\$0	This must be blank because the sale of the loader is reflected in DA5130.2	

STREET LIGHTING		
REVENUES	Is this blank because you are no longer collecting taxes for this service?	No, this is collected as part of the tax levy for the people who own property in this light district
TAX LEVY		
	If the amount to be raised by taxes is \$505,159 than everyone in Town is paying for the lights	No, the lights are not included in the Total Tax Levy, it will be \$504,459 for most of the town

Peter Martin-Rainbow Lake:

1. Would like to know why the Supervisor received a \$1,500 raise and the Tax Collector did not receive one. It seems odd to raise the salary of a new supervisor who is just coming into office.

Board Response: There was a committee of three residents who did a study of the salaries and benefits of Towns in the area with similar number of parcels. The Board used their recommendation to set the salaries this year. We are paying our Tax Collector much more with better benefits than other Tax Collectors are receiving. The Supervisor is getting paid less than the average (\$13,000) of the other Towns. This is the first time the Board has seen a comparison of salaries to use to determine salaries.

2. As an employee of Camp Gabriels, I know the inmates only work 6 hours a day and they do the work at the Town Cemetery and Town Hall. Why are we paying someone \$2,000 to do this work? When the inmates are not available the work doesn't get done by the Town employee; he waits until the inmates are available. If we are paying someone to do the work it should get done without waiting for the inmates to be available. Drives by the cemetery every day and it needs to be more maintained; it should be mowed more often.

3. The Park Attendant, Dan Spencer, works at the park many more hours than gets paid. He does extra things like open the field house early when people are at the park early. He has worked for the Town for quiet awhile and it would be nice to give him health insurance.

Board Response: The Board will consider this during the Special Meeting before the Budget is approved.

Tracie Santagate-McCollums:

1. Mr. Byno gives an accountability of what he does and the McCollums Cemetery always looks good. On the other hand the Dog Control Officer gives no accountability of what he does to earn his income. We get several calls on dog issues from the Humane Society.

2. In regard to salary increases, the Justice has received less than \$1,500 in raises over the past 10 years. The Board needs to be consistent in how they raise salaries for all employees.

Board Response: The Board has not been able to pursue a policy for salaries and benefits this year, so the committee was formed to look into this issue. There is no policy in place yet, but the Board is working toward that end. A copy of the recommendations by the committee will be available at the Town Hall.

Nik Santagate-McCollums: I get several calls from the Humane Society and from people with questions, I refer them to the Dog Officer, but I don't recall any dog cases at the Court in a long time. The Dog Control Officer position is capable of paying for itself through fines if unlicensed dogs were pursued.

Peter Martin: The raises look like they were increased by personal preference or party affiliation. Raised the issue of the Board not appointing a Supervisor so there are only four votes. Afraid the Board will not be able to pass a budget if two people vote no for it. People are calling and asking questions about these issues because he is the Chairman of the Republican Party. He would like the Board to do a study on the opinion of the Town Residents about salaries of elected officials.

Board Response: The Board disputed the salaries raises; they followed the recommendations from the report, not personal preference, for salaries. The Board has been able to function with four people very well all year and have voted for many issues without a problem. The Public Hearing is the place where people can come to get the information they want on the budget decisions. More residents should come to the Board Meeting and ask questions. This year we are adding extra money to put up a Website for people to access information about the Town.

Nik Santagate: Would like to request \$200 more for A1110.4 (Justice CE) to cover increase in mail and court cases. New envelopes and letterhead will be needed to change address for new 911 addresses. Revenue for the Court is calculated by the Comptroller's Office. They use an elaborate formula to determine what the Town gets. I don't want to know how to calculate it because some judges use it to set fines and he doesn't want to appear to do that. Would like to complement the Housekeeper on the good job she does at the Town Hall.

There were no further comments from the public.

Deputy Supervisor Alicia Bodmer thanked the Board for their work on this budget.

Motion to Adjourn the Public Hearing was made by John Quenell at 7:52 p.m., second by Linda Dobson; Aye 4, Vacant 1 (Supervisor)

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine W. Sater
Brighton Town Clerk