

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

Board Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer; Board Members: Agneshwar, Messina, Fitzgerald, Majewski

Also Attending: Fire Department Chief David Harrington, Assistant Fire Chiefs Doug Rose, John Paffie, Bill Stout and Ron Birdsall, Fire Department Administrative Secretary Sue Bowen, Town Attorney David Berger, Town Comptroller Laura McKane, Director of Human Resources Nancy Olmstead, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki and 1 person from the general public.

Supervisor Schaffer **convened the Work Session at 5:00 PM.**

5:00 PM – Presentation of 2018 Proposed Fire District Budget

Fire Department Chief David Harrington and Town Comptroller presented the Proposed 2018 Fire District Budget and gave a broad overview of the long term plan for the sustainability of the Fire District. Much of the focus was on the commitment to aggressively increase capital reserves so as to reduce the amount of borrowing that would be needed to implement the long range capital plan. Some highlights from the presentation are as follows:

- The Proposed 2018 Operating Budget being submitted tonight has already been reduced by \$597,000 from the original requests submitted by each Station (\$1.9 million to \$1.3 million).
- Operational readiness requires solid financial planning and execution.
- The 25 year Capital Plan has been adjusted (changes in red) to reflect updated information.
- The Building and Grounds report is a list of items (by Station) that need to be addressed but are not included in the capital plan.
- The Cash vs. Bond Savings Forecast sheet shows the large savings that can be realized by paying cash rather than bonding for some of the upcoming expenditures.
- The proposed increase in the non-reserve portion of the operating budget is 1.8%. The total increase being requested is 8.7% but the vast majority of that amount is the increase to capital reserves.
- The budget summary identifies the specific areas of increases and decreases from last year.
- After years of flat to declining budgets, we are catching up on funding the needs of the Fire Department in a way that is transparent and predictable.
- Regardless of our need to make major capital expenditures, our tax rate for fire protection is still considerably lower than neighboring communities.
- The 5 year Capital Plan adopted on October 26, 2016 (R237-16) has been modified and needs to be re-adopted to reflect the changes.

Supervisor Schaffer informed the Board (acting as the Board of Fire Commissioners) that he is scheduling an additional Work Session on Monday, September 18th at 5:00 PM for the purpose of reviewing the Proposed 2018 Fire District Budget. He would like to have the review of the Fire Budget completed at that time so that the Board could devote the rest of the time to work on the 2018 Town Budget. As per the request from Fire Chief Harrington, he is encouraging the Board members to review the Fire District Budget and to submit any questions to the Fire Department Administrative Secretary Sue Bowen prior to the Work Session.

COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS (FITZGERALD/Majewski)

1. Request from Water & Wastewater Superintendent Scott Groats to award the bid for fluoride equipment to the low bidder, J.C. Smith Inc. of Syracuse, in the amount of \$38,282.40.

This amount reflects the bid plus additional spare equipment on the individual item bid approved by NYSDOIH under the \$50,000.00 grant funds.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.2 **FINANCE** (AGNESHWAR/Fitzgerald)

1. Warrants: 2017- 34, 2017-34E, 2017-35, 2017-36, 2017-36E

OK – This item will be placed as a ‘Receive and File’ on the Agenda for the next Regular Meeting.

2. Request to authorize Town Supervisor John Schaffer to sign an agreement with Vestal School District for School Resource Officer (SRO) services, September 2017 – June 2018.

Councilman Majewski stated that contracting for SRO services continues to be a win-win arrangement for the Town and the School District. The Vestal School District is to pay for 37 weeks at a cost of \$52,088.00. The Town of Vestal will pay benefits and the balance of the officer’s yearly salary.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.3 **PERSONNEL** (FITZGERALD/Agneshwar)

1. Request from Director of Human Resources Nancy Olmstead to schedule on site flu and pneumonia vaccine clinic for Town employees on September 26, 2017 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at Town Hall. The clinic is to be provided by Lourdes Hospital at a rate of \$25 per flu vaccine and \$85 per pneumonia vaccine.

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked about the number of pneumonia vaccines that will be administered. Human Resources Director Olmstead replied that only 3 to 5 pneumonia shots have been given each year, noting that retirees are now being handled separately under the Medicare Advantage plan.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Request from Director of Human Resources Nancy Olmstead to appoint George Bezama to the Planning Board as an alternate member effective September 18, 2017. This term is to expire July 7, 2022.

Councilwoman Agneshwar stated that she would not be supporting this appointment because the person has been a Vestal resident for only a short time.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

3. Request from Town Assessor Mark Minoia to begin recruiting for a full time clerical position in the Assessor’s Office. This vacancy is being created by the retirement of a current full time employee at the end of September.

Human Resources Director Nancy Olmstead stated that the current employee has been classified as a typist and this classification is probably not consistent with the duties of the position. The Assessor is reviewing the duties of the position to assign a proper classification.

The Board expressed no objection to the Assessor’s recruitment initiative.

7.4 **PLANNING & ZONING** (MESSINA/Fitzgerald) – no items were brought for consideration.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

7.5 PUBLIC SAFETY (MAJEWSKI/Messina)

1. Request from Fire Chief David Harrington to advertise for bids on the Tower 32-4 Project on October 4, 2017 with the bid opening to be at 2:00 PM on October 31, 2017 in the Town Clerk’s Office.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Request from Fire Chief David Harrington to approve Station 1’s Firefighter 5K Challenge being held on October 1, 2017 from 11 AM-2 PM.

It was noted that the request did not specify where the event would be held. Councilman Majewski stated that he would get the answer.

Town Attorney Berger noted that the motion to approve this event should also state that ‘coverage time will be from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and a sign in sheet will be used to track personnel at this event.’

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.6 ADMINISTRATION (MESSINA/Majewski) – no items were brought for consideration.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Employee Handbook Updates

Human Resources Director Nancy Olmstead stated that the IT Department has recently provided additional information about the Computer Use Policy which she will make available to the Board. If the Computer Use Policy, as amended, is acceptable to the Board, all of the proposed changes that have been reviewed to date can be voted on at the Regular Meeting on September 27th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion of Councilwoman Messina, seconded by Councilwoman Agneshwar, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Messina, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the following:

- Vestal Library lease agreement
- Labor negotiations with the VPSA bargaining unit
- LOSAP issue concerning a specific person’s application
- Issue concerning interpersonal Board relations

The time was 6:19 PM.

On a motion of Councilwoman Messina, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Messina, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0

Resolved the Board leave the Executive Session and **adjourn the meeting. The time was 7:02 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk