

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Budget Workshop and Meeting on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 130 Ovid Street.

Present were Supervisor Gregory Lazzaro; Councilmen Louis Ferrara, David DeLelys, Douglas Avery and Vittorio Porretta. Also present were Beverly Warfel, Principal Account Clerk; Stuart Peenstra, Police Chief and Marshall Foster, Network Administrator.

Supervisor Lazzaro opened the Budget Workshop and Meeting at 5:00 P.M. A roll call of Board Members was taken and all were present; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

POLICE

Public Safety: Chief Peenstra stated many of the line items within the Budget are contractual line items so they are pretty much set to where they are at. He added salaries are set by the bargaining unit. Mr. Lazzaro noted Sergeants, Investigator and Full Time Police Officers are all set by the bargaining unit. The Chief said Part-Time (A3120.104) are not, and he is requesting that line item to remain the same as this year - \$48,360.00. Data Base Clerks (A3120.105) and Longevity (A3120.106) are contractual. Chief Peenstra referred to Overtime (A3120.107) and said it appears they are going to be over by the end of the year. One main reason (they haven't been over on overtime since he became Chief) is they had three full time Officers that were off the schedule for most of the year, so two Officer recruits were filling vacant positions throughout the year. He reminded the Board that overtime has been slowly cut back. The line item for Overtime was increased from \$70,000.00 to \$80,000.00. Discussion followed.

Crossing Guards (A3120.108) is the same as this year. The Chief requested that the two Crossing Guards be given the same percentage raise as all employees. Harbor/Parking Attendant (A3120.109) was removed from the Budget. Chief Peenstra said the Lieutenant (A3120.111) and himself currently have no percentage wage increase, and obviously, they would like to see some increase. Mr. Lazzaro referred to Chief Peenstra's Memo relative to unionizing and asked the Chief to explain it. Chief Peenstra stated in discussion with the Board, it was approved at one of the Board Meetings to allow our Labor Relations Attorney to draft an MOU for the Board to vote on. He said during those conversations with our Labor Relations Attorney, he felt it was in the best interest of the Lieutenant and himself if they form their own bargaining unit. He added they are looking to do that and will come to the Board to negotiate a contract. Mr. Lazzaro asked if they were certified as a bargaining unit yet; the Chief responded they have an Attorney who has been in contact with Roemer this week and he will reach out to the Board. Mr. Ferrara asked if this has been done by any other place; Chief Peenstra replied yes, there are other agencies that have a Command Staff Union.

Resource Officer (A3120.112) was increased to \$25,000.00. Chief Peenstra said this is based on the percentage rate that the School reimburses the Town (75% of the Sergeant's salary); the Town pays for the benefits – it has been adjusted because of Sgt. Poole's salary. Investigator on Call (A3120.114) and Education Degree Award (A3120.115) are contractual. Equipment (A3120.200) is at \$25,000.00. Chief Peenstra referred to Vehicles (A3120.201) and said they are looking at replacing two vehicles. They are currently leasing four vehicles, and this will bring it up to six. They are still only spending \$53,000.00 on six leased vehicles when we used to spend (before leasing) at least \$40,000.00 per vehicle.

Clothing (A3120.400) and Office Supplies (A3120.404) will remain the same as this year. Telephone/Wireless charges (A3120.405) stays at \$14,000.00. The Chief mentioned that the Town does receive some funds for our wireless communications on three cars from the County. Postage (A3120.406) remains at \$360.00, and Education (A3120.408) was reduced from \$22,000.00 to \$20,000.00. Mr. Lazzaro asked if that expense can go up if some people leave and the Board approves hiring another person. Chief Peenstra responded that he looked at expenditures for this year and \$10,000.00 is remaining, and two people were sent to the Academy, so this is good.

Publications (A3120.409) remains at \$400.00, and Gasoline (A3120.410) was increased from \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00. The Chief remarked that gas has gone up; patrol is 28 square miles of the Town. Ammunition (A3120.411) remains at \$2,000.00, and Vehicle Maintenance remains at \$17,500.00. Maintenance Agreement (A3120.413) is at \$19,000.00. Chief Peenstra explained that they have multiple maintenance agreements, such as body cameras, license plate readers, tasers, etc. Radio Maintenance (A3120.414) was increased to \$5,000.00. Chief Peenstra said they were very fortunate that the County gave them radios through a grant the County received. If one of the radios was to go down, \$5,000.00 would not pay for one radio; they do have money in the Equipment line, but if there is a Radio Maintenance line, money needs to be in that line item for repairs, etc. Brief discussion followed.

Photo (A3120.415) remains at \$825.00, and Miscellaneous Contractual (A3120.416) remains at \$9,000.00. The Chief put \$10,000.00 in the line item for Grants (A3120.490). He said for years he had grant money which he could utilize if there was a matching grant. He didn't put any money in this line item the past few years because the Town did not have a grant writer to justify that. He is hoping the Board will do something with this in 2020. Travel Expenses (A3120.492) was increased from \$1,750.00 to \$2,000.00.

TAX COLLECTOR

Tax Collection: Equipment (A1330.200) remains at \$200.00, and Office Supplies (A1330.400) was lowered to \$350.00. Postage (A1330.401), Education (A1330.402) and Ads & Legal Notices (A1330.403) all remain the same as this year. Dues & Fees (A1330.405) and Miscellaneous (A1330.406) remain at \$25.00 each.

TOWN CLERK

Equipment & Software (A1410.200) remains at \$1,000.00. The Town Clerk said there is one computer she may need to replace. Office & Computer Supplies (A1410.400) was increased to \$1,100.00, and Postage was reduced to \$800.00. Ads & Legal Notices (A1410.402) and Education Expense (A1410.403) remains the same as this year. Maintenance Contracts (A1410.404) was increased to \$800.00. Publication and Books (A1410.405) is at \$50.00, and Dues & Fees (A1410.406) was lowered to \$75.00. Miscellaneous (A1410.407) was left at \$25.00.

LAW

Mrs. Warfel asked what the Board intends to do with the wage – the Attorney does not intend to be here. Mr. Lazzaro said it's up to the Board. Mrs. Warfel said it depends if the Board intends to hire another Attorney or put it into the next line down (Regular) and make it a contractual item. Mr. Lazzaro said - or go with a full time Attorney; most full time attorneys are going to be more than that. Mr. DeLelys said - can the title be Professional Services; Mrs. Warfel responded the Board can do that where it says Regular. Mr. Avery thinks the feeling is that the Board should be defunding full time Attorney for next year. Lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. DeLelys said Town Attorney Services is budgeted at \$60,862.00; the part-time Attorney we had was at \$50,000. Mr. Porretta mentioned that the \$60,863.00 doesn't include retirement and benefits. Mrs. Warfel noted that insurance is pushing \$20,000.00, and there's retirement on top of that. Mr. Avery said he realizes we may not be able to get through the year with \$47,000-\$48,000. He thinks the Town will be better off going to contractual services. He suggested putting \$50,000.00 under Regular (A1420.400) and zeroing out Town Attorney Services (A1420.100). Mr. Lazzaro said what happens when you have a contractual attorney and generally, their method of charge is in 15-minute increments. He thinks you have to be very careful - the Board Members cannot be calling this attorney on and on. At this point, Town Attorney Services (A1420.100) was zeroed out, and \$50,000.00 was put into the line item Regular (A1420.400).

Michael Ferrara asked why this is being discussed this year and not in previous years. Mr. Lazzaro replied Mr. Avery wanted to bring it up and it was brought up. Mr. Avery stated the Board was told several times that the Attorney was under a 2-year contract which will expire the end of the year. Mrs. Warfel added previous to this, the Board has never had professional services as an employee for Town Attorney; it's only been in the last two years – there was never a need to have the discussion before. Further discussion followed.

Environmental Fees (A1420.401) remains at \$2,000.00, and Litigation/Possible Litigation (A1420.402) stays at \$200,000.00. \$18,000.00 is in the line item for Negotiations (A1420.404). Mr. Lazzaro said this is Mr. Roemer, the Town's Labor Attorney. Office Supplies (A1420.403) and Education (A1420.405) was zeroed out.

ENGINEER

Contractual (A1440.400) was left at \$50,000.00.

BUILDINGS

Equipment (A1620.200) was increased from \$400.00 to \$1,000.00, and Custodial Supplies (A1620.400) was increased to \$2,500.00. Gas & Electric (A1620.401) went up to \$40,000.00, and Garbage Removal (A1620) went down from \$1,400.00 to \$1,200.00. Maintenance Parts & Repairs (A1620.404) remains the same as this year, as well as Service Contracts (A1620.405). Miscellaneous (A1620.406) is at \$7,000.00. Discussion followed relative to the Building Maintainer A1620.101) which is one-half of Mr. Passalacqua's salary and one-half of Mr. Nicholson's salary.

CENTRAL DATA PROCESSING

Mr. Lazzaro said Personnel Services (A1680.100) is Marshall Foster's salary. Equipment (A1680.200) was increased from \$12,051.97 to \$27,000.00. Mr. Avery questioned why this jumped to \$27,000.00. Marshall said it's for a memory detect storage unit usually mounted on a rack; it has four drives inside of it, and this will keep your disaster recovery and backup recovery on it. Mr. Avery asked what the cost is for that one unit; Marshall replied it depends on what type of drives and what manufacturer you want to go with – you don't want to keep your backups and data recovery on the same unit.

Office Supplies (A1680.400) is at \$2,000.00, and Education (A1680.401) was increased from \$2,000.00 to \$2,800.00. Marshall stated it is required in his field to stay up-to-date with what you are doing; technology changes very quickly. He added there are a lot more certifications out there. Michael Ferrara asked if it is mandated that all Information Technology people who work in a municipality have education training – what happens when a municipality has a part-time IT person. Marshall responded usually if it's part-time, they would end up handling it themselves; if you are a full time permanent person, they pay everything. Brief discussion followed.

Conferences (A1680.402) was increased from \$1,200.00 to \$1,800.00. \$250.00 was put into a line item for Mileage (A1680.403).

DONATIONS

Band Concerts: Seneca Falls Community Band (A7270.400) remains at \$500.00, and Pageant of Bands remains at \$100.00.

HISTORIAN

Historian (A7510.100) is at \$500.00, Contractual (A7510.400) remains at \$75.00, and Training (A7510.401) stays at \$400.00.

HISTORICAL PROPERTY

Historical Society: The line item for Historical Society (A7520.400) was increased from \$7,000.00 to \$25,000.00. The Town Clerk mentioned that they requested more money for some repairs that need to be done. Mr. Lazzaro suggested this be discussed after the Public Hearing.

CELEBRATIONS

\$500.00 was put into the line item for Conventions Days (A7550.400). It's a Wonderful Life (A7550.401) remains at \$4,000.00, and St. Anthony's Festival (A7550.402) was zeroed out.

The line item for It's a Wonderful Life Museum (A7550.405) is at zero. The It's a Wonderful Life Museum has sent a letter requesting \$5,000.00 to help get the Actors from the film here and to help get attendees to the various event venues. Anwei Law stated they have made that request in their letter of September 27th, and also submitted with that letter a draft Memorandum of Agreement that they developed which would formalize a legal arrangement. They are also requesting \$25,000.00 per year for a period of two years to support, promote and coordinate the 75th Anniversary celebration of It's a Wonderful Life (December 2021). Mrs. Law mentioned that they had almost 12,000 people come through last year, which is very important to this Community and economic development. She said they don't do any publicity because it's too expensive. She spoke about the message of this film as it relates to bullying and suicide. Discussion followed.

Rhonda Destino, Director of Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry, stated they have talked individually to each Board Member and gave two presentations and followed up with materials. They were here to see if anybody had any additional questions. Mr. Lazzaro suggested they come to the Public Hearing and make statements as to how strongly they feel. Miss Destino said they have a schedule of activities they will be presenting in 2020. They feel they are under-utilized, and feel they can do a lot more for the Community. Further discussion followed.

Mrs. Warfel asked about the request submitted by the Ludovico Sculpture Trail. Mr. Lazzaro read the letter which states they are requesting \$3,000.00 to maintain the grounds for the Seneca Falls Community. Mr. Lazzaro said this is another request the Board will have to consider.

CEMETERIES

Restvale Monument Repair (A8810.407) is at \$35,000.00. Mr. DeLelys said they would like to add another \$3,500.00 to paint the Keepers Cottage. After discussion, it was decided to increase that line item to \$38,500.00.

The Board discussed a date for another Budget Meeting. It was decided the Meeting will be held at 4:00 P.M. on Wednesday, November 13, 2019.

Mrs. Warfel stated the Board has to decide what they are going to do regarding personnel across the board – elected Officials' salaries have already been done. The Board agreed on a 2% increase for employees, the same as elected Officials.

Mrs. Warfel said Deborah Waite is going to get her certification in November. She needs to be brought up to the salary matrix; right now, she is being paid below the salary matrix. Mrs. Warfel said she needs to be brought up to the start of the matrix and bring it up 2% in January. She will present a resolution for the November Board Meeting.

Resolution – A motion was made by Doug Avery and seconded by Dave DeLelys to adopt the following resolution: WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls has a responsibility to examine the most cost-effective means of providing goods and services to its own operation and to the residents of Seneca Falls; and WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls has, in the past, contracted with an outside vendor to provide the Town's IT needs; and WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls has had a full time IT Staff Member since 2017; and WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls, having experienced both means of receiving these services, is aware of the benefits and pitfalls of each.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seneca Falls Town Council is hereby authorized to explore currently available part-time, contractual, and inter-municipal solutions to its Information Technology needs as it determines the most effective way to procure these needed services in the future; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the committee will provide a report and recommendation in time for consideration as part of the 2020 Town Budget.

Mr. Lazzaro said he will be voting no on this. He thinks the Board should look at all Departments, especially the Police. He said the Police have grown in leaps and bounds and he believes the Board should be able to authorize a referendum to let people make those decisions. He believes that when two people leave, the Board should start cutting by attrition. Mr. Lazzaro stated he believes that if we are going to look at one department for shared services, we should look at all departments for shared services. He thinks it's pin-pointing a department.

The above motion made by Doug Avery and seconded by Dave DeLelys to adopt the above resolution to explore available solutions to its Information Technology needs was carried 4 ayes, 1 nay; Supervisor Lazzaro with the dissenting vote.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk

