

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF RICHLAND
1 BRIDGE STREET, PULASKI, NY

DATE: October 17,2024

KIND OF MEETING: Budget Workshop Town Board Meeting

PLACE: Grand Jury Room, H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse Pulaski, NY

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Robert North
Councilwoman Donna Gilson
Councilman Larry Atkinson (absent)
Councilwoman Sue Haynes
Councilman Eric Pappa

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Town resident, Tim Crouch, Sandy Creek Superintendent, Mike Kastler, Financial Consultant, Laird Petrie, Budget Officer Tammie Whaley and Town Clerk Millie Newcomb

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. with Supervisor North leading in the Pledge of Allegiance.

BLESSING: No blessing done

Budget Officer Tammie Whaley opened the workshop with the Contingency account in the A. Concerns were raised about the potential need to appropriate fund balance if unexpected expenses arise.

Discussion moved on the Assessor's budget, noting that previous years expenses were lower and the current year's expenses are on track to be lower as well. The assessors budget will be reduced by \$1000 bringing it to \$3500

Discussion on the zoning budget, noting that previous years expenses were lower and the current year's expenses are on track to be lower as well. The Zoning other expenses budget, (B8010.4) will be set at \$2000.

Discussion on the zoning other expenses budget, noting that previous years expenses are on track to be lower as well.

Discussion about the allocation of funds for various equipment and supplies, including hoses, chains, sand blaster, hot box, tree trimmer, rope and stump grinding. Consideration of the current fund balances and the need to charge for culvert pipe. Review of fund balance sheets and the need to update them.

Discussion on the tax cap and the allocation of fund balances to reserves. It was decided to transfer \$45,000 from B fund to DB fund to lower DB's tax and appropriate \$45,000 more in fund Balance in B .Discussion on the financial implications of transferring funds from B to DB including the impact on tax caps and fund balances. Consideration of appropriating additional funds from A to DA fund to support building needs and avoid excessive reliance on fund balances. Transfer \$25000 from A fund to DA fund to support building needs

Discussion on the necessity of appropriating funds from A to DA to support building needs and avoid excessive reliance on fund balances. Consideration to the impact on tax caps and fund balances.

Mike Kastler asked about the Towns equalization rate. Mrs. Whaley advised that it is about 55% at the present time. Money has been budgeted for a property reval. He advised that the Town of Sandy Creeks is implementing "trending" to slowly bring the Town up to a better equalization rate. He told the Board they did 5% last year and will do 5% this year.

At this time, Mike Kastler would like to address the Board before they finalize the budget. He asked if Laird , would it be possible that you could run the revenues at \$4.00 per thousand instead of the \$4.50 per thousand to see what it would do to the Town Budget, with the agreement that if Richland lowers it to the \$4.50 that the Town of Sandy Creek would agree that in 2 years, we would be back. Budget Officer Whaley told Mr Kastler that she struggles doing that because we are changing our budgeting process this year again and we don't have a full year to look at how we did it last year and this year they are changing it again. She explained that she doesn't get to make those kinds of decisions. Mr Kastler told the Board that he understands that it's hard to look at numbers without plugging them in. He said with the excel sheet it makes it so much easier. Sandy Creek would like to see the water charge at \$4.00 per thousand. Mrs Whaley explained if we did that, they would be paying what the Town of Richland's Corporations pay. Outside our tax base, she feels they should be paying more. He explained to the Board that he has had to put a \$.50 surcharge on his residents water bills due to the increase 2 years ago. He understands if it doesn't work, he gets it. He just has to justify to his customers. Councilwoman Haynes said that it's something that the Board can discuss and get back with Mr. Kastler. Mr Kastler brought some paper work with him that he had his water clerk do, to try to figure out the difference between Richland charging \$4.50 vs \$4.00. It's not huge but it's substantial but not huge. Laird Petrie told the Board that it's about an 11% decrease in a rate and if you project that 11% to Sandy Creek revenues, it's about a \$32,000

difference in revenues coming in based upon our current budget. In our future, we have 2 water tanks that need to be repaired or replaced. Conversation turned to Brennan's Beach. Councilwoman Gilson told the audience that she spoke to former Town Supervisor Dan Krupke to see if there was anything that he could ever find in that contract that limits us to change the contract with Brennan's amount of \$177,000. The Board agrees that that figure needs to come up. Councilwoman Gilson would love to see a day where Sandy Creek is very close to what the Town of Richland users pay. Mr. Kastler understands and has no problem with Sandy Creek paying more than Richland, but it was how it all went down that was hard to swallow. The increase was even done to the Town of Richland people. When the Board looks over the numbers and tells Sandy Creek, "look we looked it over and we just cannot move off the \$4.50 per thousand, he would then ask for or consider doing more than a 1 year contract? Mrs. Whaley told Mr Kastler that it was her and the Boards hope that we don't have to raise Richland or Sandy Creek for a long time to come. Councilwoman Gilson agreed. The Board is hoping for the rates to fall and not increase. Mr Kastler said so long as there is justification for it, it is what it is. If the rate ever has to increase again, it would never be done the way it was done in the past. Discussion continued about Brennan's rate.

Discussion on establishing an employee Medical Liability Reserve with a funding of \$5000 per year for five years in each fund to cover payouts for unused vacation and sick time for retiring employees. This was clarified that this reserve can only be used for unused vacation and sick time and not for retirement incentives or insurance.

The final budget meeting will be on October 21st at 3:00pm with a Public Hearing to be held at 6:00 pm on November 4th in the Grand Jury Room of the Barclay Courthouse. This workshop ended at 2:23pm.

NEXT TOWN BOARD MEETING: November 12,2024

MEETING ADJOURNED: 2:23pm

Respectfully submitted by

Millie Newcomb
Town Clerk