

Mr. Churchill referred to Chemicals (F8330.409) which is appropriated at \$60,000 and said this year, it looks like we are on target to hit what was budgeted last year which was around \$40,000 – do we need \$60,000. Mr. Tullo replied absolutely – they are using more carbon, and the PH upgrade is going to use CO2, so there will be more expenses in chemicals and sodium hydroxide. He added the additional \$20,000 is to cover those chemicals.

Under Transmission and Distribution, Mr. Ferrara said the line item for Replacement Program Meters (F8340.435) is budgeted at \$8,000; last year was \$20,000 and expenditures through August was only \$1,568. Mr. Tullos said that will be spent as they will be ordering meters this week. Mr. Ferrara stated he and Mr. Avery are working on a committee that is looking at automating our water meters in homes; many of our meters are outdated and have to be replaced. They have talked to a couple of vendors, and it's not cheap; \$1.3 million to automat our whole system. He added until they have a chance to do a cost analysis, the new meters Mr. Tullo is buying will be able to be used for the new system, if we transfer over. Discussion followed.

#### Sewer

Under Engineer, Mr. Ferrara referred to Sewer Improvement Study (G1440.400); \$70,000 has been allocated, and one of our major projects that has to be figured out this year is the Kingdom Road Pump Station and Sewer line. Discussion followed relative to having a discussion with B& L regarding options.

Mr. Tullo referred to Fall Street Pump Station (G8120.209) and Water Street Pump Station (G8120.21) and said those two numbers will be encumbered to next year- \$95,000 and \$100,000 – those two pump stations need to be replaced.

Under Sewage Treatment/Disposal, Mr. Ferrara inquired about the line item for Conveyor/Sludge (G8130.202) which went from zero to \$20,000. Mr. Tullo replied that is for a new sludge belt for the conveyor; they have two estimates and the lowest estimate right now is \$18,000. The line item for Roof Repairs (G8130.474) \$18,000 is for the Sewer Treatment Plant. Mr. Ferrara asked if they were going to do the repairs. Mr. Tullo replied if they can – safety-wise, they may not be allowed.

James Sandlas said his understanding is that the water and sewer rates charged to taxpayers should be enough to cover the operating budget and the capital budget. Mr. Ferrara stated if we do that, water and sewer rates are going to be crazy. He added we don't have to do it that way – we are trying to maintain it as we are doing now which is to appropriate landfill money there. He said once that is out, you are going to see exorbitant water and sewer rates or no capital improvement projects or no equipment charges. Mr. Ferrara stated there's going to be a lot of fiscal planning to go out 3-5 years as to what is needed and what is not needed if that revenue is gone. Mr. Churchill stated we need to live within this Town's means without the landfill money – we can't keep injecting it in here and think we are going to be in a good place in 2025 when it closes. Mr. Avery stated we can also use landfill money now to make sure that we are in a possible good shape when 2025 comes around. He added we should be doing as much now with a large share of landfill money, knowing that that revenue source is going to end in five years. Mr. Churchill said he would agree, but the Board has to be very cautious to creep into the operating expenditures of the Town – that's what the Board has done over the past years and that's what we are continuing to do. Discussion followed.

Brad Jones referred to the \$5.6 million equalization tank and said Town of Tyre and Town of Junius are not participating in these projects, and they should pay their share – is it too late to go back and ask them to pay. Mr. Ferrara replied it's too late – the IMA has been in the works for a long time. He added there are 14 users on the 318/414 sewer line, and they are paying 1 ½ times the rate. They also pay an operating and maintenance fee. Lengthy discussion followed.

Danielle Bonafiglia spoke on behalf of Bonadent and the Bonafiglia family. She stated the vote was that the Landfill closes in 2025. They rely on the Town Board to make these tough decisions. Please don't kick the can down the road any further. They ask that we work together collaboratively to charter a responsible path forward for the budget that does not rely on garbage. Ms. Bonafiglia stated if we can agree that Seneca Falls has more to offer than just a dumping ground, and if we stay the course of Landfill closure in 2025, we have five years to wean off this dependency and create a responsible and economic pathway to become trash free. She assured the Board that there are dedicated citizens ready to rally behind you, and it's that mindset, cooperation and commitment that will enable us to be a thriving community.

Mr. Churchill asked Mr. Tullo if the Town rents him a house or does he pay rent; Mr. Tullo replied he pays rent - \$6,000 a year.

Mr. Jones asked what B&L was paid for the last two or three years – maybe you can cut them out. Mrs. Warfel

replied she didn't know for sure, but it's about \$200,000. Mr. Ferrara said the Board is going to do an RFP for labor law and engineering services – you still have to have an engineer. He doesn't know exactly what B&L's contract is, but it's not \$100,000; when you start adding projects, those are additional costs to an engineer.

Mario Agnello said he thinks that everyone would agree that based on surrounding cities and towns tax rates, that we use the Landfill money to artificially create this low tax rate – most of the surrounding areas are paying 2-2 ½ times what we pay in taxes. He said if we have adopted Local Law #3 telling us that the Landfill has to close in 2025, he is not clear on why the budget negotiations and the budget process the Board is going through now isn't aimed at the elimination of the Landfill money, whether it's at a 15% or 20% rate per year. Mr. Agnello said the budget negotiations now should be aimed at what we are going to do when we don't have that revenue. Mr. Ferrara said he has been saying that all year – if you are going to get rid of the revenue, then you have to cut spending. Mr. Churchill added – and/or raise taxes. Mr. Avery stated people are going to have to realize that no one wants to hear because we have artificially lowered taxes for so long. This Community cannot survive on \$10.00 per \$1,000 without the Landfill; taxes are going to have to go up – not all at once – not all this year – not 43% this year. Mr. Avery added down the line, hopefully, we won't be at \$20.00 or \$23.00 like some of our neighboring communities. Further discussion followed.

Mr. Ferrara stated there is money being put aside. In 2020, in the middle of the worst pandemic, he doesn't think that the average person who has been laid off or doesn't have a job can afford an increase in taxes. He said personally, if he can work it out this year that these people will not have an increase in their taxes, he is going to support that 100%. He added you may be able to afford an increase in taxes, but he talks to people every day who can't afford an increase and who don't come to these meetings – they feel intimidated and feel like they have been ridiculed over the years. Mr. Agnello said he understands people are out of work and he totally sympathizes with everything people are going through, but he thinks it's a Federal and State issue – he doesn't think it's anything we can take care of with Landfill money, and doesn't think we should. Mr. Ferrara responded if we have the opportunity to possibly do that this year, we can do that – the Federal or State government is not going to be sending money to Seneca Falls. Lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Churchill stated Mr. Ferrara mentioned that \$50,000 was cut from the Budget so far; at the last Meeting, the Board cut over \$60,000 out of Highway, and talking about cutting another \$56,000 – we are probably closer to \$200,000 after last week. Mr. Ferrara asked Mrs. Warfel if she knows how much has been cut based on the Workshops so far. Mrs. Warfel replied we dropped it from \$13,025,000.00 to \$12,956,000.00.

Barbara Reese stated people who are here all have the same problem. The Budget has to be passed by November 20<sup>th</sup>; people go their own way and forget about things. She thinks people who are here are willing to help if we could try to come together with some sort of goal. Maybe we can make a commitment after the Budget is passed to not forget about it until the end of October. Mrs. Reese said we all pay taxes; some are fearful that the Landfill will never close – we are all in the same boat. Mr. Ferrara said he agrees – it's an 11-month process and needs to start in January. Further discussion followed.

Mr. Tullo stated with all the work that went into this Budget, it was cut by 18%. Mr. Ferrara stated you and the rest of the departments did the best they can. He said asking people to cut cut, cut, there's going to be a point when you really have to get down to the numbers, and it's going to be people who have to be removed or benefits.

Mr. DeLelys stated Mr. Peterson is on vacation this week. At the last Meeting, he had a line item (\$40,000) for a truck. He was checking into leasing, and when he did, he found it was not to his advantage to lease. Mr. DeLelys said Mr. Peterson has three quotes to purchase a truck; \$40,000 is in that line item, and the lowest quote was from Van Bortel at \$37,983. The plow is \$500 more, so he would like to leave that line item at \$40,000. The Board agreed to leave that line item at \$40,000.

Mr. Ferrara stated the Town currently has a contract with the Visitors Center for about \$67,000; Rhonda Destino is here asking for an additional \$53,000 to that \$67,000. Last year, the Town put a new HVAC system in and hardwood floors on the main floor and second floor.

SF Visitors Center: Rhonda Destino stated she came in April 2019 and realized that the Town funding and how this operation at the Visitors Center was conducted was grossly underfunded. They came to the Town Board last year with realistic numbers and accurate numbers of what it takes to operate such a facility, and asked for \$169,000 at that time. She said with some of the chaos that happened last year, a compromise was made of going forth with the current contract and then adding in additional line items;; in addition to the contract it came to about \$120,000. Ms. Destino said they recognize the hardships of this year, but the contract is still not accurate – to be a professional organization, we really should take a look at that. She referred to the salaries

and expense of a professional run Visitors Center, and said neither herself nor the staff receive any benefits or increases.

Ms. Destino said the Heritage Area Commission has been reinstated because the Town is a Heritage Area for New York State. When you talk about future things, they are hoping to be a revenue stream in the way of the Heritage Area for the Town, and tourism is huge. Ms. Destino thanked the Board for their support of those projects (new HVAC and flooring) which has made their space look much better. They believe this will be a return on our investment and long term plan.

Mr. Avery stated here, they are using SFVC and SFH&TC. Ms. Destino explained that they rebranded through the DRI process in using Seneca Falls Heritage and Tourism Center; for the conversation this Evening they used Visitors Center. Mr. Avery said Ms. Destino is saying 95% Visitors Center and 5% Museum; Ms. Destino responded yes, it is. She added it's sad but true, people are not coming through their doors looking for the Museum. The 5% of their budget for the Museum is not here; it is fundraised – it's part of programming and exhibits.

Mr. Ferrara stated is it safe to say, from Ms. Destino's prospective, this would be an annual expenditure on the part of the Town - \$120,216. Ms. Destino replied she thinks that would be accurate, and as we go forward, it would be professional to have an accurate contract, and would be easier for them for planning purposes.

Mr. Avery referred to the personnel side and said all the help totals 140 man hours per week. Ms. Destino stated she is the only full time person – all the rest are part-time. The third Docent is just seasonal help – May through October time frame. Mr. Avery said during that time when that person is on, that's almost the hours of four full time people – how are the staff spread out. Ms. Destino replied 10-6 Mon. through Sat., 12-4 Sundays. They hope to try to continue to be open seven days a week; right now, going down to cooler temperatures, they are open five days a week but they are open weekends. Ms. Destino said there is herself, a part-time Assistant and one person at the front counter. Brief discussion followed.

Ms. Destino stated they want to be a professional entity. Their location is the center of Fall Street, but they want to be that center – they want to give people information and get local and tourists engaged in that way. She added with a really small budget, it's hard to have that professionalism when you're trying to do more and more as they have been.

James Sandlas asked if they have revenue raising ability on their own. Ms. Destino replied they are not able to charge a fee to come in at the Visitors Center, so people leave donations. Mr. Sandlas said so there is no revenues, just expenses. Ms. Destino replied yes, for the Visitors Center. She added the Town Heritage Area headquarters is their building and the Town's Boaters amenities is in the building. Mr. Sandlas referred to the boaters launch and asked if they pay. Ms. Destino replied they do not have a fee, but most of them give a donation. Discussion followed relative to the Boaters Facility and charging fees.

Mr. Churchill asked what it is currently budgeted for; Mr. Ferrara replied in the Tentative Budget, the contract amount is \$69,216. Mr. Avery stated someone made a decision to take out the third line they had last year. Mrs. Warfel replied that was her; her understanding was that it was a one-time thing – she didn't know it was going to be every year because the contract stipulates only the \$67,000 plus an additional 3% every year. Mrs. Giovannini stated the other \$53,000 was agreed to and provided after they presented operating expenses.

Mr. Sandlas stated if their mission is tourism in Seneca Falls and you live within the County, tourism – 100% goes to the Chamber of Commerce. He asked if they were soliciting the Chamber of Commerce as part of their budget. Ms. Destino replied they are in discussion with them, as well as the County, but this year, things have stalled for 2020. Mr. Ferrara stated the Chamber of Commerce getting all the money has been a hot topic over the years at the County. He had discussions with County Manager and Chairman and told them we need to help out these charitable places that bring in tourists – they are going to bring it up tomorrow. Mr. Avery asked if ours was the only Visitors Center in the County; Mr. Ferrara replied no, Ovid has a Visitors Center. Mr. Avery said the County should be sharing the money to these agencies that are promoting tourism – the County benefits from these two Visitors Centers.

Mr. Churchill stated if we are going to have a Visitors Center we need to fund it. They asked for \$120,000; in the interest of shaving a little off because everyone else has, he would like to suggest \$108,000 for next year.

A motion was made to put \$108,000 in the budget for next year for the SF Visitors Center by Steve Churchill and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Avery stated he is of a mind to fund it; this is one of those things that doesn't give a tangible result to a lot of people. He added if tourism is our future, we need to do everything we can to make it effective. He said the thing that surprised him was the 95% Center and 5% Museum. Ms. Destino mentioned the 95% of time spent in that type of programming that they need to still obtain is in the Visitors Center, and the 5% of everybody's work for the responsibility and obligation was left to them from the Delavans of the Seneca Museum. Discussion followed. Mr. Ferrara stated their overall budget presented was \$139,689; they reduced the budget by \$19,000. He thinks if it's funded, it should be at \$120,216.

The above motion made by Steve Churchill and seconded by Doug Avery to put \$108,000 in the budget for the SF Visitors Center was carried 3 ayes, 2 naves; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilman DeLelys with the dissenting votes.

Mr. DeLelys said he still thinks funds should come from the County and the Chamber and they can do some fundraising.

Ludovico Trail: Mr. Ferrara read a letter from Liz Rossetti, Vice-President of the Sculpture Trail, which requested a contribution of \$3,000 to maintain the grounds of the Trail which has provided everyone a tranquil walk along the Canal for years.

A motion was made to put \$3,000 in the Budget for the Ludovico Sculpture Trail by Steve Churchill and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Avery asked if they were in last year's Budget; Mrs. Warfel said they were in 2019 and 2020, and they are not in the 2021 Budget yet.

The above motion made by Steve Churchill and seconded by Doug Avery to put \$3,000 in the Budget for the Ludovico Sculpture Trail was carried 3 ayes, 2 naves; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilwoman Dyson with the dissenting votes.

It's a Wonderful Life Musuem: Mr. Ferrara read a letter from Frances Caraccilo, Treasurer of the Museum, which requested a contribution of \$25,000 as they prepare for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the movie.

A motion was made to put \$25,000 in the Budget for the It's a Wonderful Life Museum by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Steve Churchill.

Mr. Churchill asked if they were not-for-profit; Mr. Ferrara replied yes, they are. Mr. Avery noted their letter says \$25,000; the line item in the Budget for 2020 says \$20,000. He said when they have been here, the primary thing they were relying on the Town for was to pay for the airfares of the actors to come here; obviously, that's not going to happen this year. Mr. Avery said to him, \$25,000 is too much; if anything, the Board should maintain what it gave them last year. In spite of the fact that the Historical Society was cut more than one-half, he thinks it's too much.

The above motion made by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Steve Churchill to put \$25,000 in the Budget for It's a Wonderful Life Museum did not carry as the vote was 1 aye, 4 naves; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilpersons Dyson, Avery and Churchill with the dissenting votes.

A motion was made to put \$7,000 in the Budget for the It's a Wonderful Life Museum, the same as the SF Historical Society, by Doug Avery and seconded by Steve Churchill. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 naves.

Under Central Date Processing, Mr. Churchill asked what the \$15,000 was for in the line item for Equipment (A1680.200). Mrs. Warfel said that is for any equipment that is needed for data processing. She said under Contractual (A1680.401) that amount should be \$40,000 which is for the contract for storage with Dataprise. Mr. Churchill said he thinks \$40,000 for storage is too much. Mr. Ferrara stated he talked to them – he doesn't think it's anything that is replaceable; he will talk to them again. Brief discussion followed.

Under Parks, the line item for People's Park Cameras (A7110.414) is zeroed out, and the line item for Training (7510.401) under Historian was zeroed out. Mr. Churchill referred to Gas and Electricity (A7989.400) for the Visitors Center/Boaters Facility, and said it appears to be going down, but our budget is going up. Mrs. Warfel said it is the same as this year's budget. The line item for Gas and Electricity was reduced to \$14,500.

Under Insurance, Mr. Churchill had a question about the line item for Town portion (A9060.802), Mrs. Warfel said that is the Town's share for Retirees' insurance. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Churchill referred to Transfers to Other Funds and asked about the line item for Transfer to Community Center (A9902.902). Mrs. Warfel said this is because we fund the Community Center. Mr. Churchill asked about Refuse and Garbage Charges (A2130). Mrs. Warfel replied that would be revenue coming in from the Landfill. Mr. Sandlas asked – how much money is anticipated from the Landfill; Mr. Ferrara replied about \$3.5 million. Mr. Sandlas asked if some of that is going into reserve; Mr. Ferrara replied correct. Discussion followed.

Mr. Churchill asked about the line item for Salary Contingency (DA1990.401). Mrs. Warfel explained she added 2% to the Budget to show the Board what it would cost to give the employees increases – that has been removed because the Board voted to not give increases. Mr. Ferrara said Mrs. Warfel shared with the Board what effect 1.3% increase would have on the Budget - \$26,000. Mr. Churchill asked if we have a Tax Stabilization fund; Mrs. Warfel replied yes – we have \$1.3 million right now.

Mr. Avery made a motion to put 1.3% back in the Budget for employees, and also to look at the insurance. Mr. Ferrara suggested looking at insurance first. He said if you go from 90% to 85% which would not take effect for three months, it represents a \$56,000 savings in the Budget.

A motion was made to reduce the Town's contribution for employees insurance to 85% by Doug Avery and seconded by Dave DeLelys. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

A motion was made to give a 1.3% salary increase to Town employees with the exception of the Police by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Ferrara said it's about a \$26,000 cost. Mr. DeLelys mentioned that it will be offset by the insurance savings. Mr. Avery referred to the pay raises and said he has heard an awful lot in the past couple of weeks about people talking about their raise – there is a sense of entitlement among the employees that this is something they are entitled to regardless of the condition of the Town. He doesn't think when you work for a municipality it's quite that simple.

The above motion made by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Doug Avery to give a 1.3% salary increase to Town employees with the exception of the Police was carried 4 ayes, 1 nay; Councilwoman Dyson with the dissenting vote.

#### Vince's Park

Mr. Ferrara said if you keep the Park open, the budget is \$95,575; if you don't open the pool, the savings is about \$47,375.

A motion was made to not open Vince's Park for 2021 by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson.

Mr. Avery stated he is not ready to give up on Vince's Park. For the most part, our finances for next year will be about what they have been. He thinks it's a real asset to the Town. Mr. Avery said he is in favor of funding it and in favor of including the pool. There may be in 2025 a day of reckoning when the Town will have to take that step, He doesn't see why we are doing it now when we got Landfill revenue for five more years. Mr. Churchill agreed with Mr. Avery – green space is very valuable, and once when it's gone it's almost impossible to replace. Mr. Churchill and Mr. DeLelys agreed to support keeping Vince's Park open.

The above motion made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson to not open Vince's Park for 2021 did not carry as the vote was 2 ayes, 3 nays; Councilmen Avery, Churchill and DeLelys with the dissenting votes.

A motion was made keep Vince's Park open and fund it as per Jim Spina's submission of \$95,575 by Doug Avery and seconded by Dave DeLelys.

Mr. Ferrara stated based on the information he has from Mr. Passalacqua and proposals, he thinks the pool is going to cost a lot more money with repairs. He wants the Board prepared that it is a strong possibility that they may come in with things needed to keep the pool open. Brief discussion followed.

The above motion made by Doug Avery and seconded by Dave DeLelys to keep Vince's Park open and fund it as per Jim Spina's submission of \$95,575 was carried 3 ayes, 2 nays; Supervisor Ferrara and Councilwoman Dyson with the dissenting votes.

Mr. Ferrara asked for the Board's permission to work with Mr. Spina to maybe consolidate some staffing at Vince's Park. The Board had no objection to have that conversation with Mr. Spina.

Landfill Revenue

Mr. Churchill proposed the following: take 1/3 (about \$470,000) out of the Capital Reserve Fund; 1/3 out of Landfill revenue and increase taxes by approximately 14%.

Mr. Ferrara stated Mrs. Warfel worked up three scenarios:

1. Add \$1.9 million into the Budget which would lower taxes about 2%. Tax rate would go from \$10.31 to \$10.09.
2. Add \$1.84 million into the Budget which keep the tax rate about the same – \$10.31 to \$10.28.
3. Add \$1.4 million into the Budget which would put the tax rate from \$10.31 this year to \$11.29 in 2021.

A motion was made to go with proposal No. 2 and add \$1,847,209 into the Budget to balance the Budget by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Michael Ferrara.

Mr. Churchill said he doesn't know how we get out of this mess if we keep perpetuating the mess – that is to take whatever we need out of the Landfill money and put it into the Operating Fund and continue on. He would like the Board to take some money out of the Tax Stabilization Fund and increase the taxes 14%. We would not just be taking dump money and injecting it into the Operating budget. He can't support this proposal.

Mr. Avery stated all the communities around us that have the programs and services we offer are paying \$20.00+ per \$1,000. He doesn't want to get us anywhere near there, but he thinks this effort to constantly keep taxes flat is misguided. Mr. Avery thinks for the Board to not at least allow the taxes to rise according to inflation is suicidal. He said year after year, we try to keep taxes flat or take them down and on the expense side it's going up again.

Mr. Churchill said his proposal would raise taxes to \$11.75 per \$1,000 – up about \$1,40. He added the Landfill is going to close in 2025, and right now, we have to do everything we can to operate and keep this town solvent when that date comes. Mr. Churchill said the communities around the Town are paying \$10.00 more – we have to start raising taxes.

Frank Sinicropi stated Waterloo has more foreclosures this year than any other town in the County because taxes went up 110%; Seneca Falls is second with the most foreclosures. He said if the Board keeps raising taxes, you are going to be getting more and more foreclosures. He added there are some poor people in this County; if you raise taxes, there will be a lot more. Mr. Churchill said it's not how the Board wants to do it – it's how they have to do it. Lengthy discussion followed.

The above motion made by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Michael Ferrara to go with proposal No. 2 and add \$1,847,209 into the Budget to balance the Budget was carried 3 ayes, 2 naves; Councilmen Avery and Churchill with the dissenting votes.

Public Hearing – 2021 Preliminary Budget: A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board approved a motion on October 6, 2020 establishing the Public Hearing for the Preliminary Budget on November 5, 2020; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to pass a resolution re-affirming this decision and formally set the Public Hearing.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board does hereby adopt this resolution establishing a Public Hearing for the 2021 Town of Seneca Falls Preliminary Budget on November 5, 2020 at the Community Center, 35 Water Street, Seneca Falls at 6:00 P.M.

No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 naves.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER  
Town Clerk

