

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE VESTAL TOWN BOARD**  
**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2012**

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer, Board Members Marnicki, Fitzgerald and Milkovich and Majewski

Also Attending: Comptroller Laura McKane, Fire Chief Pat McPherson, Town Attorney David Berger, Police Chief John Butler, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki, Vestal School Board President Kim Myers, Press & Sun reporter Dave Robinson, Town Crier reporter Rose Mary West and several members of the community.

The Special Meeting of the Town Board was convened at 5:00 PM by Supervisor Schaffer.

**Amending of Public Hearing date for Special Districts Budgets**

**R326-12** On a motion of Councilman Marnicki, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved to amend Resolution 303-12** changing the **Public Hearing on the 2013 Special Districts Budgets** from November 7, 2012 to November 14, 2012 at 6 PM.

**Amending of Public Hearing date for proposed Local Law "C"**

**R327-12** On a motion of Councilman Marnicki, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved to amend Resolution 301-12** changing the **Public Hearing on Local Law "C" Repealing Current Code Regarding Alcoholic Beverages** to be advertised on November 7, 2012 with the public hearing on November 14, 2012 at 6:00 PM.

**Sewer rate increase options**

Supervisor Schaffer addressed the need to raise the sewer rates noting that much of the pressure is coming from the drastic increases in the user fees that we pay to the Joint Sewage Treatment Plant. He asked the Board to decide on one of the two rate increase options outlined in a memo from Comptroller McKane dated October 18, 2012.

Councilman Milkovich asked whether the Water & Sewer Superintendent is recommending either option. Supervisor Schaffer responded that Superintendent Groats is recommending Option 1.

Councilman Majewski stated that he favors Option 2 because it is the better option for low-income people and lessens the need to increase rates again next year. Also, he would like the rate increase to take affect in 2013.

Comptroller McKane stated that there will be a shortfall in the 2012 sewer budget and the rate increase needs to take affect in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2012.

With 4 Board members in favor of Option 1 and one favoring Option 2 (Majewski), the decision was to go with Option 1 as the rate formula that would be presented at the Public Hearing on the increase in sewer rents.

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**School Resource Officer (SRO) contract with the Vestal School District**

Supervisor Schaffer noted that this contract has been discussed earlier in the year but the Board did not take action. He noted that there are some terms in the proposed agreement that he is not totally happy with, but on balance, this is a great program, and deserves the Board's support.

Councilman Marnicki noted that this contract does not cover the benefits of the SRO officer and is therefore not a fair split of the costs between the Town and the School District. He feels that the proposed cost sharing formula has the Town subsidizing expenses that should be paid for by the larger tax base of the School District, which also includes areas outside of the Town of Vestal.

Councilmen Milkovich and Majewski expressed strong support for the SRO program citing cost savings from having to dispatch fewer police vehicles to the schools and getting a quicker response when problems develop in the schools.

**R328-12** On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilman Milkovich, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 4 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Schaffer  
Nays 1 Marnicki

**Resolved** to authorize the Supervisor to sign an **agreement with the Vestal Central School District for the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program** from September 1, 2012 until June 30, 2013.

**Emergency Watershed Protection Project 5053 Extension**

**R329-12** On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilman Milkovich, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolve** to authorize the Supervisor to sign **Emergency Watershed Protection Project 5053 Irene and Lee 220 Day Extension Request** – Project Agreement 68-2C31-2-0248 which extends the completion date from November 7, 2012 to June 15, 2013 regarding Norris Ave/Eastland Rd (B-TV-01) and Rayelene Dr (B-TV-03).

**Adoption of the 2013 Fire District Budget**

Comptroller Laura McKane stated that she has received the final figures from the Worker's Comp carrier but has not completed the task of incorporating those numbers into the Fire District budget. So as not to delay the vote on the budget, which needs to be adopted by November 4<sup>th</sup>, she recommends that the Board adopt the 2013 Fire District Budget as proposed with the total appropriations of \$1,223,182. The relatively minor adjustments that will need to be made to reflect the new Workers Comp figures can be done by budget transfers in 2013 and will provide us a little wiggle room to address other budgetary needs within the Fire District budget.

**R330-12** On a motion of Councilwoman Fitzgerald, seconded by Councilman Marnicki, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved** the **2013 Fire District Budget**, with total appropriations of \$1,223,182.00, is adopted.

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**Budget Deliberations and Preparation of Preliminary Budget**

Comptroller McKane presented the Board with proposed changes in appropriations and revenues to the 2013 Tentative Budget, most of which were discussed and debated by the Board in previous budget review meetings. These changes, if adopted, would be incorporated into the 2013 Preliminary Budget.

With these changes, the 2013 Town Budget would fall below the state cap on the tax levy. In the lengthy discussion that ensued, the following items were highlighted:

- The total assessed value of the town has decreased by 1.8% and, due to some pending cases, is subject to further downward revision.
- The tax rate is going up more than the tax levy because we have had a loss of assessed value.
- The increase in spending is approximately 1%.
- We have less fund balance available to appropriate.
- The Town Justices have warned that the cut in overtime may result in a loss of revenue.
- Part-time labor has been cut by 5%, the building maintenance positions has been reduced to part-time and the duties of a full-time employee have been split between two departments.
- The appliance pick up program has been eliminated.
- The number of vehicles have been reduced.
- The number of school crossing guards have been reduced
- Police salaries line has been reduced for an incoming hire.
- Summer labor in Parks and Highway has been eliminated
- The largest increase on the revenue side is from anticipated logging in the parks.
- Additional cuts were made to the part time labor line in the Library, but \$15,000 was added back to the book purchasing line.

The President of the Vestal School Board, Kim Myers, stated that she sympathized with the Board for having to make many difficult decisions, but reminded the Board that it is the Town's responsibility to provide the school crossing guards. She feels that cutting the school crossing guards is a bad idea.

After a lengthy discussion about the need for school guards at various locations, the Board decided to restore about \$3,000 to the school crossing guard budget line.

The Board instructed Comptroller McKane to amend her list of changes to the Tentative Budget to reflect the following:

- Closing of the Museum
- Adding back additional funds to the budget line for school crossing guards
- Increasing the revenue line from logging in the parks to \$180,000
- Reducing the part-time employees line in the Library budget

With the above noted Board amendments to Comptroller McKane's list of proposed changes, the 2013 Preliminary Town Budget is anticipated to show the following:

- Budget appropriations will increase by approximately 0.9%
- The increase in the tax levy will be approximately 2.6%
- The increase in the tax rate will be approximately 4.5%

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- The tax increase (across all funds) on an average home with a value of \$150,000 will be approximately \$28.00

**R331-12** On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 4 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Schaffer  
Nays 1 Marnicki

**Resolved to accept the changes to the 2013 Tentative Budget** as presented by Comptroller McKane, and amended by the Board, to be incorporated into the Preliminary 2013 Town Budget.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion of Councilman Marnicki, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved** the Board enter into Executive Session for the purpose of evaluating several legal settlements. The time was 7:22 PM.

On a motion of Councilman Milkovich, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following resolution was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved** the Board leave the Executive Session and adjourn the Special Meeting. The time was 7:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk