

Public Budget Hearing Meeting held November 9, 2011 at 6:00 P.M. at the Town Hall

In Schroon Lake N.Y.

Present:

Town Supervisor: Cathy Moses

Councilpersons: Roger Friedman, Clara Phibbs, and Meg Wood
(Mark Whitney – excused)

Town Clerk: Patricia Savarie

Highway Superintendent: Dana Shaughnessy

Also Present: Roger Mahler, Fran Mahler, Albert May

Supervisor Moses called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. with a Pledge to the Flag.

Resolution # 207 Dispense with the reading of the Public Notice

Councilman Friedman moved a resolution to dispense with the reading of the Public Budget Hearing Notice seconded by Councilwoman Phibbs; carried.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS from Supervisor Moses

UNFORTUNATELY, THE STATE OF NEW YORK PAINTED THE ENTIRE STATE WITH THE SAME PAINT BRUSH, THEREFORE, THE TOWNS DOING RESPONSIBLE BUDGETING HAVE BEEN PENALIZED WITH THE 2% CAP. OUR TOWN HAS BILLED THE TAXPAYERS WITH ONLY THE “NECESSARY” OPERATING EXPENSES FOR THE PAST MANY YEARS.

WE FOUND WHEN WE CALCULATED OUR TAX CAP FOR NYS AUDIT & CONTROL THAT WE WERE ALREADY \$60,000 OVER THE CAP WITH INCREASES TO WORKER'S COMP, HEALTH INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT.

WE HAVE NOT HAD TO CUT ANY POSITIONS, BUT WE HAVE NOT FILLED TWO POSITION IN THE GENERAL FUND AND ONE POSITION IN THE HIGHWAY BY ATTRITION WITH HOPES THAT WE WILL NOT FIND OURSELVES SHORT-STAFFED.

WE ARE ALSO FORTUNATE THAT WE HAVE NOT HAD TO CUT SERVICES. WE DID, HOWEVER, PLACE A 10% REDUCTION IN SOME OF THOSE SERVICES ALONG WITH MOST DEPARTMENT CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES WHICH ARE THE .4'S IN THE BUDGET ITEMS – CUTS WENT TO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, HISTORICAL SOCIETY, & ARTS COUNCIL. WE DID NOT TOUCH YOUTH AND SENIORS BUDGETS.

SALARIES HAVE BEEN HELD FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, HOWEVER, WE CONTINUE TO OFFER OUR EMPLOYEES GOOD HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE, AND RETIREMENT COSTS CONTINUE TO RISE. WE ARE ALSO HAVING BENEFIT STATEMENTS PREPARED FOR ALL TOWN EMPLOYEES SO THAT THEY MIGHT REALIZE THE TRUE VALUE OF THOSE BENEFITS.

IN ADDITION, WE HAVE LOST STATE REVENUE – THE MONIES RECEIVED FOR ADMINISTERING THE STAR PROGRAM – APPROXIMATELY \$14,000 ANNUALLY AND THE MONIES WE HAVE RECEIVED EACH YEAR IN THE PAST FOR ADMINISTERING TAX MAP AND ASSESSMENT UPDATES – APPROXIMATELY \$18,000 ANNUALLY – WHICH WE WILL NOW RECEIVE ONLY EVERY THREE YEARS.

I'D LIKE TO THANK OUR TOWN BOARD FOR THEIR DILIGENT REVIEW OF THE BUDGET, ALONG WITH OUR BOOKKEEPER, CHRIS STONE. WE DID A LINE BY LINE BUDGET REVIEW

AS WE HAVE EVERY YEAR SINCE 2000 AND AFTER SEVERAL DRAFT BUDGETS WE HAVE MET THE 2% CAP. THIS WAS A VERY "TRYING" BUDGET!!!

Public Participation

Howard Lashway stated that he wondered if the Town Board had looked into the possibility of hiring just a part-time Building and Codes Officer. Councilman Friedman stated that the Board would like to find someone who can do multiple task to save the Town of Schroon money. Howard would like to look up a Town Law for the Chamber of Commerce that was voted on at a general election for increasing the amount from \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00. The Town Clerk will look this referendum up in the Town minutes. Howard also asked the Town Board if they had looked into many Health Insurance Policy for the employees. Supervisor Moses stated they had looked at 3 or 4 different policies through Burnham Associates who handles the Town insurance.

Supervisor Moses closed the Public Budget Hearing at 6:50 P.M.

I, Patricia J. Savarie, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct transcript from the minutes now on file in my office and of the whole such original minutes.

Dated: November 15, 2011_____

Town Clerk