

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Budget Workshop on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 130 Ovid Street.

Present were Supervisor Michael Ferrara; Councilpersons Dawn Dyson, Douglas Avery, Steven Churchill and David DeLelys. Also present was Stuart Peenstra, Police Chief and James Spina, Commissioner of Parks & Recreation.

Supervisor Ferrara called the Budget Workshop to order at 5:30 P.M. A roll call of Board Members was taken and all were present; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Mr. Ferrara stated when the process started, he sent a Memo to all Department Heads requesting that they reduce spending by 10%. It came back with about 8 1/2% across the board. He said they worked very hard to get their budgets down. Mr. Ferrara said they have been asked to do that for multiple years, and at some point, you just can't cut anymore unless you start cutting staff, salaries, etc.

Mr. Ferrara said we have been working throughout the year to save money. A lot of cable expenses and phone expenses have been eliminated, and waste management expenses as far as having things picked up at different offices is now being done inhouse. The sale of 115 Fall Street was approved by the Board. It will add to our revenue side and reduce expenses as we paid a Condo fee each year and any maintenance expenses required. Mr. Ferrara stated the Board has been very diligent to save as much as it can.

SF Development Corporation: Mr. Ferrara reviewed the SF Development Corporation budget. The Director's salary is listed at \$56,238, which would adjust with any cost of living increase granted Town employees. They would like continue funding of Farmers Market in the amount of \$3,500; total expenses are \$5,650 which includes Vendor fees – their total request for the Farmers Market is \$3,500. Mr. Ferrara said all in favor of adding this to the 2021 Budget please say aye. Vote was 5 ayes, 0 nays to add it to the 2021 Budget.

SF Police Department

Chief Peenstra stated he sent his budget to Board Members which explained each line item. He decreased the part-time Officers expenditure line by \$38,000. They have a difficult time getting part-time Officers – they currently only have one Officer working in that roll. Mr. Ferrara said most of the line items that are non-contractual are either a zero budget change or a decrease; the Chief has no control over contractual items.

Chief Peenstra stated since 2016, controllable expenses decreased 17.63%; overall within six years, the budget increased 1.9% per year. Mr. Avery asked about the increase in vehicles. The Chief replied that is because they are consistently increasing their leased vehicles. He said if one vehicle is purchased, the cost is \$45,000-\$50,000; in 2021, they will be going up to six leased vehicles, and the upfitting charges keep increasing dramatically. They are only leasing \$75,000 in lease costs, but the upfitting charges are in that line item also – that's why it's going up. Mr. Ferrara asked if it is a 2-year rotation or a 3-year rotation. Chief Peenstra replied they are trying to get 3 or 4 years – depending on the mileage of the vehicle. He explained you are leasing the vehicle for the time you possess it; vehicle mileage doesn't matter. Another benefit of the lease is the Town doesn't pay for a vehicle until it is received. Last year, the Board approved the purchase of the vehicles in December. They just took one vehicle in in September from the December approval, and the other vehicle is here, but that haven't upfitted it yet. The Chief said if approved in the budget, he will be asking the Board for approval in December so that he can order them now with hopes to get them in October.

Mr. Avery referred to the line item for Grants (A3120.490) and said it was zeroed out. The Chief said with everything going on he hasn't seen a lot of grants. He cut it this year in hopes that things will rebound again in 2022 and the Board will put it back in. He is cutting it, but he wants it back.

Mr. Churchill asked how many vehicles do we have; Chief Peenstra replied eleven – seven Patrol (which includes the SRO), two Investigators, the Lieutenant and the Chief.

Brad Jones stated the Board can spend a lot of time looking at the line items, but it really should be looking at salaries and head counts for 2021. Mr. Ferrara commented if the people of Seneca Falls want to cut essential services, that's what we are talking about. He considers essential services as Highway, Water & Sewer and Police. He added when the revenue stream ends, the essential services will have to be looked at very closely. Mr. Ferrara stated as far as staffing, the Police Department is down two Officer. Chief Peenstra said ideally, with full staff, they would have three Police Officers – one Sergeant and two Patrol. They patrol 27.6 sq. miles of the town – it's a big area with a lot going on, and the biggest population in Seneca County.

Greg Lazzaro stated in times of peril we are in now, we should reopen contract negotiations because we don't

have the funding. He is concerned about money for Court security. Other towns and villages in the area who don't have a police department hire out security. He mentioned that there are other staff on besides patrol officers who could take to the road if necessary. Mr. Lazzaro said he is concerned about education, and said there is a lot of training that needs to take place in this police force. Mr. Ferrara stated some of that education component is coming through our collaborative effort throughout the County with all law enforcements. He referred to the Forum and said it was well attended, a lot of questions asked, and a lot of those issues about how we are meeting the requirements was discussed. He added the good thing is a lot of those things that are being required are things we already do as a Law Enforcement Agency. Further discussion followed.

Mr. Avery referred to salaries and asked if the salary figure reflects the down two Officers or full strength; the Chief replied full strength. Mr. DeLelys stated in 2007-08, the Police budget for the Village at that time was over \$1 million. He doesn't think it's too far out of line in 2021.

Recreation

Mr. Ferrara stated Mr. Spina has made some serious cuts in the budget wherever possible. Mr. Spina stated when working with Mr. Ferrara since summer about telephone and cable consolidation and waste management, we were able to pull quite a bit of money out of those line items. He tried to take out a lot of the projects they had last year and some of the projects we hoped to do, such as the copier which they can make last another year, and equipment was purchased for the fitness room this year so nothing is needed there for the time being. Mr. Churchill referred to the copier and said the County has a deal with Toshiba and all municipalities can ride on that. Mr. Spina said he will look into it..

Mr. Spina stated he helped put together the Parks budget in the A Fund. One of the things he left in the budget and the Board has to consider is cameras for Peoples Park. Mr. Ferrara mentioned that the Board approved a \$3,500 paint job at Peoples' Park, and a few weeks ago, it was marked up. They talked with the Chief about getting security down there. He has two prices for cameras and either of them would not exceed \$4,000. Mr. Ferrara said It would give us full coverage of Peoples Park, and he would like to approve it this year. He thinks it is a good investment. The line item A7110.414 would be reduced to \$4,000. The line item A7110.412 for Restore Bayard Street for the fence was zeroed out. Mr. Ferrara stated we don't need anything in there because that is part of the grant we will be getting from the 2020 people and the new sculpture.

Mr. Spina said he eliminated the Harbor Attendant (CR7140.102). He thinks they can handle that with their summer staff, so that line item was zeroed out. Under Building & Maintenance Services (CR7140.404), the contract with Trane comes out of that; the contract with Trane is up this year. He spoke with Mr. Passalacqua who said we can handle most of that, so this line item was reduced from \$32,000 to \$20,000.

Mr. Ferrara asked if the Boaters Facility is cleaned on weekends. Mr. Spina replied if there is a major event or there is a lot of boats – yes. He added generally, they clean it Friday and Monday – it depends on the activity.

Mr. Spina stated the Board approved painting the hallways. There is still a little painting that has to be done next year, so he dropped line item for Community Center Interior (CR7140.205) from \$10,000 to \$5,000. Under Kids Territory, Mr. Spina cut the Playground Director (CR7141.100) \$500, down to \$4,500. Summer Play Staff (CR7141.101) was reduced to \$25,000. Mr. Spina referred to Adult Programs (CR7310.401) and said most of the programs pay for themselves, so he cut \$1,000 out of that line item. Mr. Avery said with the cuts made – is that going to make it hard to maintain programs and services. Mr. Spina replied no, he feels comfortable with the changes and cuts.

Mr. Spina stated the Community Center is getting to be 20 years old. They have roof problems whenever there is a heavy rain; there are leaks in the Women's room and two in the kitchen. Those roofs are flat and they are the original. There are also water problems in the windows – water comes in on the gym floor. Mr. Spina said he just wants to get it on record that the Board has to start thinking about this at some point. Mr. Ferrara stated he doesn't think these are things you can ignore – if you are going to maintain the building you can't let things deteriorate. Mr. Avery said there is no money in the budget to address either of these; Mr. Spina replied that's correct – at some point, we have to start considering putting some money in. Discussion followed relative to fixing the leaks.

Vince's Park

Mr. Spina said he lowered the line item for Park Clerks (CR2-7110.102) down to \$10,000, and Picnic Shelf Roof (CR2-7110.203) was left at zero, as it is something the Board can discuss. They were going to do one this year and one next year. Cable, Telephone and Waste Removal have been removed. Picnic Tables (CR2-7110.415) was lowered to \$1,000, and Ballfield Work (CR2-7110.416) was lowered to \$500.00.

Mr. Spina stated he made a change in Pool Repair (CR2-7180.401) because we have a leak. Mr. Passalacqua

hasn't given him any information, but he thought it can be done inhouse. This line item was lowered to \$5,000. Mr. Ferrara stated in a difficult budgetary time, Vince's Park is a wonderful amenity for the people of Seneca Falls; if you can afford it – great. He thinks we are looking at a serious amount of money for the pool. He has been working with Mr. Passalacqua and some vendors, and referred to a list of items and cost of repairs for items in disrepair at Vince's Park. Mr. Churchill asked what the total of expenses were that Mr. Ferrara mentioned. Mr. Ferrara said these are just estimates – quick add-up is about \$85,000 in repairs. He said it's a decision that has to be made; it doesn't have to be made tonight – keep Vince's Park as is; not open the pool; keep Vince's Park pavilion/green space open are all options. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Avery said there should be a plan of what has to be done this year; some of the items mentioned are not as urgent. He added we are not trying to make the worst possible case. He mentioned that there was discussion about having other municipalities join in, and then COVID hit. Mr. Avery asked if the revenue side could be increased to help with some of these things. His other question is – is it the pool that makes Vince's Park viable? Mr. Spina stated the pool is important for those who rent the shelters. It is also important in the sense that the County swimming lessons are held there, and we have our own swimming lessons. He mentioned that we have the only public pool in Seneca County and the area. Mr. Spina said his job is to fight for every green space we have and every recreational opportunity we can get.

Mr. Avery asked if the Town can get other area municipalities involved, would that enhance the chance to get some sort of help. Emily Palumbos replied it can. She said if she was asking for a pool, it would be difficult, looking at COVID. Parks and Recreation in general are difficult grants to get. You would have to package it into something much larger, like the Park as well not just the pool. You would probably want to package it in a total upgrade of the Park. Mr. Avery stated the whole idea of inviting other communities in has been hard to move forward, but he thinks there is some interest, in part, because of the pool – that's the one thing these other municipalities don't have. He added they were going to explore that this year, but then COVID happened. Mr. Ferrara stated before COVID, the prospect would be more encouraging, He said every municipality is being impacted by COVID. He doesn't know if this is the right time, but it doesn't hurt to ask – if you do that, it has to be done quickly. Mr. Spina said we can get a group together and throw some things on the table – it can't hurt. Discussion followed.

Mr. DeLelys stated the main thing now, even if we brought other towns in, is the pool has to be fixed (\$85,000). He asked if there was any money to get that pool fixed. Mrs. Warfel said there is always Fund Balance. Mr. DeLelys said maybe we will have to put Landfill money in to get it fixed because you are not going to draw towns in – the pool needs to be repaired. Mr. Ferrara said he thinks it's too late in the game to approach municipalities, but he is not opposed to moving down the road. He added a decision has to be made for 2021 for Vince's Park. Further discussion followed relative to fixing the pool, approaching other municipalities and selling Vince's Park.

Mr. Avery stated we are diminished if we sell off Vince's Park. Mr. Spina said it makes Seneca Falls unique in a sense. Mr. DeLelys mentioned that the Rec Commission did interviews the other day. The three people interviewed said what brought them here was the Rec Center, the pool, Schools – this is what people are looking at.

Greg Lazzaro said we have to start thinking out of the box. He looks at what is happening with our economy. Seneca Falls has something special. He has had this discussion with Mr. Spina before. He said engineering firms are always making lots of money, and they are going to continue making lots of money. Any law firm gives out a certain number of "pro bono". Mr. Lazzaro said why can't engineering firms come up with some money and fix the pool – they make money from the ten towns in the area. He added we pay engineering firms enough that they should give back to the communities they are working for. Mr. Ferrara said there is no engineering required – it's just contractors coming in.

Mr. Ferrara told the Board that they really have to think about what they want to do with Vince's Park. He doesn't think an intermunicipal agreement is a bad idea, but he doesn't think it's feasible for 2021. Mr. Churchill said what if we don't open the pool for another year if we are really in a financial bind– what would it cost to keep it closed. Mr. Spina said it's significant. Mr. DeLelys added it would deteriorate more. Mr. Avery referred to the \$85,000 to fix the pool, and asked if the Board could have a copy of the list of items and cost of repairs that Mr. Ferrara mentioned. Mr. Ferrara gave the Board a copy. Further discussion followed in regard to the Board making a decision as to what they want to do with Vince's Park. Mr. Spina stated he would re-submit the budget with the pool operational and without the pool non-operational, and keeping the ballfields, the pavilion and the pole barns open. Mr. Churchill said to also give a breakdown of the order of when the repairs need to be done.

Special Event Request: Mr. Ferrara stated there is an event on October 17th in Academy Square from 10 AM to 12 Noon or maybe 2:00 P.M. depending on the number of people. He said it's a peaceful partisan demonstration to get the vote out, and also to honor Ruth Ginsberg. They will have masks and will be social distancing. They

are not marching – they are just separated around Academy Square.

A motion was made to approve the special event request to be held on October 17, 2020 in Academy Square for the peaceful partisan demonstration to get the vote out and to honor Ruth Ginsberg by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Agreement with SF Performing Arts: Mr. Ferrara stated the Board received an email from Allison Stokes and the Interfaith Church. There was an agreement with the SF Performing Arts Center. The Interfaith Church owes the Town \$16,000, and a compromise was reached to settle for \$3,000. A check for \$3,000 was received but has not been cashed. Mr. Morrell worked on a contract with the Performing Arts Center, and in that contract, there is a condition that if title to the Interfaith Church is not turned over to the SF Performing Arts Center within two years, the deal is null and void. Mr. Churchill said that is not what this Board approved. Mr. Ferrara said this is what Mr. Morrell sent him and what the Board approved. Mr. Churchill said what the Board approved was to dismiss or forgive their debt if a check for \$3,000 was given to the Town – no strings attached. It was stated that there has to be an agreement. Mr. Churchill said no, there doesn't – they pay the Town \$3,000 and we write them a receipt – paid in full.

Mr. Avery stated there are three different entities – two of them signed the Agreement, and Allison Stokes was not one of them; it was signed by the Town and Steven Beals. After brief discussion, Mr. Ferrara said we would look at the minutes and go from there.

Contract – Four-Person Statute: Mr. Ferrara stated there is going to be a contract between the Town and the 2020 Fund that is giving us the grant for the four-person statute. There is a smaller contract that has to be finalized very soon between the Architect and the Engineers to lay out the place at Peoples' Park – this is the contract that Mr. Morrell is reviewing. He and Ms. Murney-Karsten will reach out to Generations Bank because there is an agreement for the use of land for three years – he is sure the Bank would extend that if necessary. Mr. Ferrara said this is contingent on if the permanent resting place for the statute is Peoples Park and if that area is part of the DRI renovation plan which has not been decided yet. There is a lot of things not settled yet, and that is why Mr. Morrell is reluctant to put his stamp of approval on it. Mr. Churchill asked if this is time sensitive; Mr. Ferrara replied yes, it is. Mr. Avery stated there is no cost to the Town, but there are contracts involved. Mr. Ferrara said it's close to \$300,000 which covers everything, such as the commission of the statute, temporary home and permanent home, lighting, cement pad, etc. He added the money is only available in 2020. Mr. Avery stated if we mess this up, they will give it to another community. Mr. Churchill said he is not voting on it unless he has something in hand.

A motion was made authorizing Patrick Morrell to agree to the \$20,000 contract that he is reviewing with the Architect and the Engineers as long as his concerns are satisfied by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery. No questions. Motion carried 4 ayes, 1 nay; Councilman Churchill with the dissenting vote.

Wages: Mr. Ferrara said the Board has to approve Elected Officials' wages. Total for Town Board is \$36,000.

A motion was made to keep the Budget line for Town Board salaries the same as this year by Steve Churchill and seconded by Michael Ferrara. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Mr. Ferrara referred to Town Justice #1 and Town Justice #2, and said the salaries are the same. He said there is an Election in November for Town Justice #2, and he personally doesn't think Town Justice #2 should be paid the same as Town Justice #1. It was mentioned that both Justices' salaries have to be the same. Mr. Ferrara said he will look into it and the Board can make a decision at the October 20th Meeting.

Mr. Ferrara stated he reduced the Town Supervisor's salary by 10%. He mentioned the Town Clerk and her other titles salary. Mr. Avery said he thinks a wage freeze at this point under these circumstances is a good idea.

A motion was made to freeze wages across the Board for all employees by Doug Avery and seconded by Dawn Dyson.

Mr. DeLelys said with COVID and everything going on he cannot agree with that. Brief discussion followed.

The above motion made by Doug Avery and seconded by Dawn Dyson to freeze wages across the Board for all employees was carried 4 ayes, 1 nay; Councilman DeLelys with the dissenting vote.

Debt: Mrs. Warfel said there are two obligation districts. Bond payment in the former Village which will be paid off in 2025 – we are simply taxing to pay the interest. The other part of that is the Retirees and the Town's portion of their insurance cost. There is sufficient in the fund balance for that obligation district to pay the principal through the end of that debt. The V-2 is the obligation district for the Town outside and it covers the retirement benefits for retirees.

Mrs. Warfel said SR is the Refuse districts; we are under contracts and the cost will be the same this year. The final debt is the bond for Bridgeport Area Water which will be paid off in 2037.

Mr. Lazzaro said he thinks it's admirable that the Supervisor is taking a 10% decrease. He believes the whole Board should take a 10% decrease. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Ferrara requested that the Board think about RFPs for professional services and make a decision. After discussion, Mr. Ferrara stated it's the Board's fiscal responsibility to get the best situation for taxpayers of Seneca Falls.

Being there was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Meeting by Steve Churchill and seconded by Doug Avery. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Special meeting on Monday, October 19, 2020 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 130 Ovid Street.

Present were Supervisor Michael Ferrara; Councilpersons David DeLelys and Douglas Avery; and Patrick Morrell, Attorney for the Town.

Supervisor Ferrara called the Meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. A roll call of Board Members was taken, and Councilpersons Churchill and Dyson were absent from the Meeting; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Agreement – Town & Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission: A motion was made to approve the Agreement between the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission and the Town of Seneca Falls by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Ferrara stated this is an agreement to commission a four-women statute in Seneca Falls; all the players have not been determined yet. He said this is a time sensitive grant – they need the contract signed today. Mr. Morrell has reviewed it and gave it his blessing. Mr. Ferrara said \$274,000 will be granted to the Town of Seneca Falls from the Commission for expenses.

Mr. Ferrara said right now, the statute is going to go to East Bayard Street next to the three women; the property is owned by Generations Bank who will lease the property to the Town for \$1.00 a year. The property can be used as long as the Town needs to. He said hopefully, Peoples Park is included in the DRI Initiative, and the permanent home of the statute will be in Peoples Park; the price of moving the statute is included in the \$274,000. Mr. Morrell has reviewed this and has worked directly with the Commission; Mrs. Murney-Karsten has been involved in this as well.

Mr. Avery asked if this is just the small contract. Mr. Ferrara replied the Board approved the small contract, and now that is all part of this agreement. Mr. Morrell stated this is the agreement that is coming from the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. He added this is the Federal money that pays for the contract that the Board already agreed to (\$18,500).

The above motion made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery to approve the Agreement between the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission and the Town of Seneca Falls was carried 3 ayes, 0 nays.

Being there was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Meeting by Doug Avery and seconded by Michael Ferrara. No questions. Motion carried 3 ayes, 0 nays.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk

