

Supervisor David P. Kelly opened the Workshop Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Pawling at 7:00 PM November 2, 2016 at Pawling Town Hall, 160 Charles Colman Blvd., Pawling, New York. Present were Councilmen DeRosa, Johnson, Montemarano, Upham and approximately 31 interested citizens.

PUBLIC HEARING: 2017 OPERATIONAL BUDGET

Supervisor Kelly made a motion to open the public hearing on the 2017 operational budget, seconded by Councilman Johnson, motion passed unanimously.

Bill Dietz, 27 Meadow Lane, thanked the Board and employees for the detailed budget. He felt taxes in Pawling were too high, and he felt that the budgets of the Village, Town and School System were interrelated and there should be a joint effort to reduce expenses. He encouraged the Board to initiate a study to evaluate reducing costs by sharing services. He felt that items like the transfer station, golf course and recreational activities should be managed in such a way that sufficient fees are collected to cover all costs for the service.

Harvey Matcovsky, 16 Crescent Drive, Holmes, commented on health and retirement benefits for Board members and certain other officials, saying the taxpayers should not be burdened with paying for these benefits, which is something he has spoken about in past years. The Board needs to talk about total compensation, not just salaries. People should go on Medicare and get their own supplemental insurance through AARP.

Maria Mignone, Overlook Drive said she moved here two years ago. Before she moved here, someone told her not to because the taxes were too high. She talked about hiring a music teacher at \$90,000.00 and hiring a substitute at minimum wage to watch over the children, it is not building a community and spending resources wisely. The Town Recreation Center could be a wonderful place but it is not at all. She felt longer term planning needed to be done so people find Pawling appealing.

Leslie Holleran Mondschein, Harmony Road thanked everyone for their time and devotion to the community. She felt the taxes in Pawling were too high for the ongoing health and welfare of a thriving community. She stated that the School District managed to show a 2% in reduction in taxes and returned the money that was levied. The Town Board has a fund and the ability to follow suit. To reduce taxes may sound like something onerous or impossible but the good will would go a long way. She urged the Board to dig deep and look at the funds and reduce taxes for a couple of years and then make changes in the future.

Supervisor Kelly said in his conversations with the School Superintendent, it is his understanding that enrollment in the school is down dramatically. The School District has chosen not to hire back teachers for the teachers who retired. In addition, the community was overtaxed by a very large amount of money and they are using that money to offset taxes. There is more to the story.

Helen Grosso, 14 Tracy Road said she was here tonight to ask the Board to reduce taxes. She felt there were a lot of ways to reduce taxes in the Town without reducing services. The Town has three areas that can either be considered assets or liabilities. One is the Dutcher Golf Course, she has yet to have a good look at that. Her feeling is that there is not a complete picture of what it actually costs and she saw no discussion on changes or if it should be gotten rid of. It is an expensive asset to keep. There is talk of closing the transfer station, why can't it make money. The Board can enforce stickers or can look at paying by the bag. She knows something can be done about health benefits, she knows the Board has had them for a long time and it is hard to cut them off. She would like to hear a plan for this Town getting to the point where it is not giving health benefits to all elected officials. The most important thing is for the Board to make the gesture now and show they are part of it.

Jill Norgren, Bundy Hill Road, Holmes said she has spoken to a number of people about the transfer station and there is a lot of support for it. If the Board is going to consider closing it, they should have a dialogue with the community. She asked that the website be used in a better way. She would like to see the budget on line. She felt there should be a better flow of information.

Supervisor Kelly said the Town budget has been on the Town website for many years. If someone goes to the budget page, they can see budgets back many years. The Town's Annual Update Document (AUD) is also on the Town's website. He would be happy to meet with anyone to discuss the budget. He has expanded the budget into 40 pages showing the true departmental costs.

Councilman DeRosa said no decisions have been made on the transfer station. There are deficiencies and there are some big expenses that are going to come up in the near future. The Board is looking at what they will do about this situation. The Board will need to decide what kind of services they might want there. There are only five towns in Dutchess County that have a town sponsored transfer station of some kind. He felt this discussion was just beginning and nothing has been decided.

Supervisor Kelly said it was his recommendation to get out of the garbage business, not the Board members. The Board will have to look at the compactor, the retaining wall, the electric service, the truck, the hut, etc., all of which will cost serious money. According to preliminary numbers, it will cost almost three quarters of a million dollars, which is borne by the people who buy the stickers. Town residents do not pay for that service. So the people who buy the sticker will pay this additional cost. A sticker could go from \$400.00 per year to \$1,200.00 per year. It is a good thing that people are talking about it.

Councilman Johnson said tonight people are talking about supporting an increase in the budget to investigate, perhaps a full time person should be put at the transfer station and determine what losses the Town is operating under. This could be done for the first three months of the year.

Earl Slocum, Village Trustee, suggested setting up a garbage district for the entire Town. That way everyone would pay for it and it wouldn't just be the people who buy the stickers.

Councilman Johnson said not everyone uses the transfer station so he was not sure it could be done that way.

Chris Wood, 18 Sumner Lane, thanked everyone who was involved in assembling the budget. There are two things he wanted to talk about, one was the transfer station and the other the town wide assessment. He supported spending money in the budget to monitor the transfer station permits. He felt it was a real plus to the community and the debate needs to be opened to discuss it. Regarding the town wide assessment, he felt it was a really good idea. He felt it was worthwhile to get someone on board to check the records and clean up whatever needs to be cleaned up. It is not an inexpensive exercise but it probably needs to be done and will bring equity to the community and solve some underlying issues.

Alfred Greve, 1705 Route 292, Holmes said the transfer station is close to his heart and a lot of other environmentally conscious people and he would be very upset to see that facility done away with. He took a look at the retaining wall and it wouldn't take a lot to repair it, it is not a major undertaking. He suggested some kind of card that could be scanned by a card reader at the gate to enter instead of a permit.

Betsy Montgomery, 13 Quaker Hill Road in the Village of Pawling, thanked the Supervisor and Board members for their work on the 2017 budget and the expanded format of the budget. She suggested shared services between the Town, Village and School for phone service, computer maintenance and purchasing. She appreciated the discussion on the transfer station tonight, there hasn't been discussion about it since November 2015. The Pawling Community Foundation gave a presentation to update both parks, which could take a while and in the meantime, buildings are crumbling at the parks, which generate no income. It is hard to determine from the budget whether we are breaking even on the golf course or recreation programs without budget lines for general liability insurance costs. The debt service for Lakeside Park is great, is the community on the hook for a couple of money pits for years to come? She is a supporter of Pawling Tax Cut.org and she knew what her taxes were when she moved here. She was encouraged when she met other residents who were actively seeking a change. There are a lot of smart, talented people who are willing to make a contribution of their time. Their goal is the same as the Boards, to encourage a vibrant community with a fiscally sound future.

There were no further comments and Supervisor Kelly closed the public hearing.

RESOLUTIONS

The Board discussed the proposed resolutions. Following discussion, it was agreed that the resolutions would be placed on the November 9, 2016 Town Board meeting agenda.

DUTCHESS COUNTY SNOW AND ICE PROGRAM

Town Highway Superintendent John Daley said he and Supervisor Kelly attended a meeting with Dutchess County representatives and they have a new proposal for next year. He has concerns with continuing this year. The County is talking about giving the towns a flat rate to do all of the roads for the winter and he did not know if the cost would cover the Town's cost, depending on the winter. It is a gamble. The County still owes the Town of Pawling approximately \$50,000.00 in salt from last winter.

There was discussion on the continuation of the Dutchess County Ice and Snow agreement. Following discussion, Mr. Daley said he would not recommend entering into an agreement with the County at this time.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that Supervisor Kelly would call the County to see about the salt owed to the Town and then discuss the Ice and Snow agreement further.

FURTHER BUSINESS

RUBINO WAIVER REQUEST

Supervisor Kelly said a waiver request was received by Mrs. Rubino to waive the building permit fee of \$241.52 for a handicapped ramp as her husband was in a car accident and the fee is a hardship.

Councilman DeRosa said it is a temporary ramp until they figure out what they will do in the future.

Councilman Johnson felt it should be a stipulation that the ramp be removed once the house is sold.

Following discussion, Supervisor Kelly made a motion to grant Debra Rubino the waiver as requested, seconded by Councilman DeRosa, motion passed unanimously.

STUART LEAF WAIVER REQUEST

Supervisor Kelly said the Board has the email request from Mr. Leaf and some background information. He would like to wait until next week to make a decision on this, pending Planning Board Chairman and Town Engineer review.

FURTHER BUSINESS

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Supervisor Kelly said the 2% increase was left off of the Planning Board salaries so he would make an adjustment to add that.

Councilman Johnson asked that the secretaries at the Recreation Department be adjusted to \$15.00 per hour as all of the other secretary positions in the Town were. He said also, the Highway Superintendent assistant was increased last year and that is not in the current budget and he would like to see that restored.

Supervisor Kelly said he would check into the Highway Superintendent assistant and adjust it accordingly.

Councilman DeRosa said he wanted to confirm that everyone working with the Town is getting 2% across the board.

Supervisor Kelly said yes.

REPORTS

KELLY

Supervisor Kelly said there are court ordered mandates the Town needs to comply with at the Holmes Whaley Lake Civic Association building. The commercial grade stove and hood system has been identified and will be installed. The door magnets and the shed will be done and the Board will see vouchers for everything this month. Supervisor Kelly said he has been working with Comcast on getting better internet service at Lakeside Park and the Highway Department. The cost will be \$2,700.00 for Lakeside Park and \$2,700.00 at the Highway Department. He will ask for approval for this at next week's meeting. Supervisor Kelly said Danbury Ambulance's request for CON was rejected and he has been working with EM Star about a multi-year contract and he hoped to have that for December. Regarding the Whaley Lake Dam, the LDS Church has the signed forms and closing documents returned to them and once received back, the deeds can be filed. He has been working with Fuss and O'Neill regarding legal requirements for the bid packets. The Town is earmarked to receive the million dollar grant and will still be getting the money. He thanked Jessica Peterson, Legislative Aide for her work on that. The Town received the money for the CCAP grant in the amount of \$49,000.00. The Town has also received the payment for the shared services grant for the fuel farm in the amount of \$48,700.00. Supervisor Kelly said the Pawling Community Foundation is moving forward with the project at Lakeside Park and next week, soil donated from Trinity Pawling School will arrive at Lakeside Park for the new fields. He thanked Trinity Pawling School for that donation. Supervisor Kelly said he met with Mrs. Grosso this week on the budget, it was the only request he received, aside from Mr. Deitz.

JOHNSON

Councilman Johnson said he wanted to update activities at the Recreation Department because it involves a lot of kids. They had their annual Halloween Party, there were over 200 kids and the teen volunteers were from The Interact Club, Peer Leadership and Junior Interact. He said The Interact Club, which is Rotary sponsored and overseen by the Recreation Department involves and influences many children. The 9th through 12th grade program has 76 members, the 7th and 8th graders have 35 members. The After School Club continues with many 5th and 6th graders attending. There are trips for seniors and a Radio City Music Hall trip. He will be preparing an RFP for the golf course for catering and food service in hopes of generating money as well as increasing the desire for people to be there and increasing rounds of play.

MONTEMARANO

Councilman Montemarano said within the next couple of weeks he will be noticing the bids for the entranceway for the town hall and the Legion building. He will get together with Wendel Weber, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds regarding projects and equipment for fall and winter.

DEROSA

Councilman DeRosa read a letter from resident Judy Pisano thanking John Daley, Highway Superintendent for the great job on River Road. Councilman DeRosa said in September, he attended the Dutchess County Planning Federation Board of Directors meeting where different programs for Planning and Zoning Board member classes for spring were discussed. In October, he attended classes in Millbrook on tackling difficult SEQRA topics and designing for density. He said John Daley, Highway Superintendent and the Highway crew did a great job on Bundy Hill Road but people are now speeding and he suggested posting a speed limit sign there. Regarding the Whaley Lake Dam, Zarecki's office said they will have the package ready for the rest of the dam road by the next Town Board meeting.

UPHAM

Councilman Upham said there is a new director of the Pawling Free Library, who is very interested in community activities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Daley, Highway Superintendent said regarding the material bid, he was pleased that ice sand went down \$.40 per ton and blacktop went down almost \$2.00 per ton. He thanked the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and his secretary for their help on that document.

Glenn Carey said he wanted to address the budget and follow up on his comments from the last meeting. Pawling Tax Cut.org continues to disseminate incorrect and inaccurate information and he felt it was important that the record continues to reflect that. They sent out an email that talked about the fact that the Supervisor was bringing back a more detailed budget and a dialogue at public meetings. That is not true, he is not bringing anything back, it has already been in place. He resented the way that Pawling Tax Cut decides to write their emails and postings on their website as though they need to justify to their followers that they are accomplishing something, which they are not. They write, "The total budget and thereby total tax burden put upon the taxpayer in Pawling is what needs to go down. In the end, that is the only thing that matters". That is completely wrong. The thing that matters is economic growth. Economic growth is what will enable us in this community to grow and to be able to fund our liabilities in the future relative to our infrastructure. It has nothing to do with in the end, that being the only matter. They write, "A changing tax rate and ever changing assessment level is not the point." That is exactly the point. An increasing assessment level is what brings people's taxes down. It is ridiculous to even make such a statement. An increased tax assessment means there is growth in the community, people are building, whether it be homes or commercial development, which will all funnel back into people's tax rates. Ms. Grosso has tried to justify her 160% increase and how she does it now is looking at the total spending of all municipal organizations, Village, Town and School, and looked at the total spending from 2000 to 2015 and it has gone up 161%, so she is saying that is what our taxes went up. That is ridiculous, again completely inaccurate and false information. The tax increase is not based on the total spending, it is based on the mill rate. The mill rate is affected by growth in the community and as assessed value goes up, people's taxes will go down as a result of that. To say it's because of total spending that taxes have gone up 161% is just negligent and he says it is negligent from an organization that for the last two years has professed that taxes have gone up 160%, they have followers who follow them, and they are giving out inaccurate and incorrect information. The nice part about it is that they continue to send these emails to request that people come out to the meetings and they are not coming. The people who come are their regular followers. He is lucky enough that people listen to the podcast and they heard his comments from a couple of weeks ago. He was extremely pleased to receive emails from some of their own people who behind the scenes support them telling him they were happy that he said what he said at the meeting. As far as the school tax goes, the school taxes are going down. But that is because of money we already paid because they over taxed us. At some point, those taxes are going to go up. School Board members will tell you that too. For them to say let's lower our taxes and give the people a little something, that sends a real message. As he said last time, reducing town taxes only sends a message when you have an increased tax base that is helping reduce those taxes. Do not cut this budget for the sake of pleasing the Pawling Tax Cut group and at the detriment of our future community and infrastructure.

Holly Eldredge from the Pawling Lyons Club said the building at Murrow Park is used by many organizations such as the Pawling Fish and Game, the Nature Conservancy, Pawling Little League and the Rotary Club. The building is 50 years old and the ceiling is falling down, there is a big hole in the ceiling and the building needs a new roof. She asked the Town Board to see their way clear to putting on a new roof at the building.

Harvey Matcovsky said Mr. Carey is entitled to his own opinion and he suggested everyone attend a School Board meeting, where the independent external auditor will answer questions as to where the savings came. He said Mr. Carey's stats are wrong and he should know better. Regarding the transfer station, he urged the Board to install a card swipe system to better monitor it. Regarding benefits, he did not understand why, with the exception of the town clerk, elected officials are receiving benefits that no other town is giving. He has brought this up before and it has not been addressed. The problem should be addressed.

Leslie Holleran Mondschein, Harmony Road said she understood the gentleman's anger, these are emotional topics. But she did not think that the notion of reducing taxes is at odds with

stimulation. She felt we had to move forward and be vital. She felt that taxes could be lowered. She felt stimulation was necessary. There are debates as to where the money came from. We ought to be able to say that we feel the taxes are too high and we can tighten belts and still move forward with vital projects and keep the town and village moving forward.

Tom Rose, Village of Pawling, suggested a card swipe system for the transfer station, allowing a person to enter once a week and renewing when someone wants to get in additional times during the week, with justification.

Supervisor Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM, seconded by Councilman Johnson, motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk