

Notes of the 2014 budget workshop held on October 2, 2013 at 6:00 P.M. PRESENT were: Supervisor Jones, Councilors Folts, Killen, Parson, Steppe, Deputy Supervisor Stewart, Town Clerk McMichael, Highway Superintendent Martin, Budget Officer Muscarella.

Guest: Leonard & Dolores Lang, Gary & Janet Molyneaux

Supervisor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M.

RESOLUTION #142-13

ESTABLISH SALARY AND BENEFITS

On a motion of Supervisor Jones, seconded by Councilor Killen, the following was

DEFEATED	Ayes	2	Jones, Killen
	Nays	3	Folts, Parson, Steppe

Resolved the healthcare insurance remain the same with hourly and salaried employees contributing 2.5% of the healthcare premium for 2014 and employees be given a 4% salary increase; and be it further

Resolved the Town Board contribute 5% of the healthcare premium for 2014.

DISCUSSION:

Councilor Steppe provided comparable data from Monroe and Yates County for insurance premiums, employee contributions and various insurance plans as a point of reference for discussion.

Deputy Supervisor Stewart inquired about the administrator for pre-tax employee contributions. A third party will need to be hired with an associated cost.

Councilor Killen stated his desire to be fiscally responsible while avoiding the premium contribution resulting in a reduction in an employee's pay. We are currently looking at 1.15% budget increase and we need to be reasonable with the employees. The Town is fortunate to have loyal hard working employees. Some of the comparative data provided is for private suburbs versus the Town of Jerusalem. Councilor Steppe noted a number of employees in Monroe County are not getting raises and the cost of living is higher in Monroe County. Supervisor Jones noted they also receive more services. Councilor Parson stated a pay reduction could happen. As discussed last week, the Town Board can do this in increments or have employees take a big hit in the future. Councilor Killen pointed out the current budget numbers do not make the employee contribution necessary. We want to ease into it by being reasonable and not punitive, noting the prices of gas and food are increasing.

Councilor Parson does not support a 4% salary increase with no employee contribution toward healthcare. Councilor Folts stated we do not want to go backwards. Councilor Steppe noted that next year the Town could face a 4% tax increase with a 2% salary increase and a high contribution toward healthcare. No time is good and it's not a comfortable discussion. It's a fair first step and he feels it's not the end. Councilor Killen stated his strong concerns with the future of healthcare. Councilor Folts stated a 5% contribution equals approximately \$900, noting his wife pays 30% of a single plan.

Highway Superintendent Martin distributed three revised salary worksheets based on comments last week that the employees will contribute toward their healthcare that resulted in a reduction of one employee's gross pay. He was told last year that we were bringing salaries in line this year. He was instructed to tell the Highway Department that we are getting there, but not all this year. Highway Superintendent Martin has flexibility in how raises are given. Councilor Steppe stated he does not support the management by threat concept. Councilor Killen reiterated comments he received from the employees on this matter; insurance is important to the employees and morale will be impacted. In response to an inquiry from Councilor Folts, Budget Muscarella stated the 4% salary increase is generous and the employees should contribute 5% toward the healthcare premium. They are not losing.

Highway Superintendent Martin requested the salary and benefits discussion begin in May 2014 so he has ample time to work on it for the 2015 budget. Councilor Steppe presented a possible scenario of a 2% base increase and use ½% for merit increases to vary the salaries.

RESOLUTION #143-13

ESTABLISH SALARY AND BENEFITS

Councilor Parson made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Steppe:

Resolved the healthcare insurance remain the same with hourly and salaried employees contributing 5% of the healthcare premium for 2014 and employees be given a 4% salary increase; and be it further

Resolved the Town Board contribute 5% of the healthcare premium for 2014.

RESOLUTION #144-13

AMEND RESOLUTION #143-13 ESTABLISHING SALARY AND BENEFITS

On a motion of Councilor Parson, seconded by Councilor Steppe, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Folts, Killen, Parson, Steppe
 Nays 1 Jones

Resolved Resolution #142-13 be amended to the healthcare insurance remain the same with hourly and salaried employees contributing 5% of the healthcare premium for 2014 and employees be given a 4% salary increase; and be it further

Resolved the Town Board contribute 7.5% of the healthcare premium for 2014.

HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

Justice Davison is up for election in November 2013.

A meeting is scheduled with Sprague Insurance on October 10, 2013 at 10:00. We will inquire about the pre-tax program.

The Town can only offer two insurance plans. One of them has to be accepted based on the terms of the Teamsters Union. Councilor Folts noted Sprague Insurance swears by the high-deductible plan and will check with the Town of Milo because they switched to that plan. Councilor Parson will also check with the Town of Potter.

LIBRARY CONTRIBUTION:

The Modeste Bedient Memorial Library submitted a request for \$17,000. In prior years, the Town provided \$5,000. When the new building was constructed, the tax-exempt paperwork did not get timely filed; thereby property tax bills were generated. The Town provided an additional \$6,000 to cover the School and County/Town tax expenses. The Library is now tax-exempt, but the Town's contribution remains at \$11,000. Supervisor Jones will send a letter to the Library requesting detail to support a change in the Town's contribution and offer to meet with them early next year to discuss their request.

PLANNING BOARD BUDGET REQUEST

The Planning Board is requesting an additional \$4,000 for the Hamlet Committee; \$3,000 to develop façade guidelines and \$1,000 to purchase one "Welcome to Branchport" sign.

Councilor Steppe will clarify if these expenses are part of the \$5,000 already included in the Planning Board budget 8020.4 for consulting. If not, more information will be requested.

2014 SALARY REQUESTS

In response to a question posed by Deputy Supervisor Stewart, it was clarified the Town Clerk and ZAP Clerk salary requests were addressed by Resolution #144-13.

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing is scheduled for October 16, 2013.

With there being no further business, on a motion of Councilor Folts, seconded by Councilor Steppe, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Sheila McMichael, Town Clerk