

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Special Meeting and Budget Workshop on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 130 Ovid Street.

Present were Supervisor Michael Ferrara; Councilpersons Dawn Dyson, Douglas Avery, David DeLelys and Steven Churchill. Also present was Patrick Morrell, Attorney for the Town; James Peterson, Highway Superintendent; Deborah VonWald, Assessor; Beverly Warfel, Senior Account Clerk and Peter Baker, Town Engineer.

Supervisor Ferrara called the Special Meeting and 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.

Old Business

Intermunicipal Rt. 318/414 Sewer Agreement: A motion was made to approve the Intermunicipal Sewer Agreement with Seneca County and Town of Tyre by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Ferrara stated the Board received this Agreement at the October Meeting; it was tabled so that Board members had a chance to review it. Mr. Churchill requested that it be put off until the November Meeting as he has not had a chance to look at it. Mr. Ferrara said he was not in favor of that – the Board received it October 1st. Mr. Churchill again requested to hold it off until the regular November Meeting; this is a Budget Workshop and it's not time sensitive. Mr. Ferrara responded that it is kind of time sensitive since he told the County and the Town of Tyre the Board would review it tonight and make a decision. He asked if any other Board Member needed more time; there was no response.

The above motion made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Doug Avery to approve the Intermunicipal Sewer Agreement with Seneca County and Town of Tyre was carried 4 ayes, 1 nay; Councilman Churchill with the dissenting vote.

New Business

Appoint Linda McCully to Heritage Area Commission: A motion was made to appoint Linda McCully as a Member of the Heritage Area Commission, said term ending December 31, 2025, by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays

Appoint Board Liaison to Heritage Area Commission: Mr. Ferrara stated we need to appoint a Board Member Liaison. Mr. Avery said he has an interest, but he is not looking for another committee. Mr. Ferrara said he would be happy to split the responsibility if Mr. Avery can't attend a Meeting.

A motion was made to appoint Doug Avery as the Board Liaison to the Heritage Area Commission by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

RFP for Camera System – Peoples Park: Mr. Ferrara said this was discussed at the last Budget Meeting. There is a \$10,000 line item in the 2020 Budget for cameras. There are two quotes which are similar in cost, but the one we have now ties into the software that we currently have at the Community Center and the Boaters Facility.

A motion was made to accept the proposal of Life Safety Systems for a camera system at Peoples' Park at a cost of \$3,878.00 by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Award Bid – Auburn Road Water Tower Backup Generator: A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys to award the Auburn Road Water Tower Backup Generator Project to Blackmon Farrell Electric, Inc. at the bid amount of \$57,600 by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys.

Mr. Baker stated thirteen bids were opened on October 5th; low bid was from Blackmon Farrell Electric, Inc. for \$57,600.00. They reviewed the bids and their recommendation is to award the bid to Blackmon Farrell Electric, Inc. Mr. Baker noted a lot of the work that has to be done the Town will be taking on themselves.

The above motion made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys to award the Auburn Road Water Tower Backup Generator Project to Blackmon Farrell Electric Inc. at the bid amount of \$57,600 was carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Transfer Funds from PH Adjustment line to Auburn Road Water Tower Backup Generator: A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dave DeLelys to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Town of Seneca Falls is in need of a backup generator at the Auburn Road Water Tower; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has opened and approved the bid for the generator; and WHEREAS, December 3, 2019, the Town Board passed a resolution to transfer funds to cover this project, but neglected to indicate the adjustment was to be made to the 2020 Water Fund Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Seneca Falls Town Board approves modifying the 2020 Water Fund Budget with a transfer from the PH adjustment line F8330.202 to F8340.202. the Auburn Road backup generator in the 2020 Budget in the amount of \$90,000.

No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Assessor: Deborah VonWald stated her pay was not budgeted for an increase, but she requested consideration for an increase. Kim Rose was brought down to part-time in her department and she is split with zoning. She said because of that, there has been a full time Aide in her Office for several years, and taking a cut there, she would like this adjustment of some sort in the matrix. Last year, they appointed her under the matrix and brought her up to the bottom of the matrix. Mrs. VonWald thinks after two years of service and her real estate background and the work she has been putting in, plus the education, there should be a slight adjustment.

Mrs. Von Wald stated almost 31% has been cut out of her budget going to part-time Aide. Postage (A1355.404) was minimized by almost 64%; at this time, there is no reval planned so she decreased that line. Ads/Legal Notices (A1355.406) was reduced by 50%, and Annual License Fee (A1355.412) went down 5 ½%.

Mr. Ferrara referred to Mileage (A1355.407) and said as Mrs. VonWald gets building permits from the Zoning Office, she goes out and checks the progress of the permits and when the job is completed. Mrs. VonWald mentioned that she inspects every building permit, especially now with the pandemic. She is going to be struggling a little more without Mrs. Rose assisting her. Mrs. VonWald said the same thing with sales – she is constantly watching Homestead net. She was allocated funds to use the MLS, but she has not used it. She stated her total overall budget savings is about 13%.

Mr. Ferrara stated Mrs. VonWald's salary is low under the matrix. She has 22 years of experience in real estate, 12 years as an appraiser, and taken on more responsibilities by reducing a position.

A motion was made to increase the Assessor's salary by \$5,000 by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Michael Ferrara.

Mr. Avery asked what the salary would be; Mr. Ferrara replied it would go to \$60,433.00. Mrs. Dyson said last week, the Board voted to not give any raises – how does this affect other people not getting raises. Mr. Ferrara replied she is a department Chairperson, and he doesn't think she was placed in the matrix correctly when she got her final certification. Discussion followed relative to the matrix and her placement on the matrix.

Mr. DeLelys suggested giving employees a cost of living 1.3% raise; Mrs. Dyson said the Board can't pick and choose – give it to everybody. Mr. Ferrara mentioned that the Board voted to give no raises. As the Budget process goes forward, someone can make a motion to provide a cost of living increase if they wish. Further discussion followed relative to providing a cost of living raise and the effect on the budget.

The above motion made by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Michael Ferrara to increase the Assessor's salary by \$5,000 (total salary \$60,433.00) was carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

A motion was made to give all employees a 1.3% cost of living increase, not including the Town Board and Assessor, and including Town Clerk, Highway Superintendent and Judge Lafler, by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Steve Churchill.

Mr. Ferrara said as it stands now, he is voting no. He would like to approach this at the October 26th Meeting because we are still looking at a 43% increase to the tax rate. He added at some point, the Board is going to have to either cut more spending or bring revenue into the Budget. When the Board makes those decisions, he would be more than willing to support the cost of living increases that Mr. DeLelys is proposing.

The Town Clerk mentioned that the Public Hearing Notice and salaries of elected Officials has to be published in the official paper by Thursday. Frank Sinicropi stated if you decide to give the Public Officers an increase, you don't have to publish it by Thursday – just pass a motion. It will have to be published sometime so that it gives people a chance if they want to have a permissive referendum against it and then put it on the ballot to vote, which is never going to happen – it's never happened in the history of the Town. The Town Clerk stated the law says if there is an increase in an elected Official's salary, it has to be a local law. She added in the Budget process,

it states that the public hearing notice and salaries of elected Officials has to be published within so many days of the Public Hearing. Mrs. Warfel stated at the last Meeting, a salary contingency of 2% increase was in the budget; when the decision was made to freeze wages, she took it out of the budget. After further discussion, Mr. Ferrara requested that Mrs. Warfel provide the Board with what the effect of a 1.3% increase in salaries would be on the Budget.

Mr. DeLelys withdrew his above motion to give all employees a 1.3% cost of living increase, and Mr. Churchill withdrew his second.

Court: Mr. DeLelys referred to Justice #2 and said the Board needs to discuss the salary. Mr. Ferrara stated Justice #1 is Judge Lafler; there is an election in November to fill the Justice #2 position. In the Budget, their salaries are the same, but he personally doesn't see why both positions have to be paid the same. He mentioned that Judge Lafler has 7 years of experience, and the new Justice coming in has zero experience as a Judge. He checked it out, and there is no law that says one can't be paid different from another one – the only stipulation is the Board has to make it official before the election on November 3rd. Mr. DeLelys said that he and Mr. Avery had a discussion with Judge Lafler, and when they started seven years ago, the salary was \$25,000. They are recommending that Justice #2 be paid \$25,000.

A motion was made to change Town Justice #2's salary to \$25,000 by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Doug Avery.

Mr. Churchill said if the Board makes an adjustment to this, it would have to be approved following the Public Hearing, and our Meeting isn't going to be until after the Public Hearing on November 5th. Mr. Ferrara said it just has to be established before the General Election on November 3rd. Mr. DeLelys said they checked with Mr. Morrell to make sure they are doing this correctly – he said you can do any salary amount you come up with.

The above motion made by Dave DeLelys and seconded by Doug Avery to change Town Justice #2's salary to \$25,000 was carried 5 ayes, 0 naves.

Judge Lafler referred to Court Security (A1110.107) and said there is no change. It started out with a much higher amount, and they started paying attention over the years as to what kind of money they need to pay law enforcement to be in Court. He added \$16,000 seems to be fair – they have been trying to watch that. Outside of County Court, they are the busiest Court – they have heavy dockets several times a month. Mr. Ferrara said since the Court reopened, has the caseload been normal or has it gone down since COVID. Judge Lafler replied the caseload is normal. The Judge said they appreciate having the SF Police Department as their security because of the training they have and the appearance they bring when they come to Court. Mr. Ferrara asked what they have on a typical Court day besides an Officer on the metal detector. Judge Lafler replied on a heavy Court day, they have two Officers checking people in. Because of COVID, they have a procedure that requires an Officer to fill out paperwork in reference to how a person wants to be contacted; they only allow so many people in Court and the rest have to wait in their cars or outside – they schedule it so there are so many per hour. Sometimes they will have an Officer at the bench, depending on the circumstances. Mr. Ferrara said in other courts who don't have two security people, wouldn't the Court Clerks be getting the information and one security at the metal detector – why can't a Court Clerk get the information. The Judge replied because it's a security situation – the hallway is a potential volatile area and he doesn't want to expose his Clerks to that type of a situation. Brief discussion followed.

Judge Lafler stated the Equipment line item (A1110.200) reflects the JCAP grant they received; this line item was left at \$2,000. Postage (A1110.401) was reduced to \$2,500, and Interpreter (A1110.404) remained at \$2,000. They have to be certified by New York State to get on the list. The Judge left Education (A1110.405) the same at \$5,500; the Court Clerks are now mandated to have training. Maintenance Contracts (A1110.406) was reduced to \$2,500. Judge Lafler referred to the Cell Phone line item (A1110.410) and said he had a discussion with Mr. Avery, Mr. DeLelys and Mr. Ferrara. He uses his cell phone to check out arraignments and his assignments on Friday nights down at the jail. He added more than half of the time he uses his phone to talk or text Clerks about cases. The Judge said if the Board is willing to pay 50% of his cell phone, he would be happy with that – more than 50% of his usage is for Court. The line item for Cell Phone was reduced to \$500 - 50% of the Judge's usage.

Brad Jones referred to the \$200,000 for the Court expenses – he knows a portion goes to the Town and a portion to the State; does the portion that goes to the Town in revenue offset the \$200,000. Mrs. Warfel replied no, the majority goes to the State. She said \$80,000 in revenues was budgeted for this year; the Town will probably get about \$60,000. Mr. Jones said we have a Court system with \$60,000 in revenue and \$200,000 in expenses – it's more for the taxpayers. Judge Lafler stated that's something Mr. Jones needs to take up with people at the State level. Mr. Ferrara said the Court system is not supposed to be a moneymaker – it's not something we

have a choice in – the Court is mandated. Mr. Ferrara requested that the Court Committee look into something like a local law that handles parking tickets - a local traffic bureau. Judge Lafler explained the process they go through for parking tickets. Further discussion followed.

Highway: Mr. Peterson stated under Traffic Control, Road/Street Signs (A3310.402) was increased by \$2,000, and Striping (A3310.403) was increased by \$500. Weed Control (A3310.405) was reduced from \$15,000 to \$1,000, as they can no longer spray themselves. The remainder of the line items remain the same. Mr. Ferrara referred to street signs and said a local law was passed making the parking signs coincide with laws on our books.

Under Highway Administration, Mr. Peterson said the Deputy Highway Superintendent (A5010.102) was increased to \$3,120. All the rest of the line items remain the same. Mr. Churchill referred to Ads & Legal Notices (A5010.402) and said it is budgeted at \$1,000 but, to date, only \$25.00 was spent. After brief discussion, it was agreed to reduce this line item to \$500. Internet/Phone/Cable (A5010.403) was reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,500.

Mr. Churchill referred to Office & Computer Supplies and said the Board may want to consider having one Office & Computer line item for the Town rather than every department having their own. Mrs. Warfel stated it is supposed to be allocated to every department's budget. Mr. Ferrara is having every department give him their request for office supplies so that he has one big demand for the whole Town, and will put that out for bid for the best price for those supplies. It will still have to be allocated to each department.

Under Garage, Mr. Peterson stated Custodial Supplies (A5132.402) was increased to \$1,200, All remaining line items remain the same. Under Street Lighting, Mr. Peterson said Electrician (A5182.401), he would like that line item at \$3,000. The Town got sighted for the overhead lights at the Bridge Street bridge – they have to be replaced. Mr. Ferrara asked if there was money in this year's budget; Mr. Peterson said yes, there is still money in that line. Mr. Ferrara suggested allocating it for this year. The line item for Electrician was reduced to \$2,500. Ornamental Lighting (A5182.402) was reduced to \$6,000 as almost all of the LED lighting is done.

Sidewalks (A5410.401) remains the same at \$3,500. Under Storm Sewers, Mr. Peterson stated he dropped Miscellaneous Projects (A8140.401) down to \$500 – that was on the Noble Road projects and they are done. Mr. Churchill referred to Grates/Basins/Pipes/Misc. (A8140.402), and said as of the end of August, \$600.00 was spent - does he anticipate spending a lot next year. After brief discussion, this line item was reduced to \$3,000.

Under Cemeteries, Mr. Peterson said the line item for Equipment (A8810.200) was reduced to \$9,000; one mower needs to be replaced. The Cemetery Commission line item (A8810.407) was reduced to \$32,000 – Mr. Peterson said he doesn't have anything to do with that as Kay Irland and Commission are responsible for that.

Mr. Peterson referred to Weed Killer Certification (DA5010.450) under Transportation, and said he zeroed that line item out. Under General Repairs, the line item for Motor Equipment Operator was reduced from \$270,000 to \$251,425. Asphalt/Town Portion (DA5110.406), Mr. Peterson said \$90,000 is in this line to cover the Balsley Road project – a bill has not been received yet. He feels he doesn't need \$90,000 for next year so he dropped it down to \$50,000. Mr. Churchill said will that be paid out of this year's Budget; Mr. Peterson replied it should be. After brief discussion, Mr. Ferrara suggested dropping it down to \$30,000; line item was reduced to \$30,000. Sub-Contractors (DA5110.409) remains at \$1,500.

Under Bridges, the line item for Bridge Repair (DA5120.400), Mr. Peterson said he left that at \$10,000. This goes into a fund and keeps accumulating; at the end of this year, \$90,000 will be in that fund. Mr. Peterson mentioned that they are trying to get a grant for that. Under Machinery, the line item for Equipment (DA5130.200) is \$167,000; out of that, he has to pay for the Ventrax (one more year on that). That line item is also for a plow truck at \$130,000; \$7,000 for a trailer; and a wing for the 2010 truck is \$25,000. Mr. Peterson said he would like to take \$100,000 out of the Capital Reserve fund to offset that \$167,000. Mr. Ferrara asked what was in the Reserve Fund; Mr. Peterson replied \$286,000. Mr. Ferrara said we will have to consult with Mr. Morrell on that. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Peterson stated he increased the line item for Capital Reserve Equipment (DA5130.201) from \$30,000 to \$50,000. He explained Caterpillar has a program where we pay \$10,000 a year for three years; they take that caterpillar and bring us a new one. He wants to replace the four bobcats next year – that's when you get the most for your money. He added this is why he increased this line item to \$50,000. Discussion followed relative to the bobcats and equipment purchases. Mr. Ferrara said this all comes under an Asset Management Program. Mr. DeLelys said the Town had an Asset Management Program- B & L developed it. Mr. Ferrara stated let's get it back. Further discussion followed.

Bobcat Attachments (DA5130.202) was reduced to \$18,000. Mr. Peterson referred to the Plow Lease (DA5130.205) and said he would like to get a new pickup truck with a lease, such as the Community Center and the Police have. He added instead of putting \$40,000 upfront, it will be \$12,000 the first year and then it goes

down. Mr. Ferrara asked what was being replaced; Mr. Peterson replied a 2013 – 2-wheel drive. The new truck will have a plow on it and it would be more feasible. Mr. Ferrara stated Mr. Peterson needs to come up with a comparison – how much does it cost to buy outright and how much would it cost for a 3-year lease. He said to hold off on this line item until October 26th.

Under Home and Community Services, Mr. Peterson increased the line item for Recycling to \$1,000 because he has to replenish his supply of leaf bags which they sell to the public. After brief discussion, it was decided to go out of the recycling business for leaf bags and zero out this line item.

Totes: Mr. Peterson said he checked on the totes. Mr. Ferrara asked if the Board wanted to have a discussion on totes as Mr. Churchill said this is something he wanted to look into. Mr. Churchill said the Board cannot come up with a solution tonight - he doesn't know what the Board wants to do. Mr. Ferrara asked if the Board wanted to add more money to buy totes and phase it in over time. Mr. Avery said he thinks they should be made available for people in the Town outside; the Board has been criticized because of the inequity of the situation. Mr. Ferrara stated if the Board wants to go with the premise to make it equitable, money should be added to the tote budget. He added obviously we can't buy all of them at one time, but maybe buy 100 and see how it goes. After further discussion, Mr. Ferrara suggested leaving the line item for totes (SR8160.403) at \$7,000 until this is resolved. Mr. Peterson referred to the line item for Dumpsters (SR8160.404), and said he has \$10,000 in that line item for dumpsters as the ones he has are in really rough shape – there is close to 15 that need to be replaced.

Snow Removal: Mr. Peterson stated under Salt (DA5142.401) he increased that line item to \$85,000 because last year, he ran out of salt. He has to buy 70% of the amount he put in for and that has to be put in in April. He had to put in more money last year and the year before.

Mr. Jones referred to the insurance budget of \$467,000 and asked how many employees are in the Town; Mr. Ferrara replied close to 50. Mrs. Warfel said this insurance is only for the people paid out of the General Fund – this is only a portion of the cost. Mr. Jones said employees are only paying 10%; it's time – it should be 20% or higher. Lengthy discussion followed relative to Health Benefits.

Mr. Ferrara said the Board has to make a decision – leave revenue out of the Budget or increase the tax rate 43%. A decision also has to be made if the Board wants to go out for RFPs for professional services. Mr. DeLelys said the Board should think about taking \$1.8 million from the Landfill money and put it towards this Budget. Mr. Churchill suggested to wait and see what this Budget is at the next Meeting. Mr. Ferrara asked about the RFPs. Mr. Churchill asked if this can be discussed at the November 5th Meeting.

Tax Collection: The Town Clerk noted she decreased Equipment (A1330.200) to \$100.00. Mr. Ferrara asked why tax collection is done internally. Frank Sinicropi said it's the law – you have to establish hours as to when the Tax Collector is going to be here for the public – it's in the law; you can ask Lisa Keshel at the County. School districts, cities and villages are different. The Town Clerk noted all other line items remain the same.

Town Clerk: Equipment and Software (A1410.200) was reduced to \$700, and Postage (A1410.401) was reduced to \$600. Publications & Books (1410.405) was reduced from \$50 to \$25. All other line items remain the same as this year. Under Records Management, Mr. Ferrara said he was working with Emily Palumbos on a grant with someone from the State. The Town Clerk mentioned that the Town had a Records grant and all records were straightened out on shelves and a records book was created. Since the Village dissolved, records were just thrown in the building and it is disorganized - we need a records grant. Ms. Palumbos said she did a number of submissions this past year but money hasn't come through. She added we can have a Regional Representative come out and take a look as to where we are, and then apply for a grant. Mrs. Palumbos said she will reach out to the Department of Education.

Under Buildings, Cleaner 1 (A1620.100) was increased to \$18,330. Mr. Ferrara mentioned that the Cleaner's hours have been reduced to 25 hours a week so the Town doesn't have to pay benefits. Custodial Supplies (A1620.400) was increased to \$3,000, and Gas & Electricity (A1620.401) went down to \$35,000. Garbage Removal (A1620.403) went down to \$500. Maintenance Parts & Repairs (A1620.404) was increased to \$5,000.

Control of Dogs: The Dog Control Officer's salary was discussed. The Town Clerk mentioned that she has not had an increase for a few years. After brief discussion, it was decided to leave \$14,500 in the line item for Dog Control Officer. Postage (A3510.401) increased to \$500, all other line items remain the same.

Registrar of Vital Statistics: The Town Clerk said this brings in revenue – she does certified copies for births, deaths and marriages. She mentioned that most states require copies of births and marriages when applying

for renewal of a driver's license – this is bringing in more revenue. We also have the Cemeteries in the Town and all the records that go with them. The Clerk said there has been more deaths as of this August than there was all of last year.

Mr. Ferrara mentioned that in November, the Board can discuss putting out RFPs for Engineering and Labor Law. He told the Board to be prepared on October 26th to decide how we are going to balance the Budget. We can either come up with \$1.6 million in cuts or appropriate Landfill revenue to the Budget and keep the tax rate the same or a little lower. Lengthy discussion followed relative to Landfill revenue.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER
Town Clerk