

Supervisor David P. Kelly opened the Workshop Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Pawling at 7:00 PM October 5, 2016 at the Holmes Whaley Lake Civic Association Building, 239 Route 292, Holmes, New York. Present were Councilmen Johnson, Montemarano, Upham and approximately 13 interested citizens. Councilman DeRosa was absent.

## **2017 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PUBLIC HEARING**

Supervisor Kelly opened the public hearing for the 2017 CDBG program. There were no comments and Supervisor Kelly closed the public hearing.

### **PRESENTATION: PAWLING NEWSPAPER**

The Board entertained a presentation by Mr. John Burweiger and Mr. Chris Wood on the proposed Pawling Newspaper.

Mr. Burweiger said he, Mr. Wood and a group of concerned citizens have over the past 18 months formed a committee to create a newspaper. This would be a free weekly publication and they think it will be well received.

Mr. Wood presented a sample newspaper and explained that the newspaper would be community sponsored and would likely be run with community wide support and advertisements. They have developed a format, budget and structure. They proposed this to be a 501C3 not for profit. It will have a self-perpetuating board. There would be an editor and at least a couple of staff reporters, and also an editorial subcommittee overseeing the content. It will follow the Pawling Press format so it is ready to go. They propose every organization to have a page in the newspaper if they want it. They will mail the paper to every resident for the first couple of months so people are aware it exists. They felt the business model will work effectively. It is possible this could be up and running by December of this year. They are ready to go, just waiting for the legal entity to be set up.

Mr. Burweiger said they hoped that advertising alone would carry the newspaper. They are following the format of the Putnam Times so they feel the business model would work.

Councilman Upham asked what the Town could do for them.

Mr. Burweiger said the Town could write a letter supporting the idea of a newspaper. And other things would be consolidating some of the publications the Town produces and diverting monies they might use for another source and use the newspaper instead.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

The Board discussed the proposed resolutions. Following discussion, it was agreed that the resolutions would be placed on the October 12, 2016 Town Board meeting agenda.

### **FURTHER BUSINESS**

#### **2017 BUDGET**

Supervisor Kelly announced that the 2017 Tentative Budget had been submitted to the Town Clerk as of September 30, 2016. He said overall the tax rate is down.

Supervisor Kelly made a motion to move the Tentative Budget to the Preliminary Budget, seconded by Councilman Johnson, motion passed unanimously.

### **REPORTS**

Supervisor Kelly said he has spent every waking moment of the month working on the expanded version of the budget. He thanked Town Bookkeeper Jerry Terwilliger for his help on the budget.

Supervisor Kelly read the following statement:

In reference to recent comments, I would like to share the following information with you that I believe will be helpful and informative.

When I took office in 2010, my budget was expanded from the previous administration's 6 pages to 43 pages in an effort to display transparency and to help residents better understand what their tax dollars pay for, as well as to provide the board with a comprehensive document with which they can make educated and informed decisions.

Further, I created an extensive and detailed PowerPoint presentation explaining the entire budget using graphs, charts, and breakdowns that illustrated exactly where the tax money goes. I will be doing the same this year for the benefit of transparency, which has always been a top priority of mine.

Last year, there were town board meetings on 10/7/15, 10/14/15, 11/4/15 and 11/18/15 that were specific to the budget process in which all residents were allowed and encouraged to come voice their concerns and opinions. It is also important to note that at every board meeting throughout the year, residents have the chance to speak to the board about anything they wish when there is a call to comment on non-agenda items.

In listening to resident's concerns, we've also evolved our format to be more open to answering questions, which has created a more productive meeting. In addition, both myself and the town board have been extremely willing to schedule meetings to discuss any issues a resident may have, which only a few people have sought. I have personally met with anyone who has requested a meeting with me, and more conversations were had last year than ever before because of our ongoing efforts.

Knowing all of these facts, which are easily verifiable by going to the town's website and looking at the meeting minutes as well as listening to the meeting podcasts, I feel that the public is being misinformed by some members of the community insinuating that the board has not been transparent nor allowed sufficient input from the residents. Everyone who attended the board meetings – meetings that were in no way secretive and were public knowledge far in advance - had a chance to speak and offer their input, which the board took into serious consideration. In addition, we encouraged residents with questions or concerns to schedule a time to sit down with any member of the board.

My goal has always been demonstrating fairness and transparency in everything that I do as Supervisor. I have worked diligently during this process to present a budget that is as detailed as possible, as I have done each year. It is important to me that all residents fully understand the reality of the budget process.

### **JOHNSON**

Councilman Johnson said he has been focusing on the water quality at Lakeside Park and wanted to ensure that the beach will be open all summer. He will meet with Mrs. Grosso next week to answer her questions on the golf course. In speaking with Wendel Weber, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds, he did not think the Town would get permission to put carp in the lake because the weeds in the lake are not the type carp will eat. He may have to look into mechanical weed removal. He commended John Daley on the rehabilitation of Bundy Hill Road.

### **MONTEMARANO**

Councilman Montemarano said the Board is in the process of doing upgrades to the entranceways of the Town Hall and the Legion building. The bid packets should be ready later this week. The Town received a CDBG for this year which is for handicapped upgrades from the Village up to Lakeside Park.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vinny DeMarco thanked the Board for coming to Holmes. He thanked the Board for all they do for the community as a whole. He felt the idea of the newspaper was a good idea and he supported it. Regarding the budget, Supervisor Kelly and the Town Board do a great job on the budget. It is an open process and any rumors are nonsense. He thanked John Daley, Highway Superintendent for the Bundy Hill Road rehabilitation. The Highway Department does all of their work with equipment that is in need of replacement.

Harvey Matcovsky, resident of Holmes thanked the gentlemen proposing the newspaper. They made a presentation to the School Board where they got a very favorable reception. It was indicated by members of the School Board that the Board of Education would pursue any legal ways they could support this worthy endeavor financially. The School Board is looking into this

with their attorney. Regarding the budget, he asked about interest and principal on the Lakeside Park bond and what discussions the Board has had for the day when the bond can be retired or refinanced. He thanked John Daley for the work on Bundy Hill Road and asked where the money came from for this work.

Supervisor Kelly said he would get Mr. Matcovsky the information on the bond. The money for Bundy Hill Road was gained from a combination of CHIPS money and also part of the money the Town Board put in the budget for capital projects.

Helen Grosso said the building looks great and she knew the Board was responsible for finding the grant money to make that happen. She asked when the budget would be available for the public to see.

Supervisor Kelly said it would be available on the website at some point, or she could FOIL it.

Mrs. Grosso one issue she had was rolling over the budget. Another question she had is one she emailed the Board about, which is if resolutions passed take precedent over the employee handbook.

Supervisor Kelly said this is an active FOIL request and he would hold his comments until the Town Clerk has responded to her FOIL request.

The motion to adjourn was made at 7:40 PM, seconded by Councilman Johnson, motion passed unanimously.

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Town Clerk