

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE FORT ANN TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Supervisor Samuel J. Hall
Councilman Michael Sexton
Councilman George F. Smith
Councilwoman Deborah Witherell

ABSENT: Councilwoman Gretchen Stark
Mark Miller, Enforcement Officer
Shannon Celeste, Dog Control Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Winchell-Highway Superintendent, Helen Denno-Budget Officer, Miranda Herringshaw- Town Clerk, Jennifer Jackson-Clerk to the Supervisor, Christine Milligan-Fort Ann Town Historian, Mary Davis, Jon Lashinsky, Jon Pollock, Rick Dumas, Floyd Ladd, Regina Ladd, Robert Ladd, Tony Cantanucci, Allison Bailey, BJ Palmer.

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

This meeting was published in The Post Star September 30, 2022.

Supervisor Hall stated that this is the first budget meeting of the year and the second meeting will be held October 19th, 2022 at 6 PM at Town Hall. He also advised that no decisions will be made tonight, that tonight's budget is a tentative budget, they took what all department heads requested, and we will work on cutting down on things once we have a clear picture of what we are working with. Supervisor Hall turned the meeting over to the Budget Officer, Helen Denno, to read the 14-page 2023 tentative budget and answer any questions people may have. Everyone that was present was given a copy of the 14-page tentative budget as well as the Town of Fort Ann budget Summary 2022. Paper copies are available in the Town Clerk Office as well as on the town's website www.townoffortannny.com

Supervisor Hall mentioned that as far as salaries go the town has kept the employees at a very low wage for a long time and that in order to attract the younger generations, we will need to be somewhat in the ball park of the average competitive salary rates. The price of everyday living has increased for everyone, and the Town Employees have families to raise and we need to have their salaries reflect their positions and what they are responsible for on the day-to-day bases.

Most Departments budgets are based on giving a 2% raise, some departments did request more than 2% raise.

Any line item that was not changed from the 2022 budget has not been listed and any budget that only changed by the 2% increase was also not listed. You can see all budgets on the website or in person in the Town Clerks office.

Line Items that have changed:

The line-item tax collection was increased by \$1,500.00 due to the contract with Washington County increasing.

The line-item assessor was increased by \$5,059.00 due to the contract with Washington County increasing.

The line- item Town Clerk was increased by \$6,232.00 due to more responsibility to fall on the town clerk and increasing the deputy clerks' hourly rate from \$13.20 to \$15.00 per hour.

The line-item for the Town Engineer was put in for \$3000.00 in hopes of Battle Hill getting underway.

The line item for Central Communication for the Town's website services and WiFi was increased by \$2,000.00 due to increasing prices.

The line-item central printing and mailing was increased by \$800.00 due to increasing prices.

The line-item Buildings was increased by \$903.00 due to hourly wage being increased from \$13.20 to \$15.00 per hour.

The line-item Special Items was increased by \$3,860.00 due to an increase in insurance. The Budget Officer stated that Gallagher Insurance said the town should plan on a 5% increase for the Town's insurance for 2023.

The line-item Registrar of Vital Statistics salary was increased by \$1,000.00 due to register salary increasing and compensating the deputy registrar as well.

The line-item Superintendent of Highways salary was increased \$5,000.00 due to more responsibilities to fall on the Superintendent.

The line- item Cemeteries was decreased by \$4,250.00 due to the highway superintendent offering to take over mowing of the cemeteries.

The line-item Veterans Services was increased by \$200.00 due to needing more flags and a new flagpole.

Historian did not request an additional \$500 but Budget Officer, Helen included the contractual expense due to storage.

The line-item Joint Youth project was decreased by \$3,500.00 due to not using any of the \$9500.00 from last year.

The line-item Employee Benefits was increased \$97,353.00 due to retirement, social security, and insurance amounts increasing, there will be a 7% increase of employee's health insurance for the 2023 year.

The line-item Clerk Fee's income was increased \$300.00 due to year-to-date amount being higher than proposed 2022 budget income.

The line-item Planning Board income was increased \$500.00 due to year-to-date amount being higher than proposed 2022 budget income.

The line- item Mortgage Tax was increased \$10,000.00 and may be able to be adjusted higher.

The line-item Equipment was increased \$47,000.00 due to the purchase of a new plow truck and pick up truck, however Budget Officer- Helen stated that this is one of the line items that will be cut and \$47,000.00 will be removed from this line item.

The line-item Repairs was increased \$2,500.00 due to increase in materials and that account will be short money this year.

The line- item Snow Removal was increased \$6,000.00 due to a .60 cent per hour raise for the highway employees.

The line-item Contractual Expense was increased \$2,500.00 due to rising prices for fuel and materials.

The category Employee Benefits under highway appropriations was increased \$10,242.00 due to employee wages increasing causing retirement, social security and insurances to increase, there will be a 7% increase of employee's health insurance for the 2023 year.

The line-item Serial Bonds decreased \$32,606.00 due to paying off the grader.

The line-item Ambulance requested a \$11,699.00 increase in budget due to rising cost in fuel and medical supply cost.

Regina Ladd stated that this increase is only to cover rising expenses and for no new purchases and that the EMS has made substantial cuts in other areas to remain within budget.

Supervisor Hall stated that recently he had a meeting with Glens Falls Hospital and are looking to purchase medical supplies through the hospital- this will be on a county wide basis, the plan will be that the EMS companies would be able to buy supplies and medications at bulk cost and will be able to return any supplies they may not need, this is feasible due to the EMS being a nonprofit organization.

Regina Ladd stated this would be a huge help and save a significant amount of money.

The line- item Fort Ann SF1 was increased \$69,423.00 for a contract amount of \$268,813.00.

Jon Lashinsky, Chief stated that the Fort Ann Volunteer Fire Company needs to replace three sets of turn out gear this year (approx. \$2,000.00 per set), fuel price increases, insurances increases, physicals have increased due to number of members and the Chief holding members responsible for actual getting the physicals done. They have increased money for equipment due to things needing to be replaced like hoses and other things of that nature. They have also been working with Tim Hardy from the County trying to get a repeater system set up. Chief Lashinsky asked Helen what steps would need to be taken to enroll Fort Ann Fire Dept. into the LOSAP program, Helen said she would provide them with the contact information.

The line- item Pilot Knob SF2 was increased \$6,950.00 due to contract increase (\$5000.00 contract increase will bring them back to their pre-covid contract amount of \$93,200.00) and LOSAP increase of \$1950.00.

The line- item West Fort Ann SF3 was increased \$21,042.00.

Contract amount to increase by \$26,550.00 due to fuel, utilities, and legal fees.

LOSAP contribution has decreased by \$5,508.00 due to overpayment in 2022.

The line-item Personal Service for Hadlock District was decreased \$5,000.00 due to never spending all that money.

The line- item Contractual Expense for Hadlock District was increased \$12,500.00 due to rising cost in insurance, Mike Grasso from Gallagher Insurance said to plan on 5% increase along with cost of maintenance and fuel.

The line-item Serial Bond was decreased \$1,950.00 due to decrease in interest.

The Budget Officer went over the Town of Fort Ann Budget Summary 2023 sheet paying special attention to the last line (Increase/Decrease from 2022 budget; Allowable increase per tax cap calculation: \$78,817.00 and amount over tax cap \$209,642.00).

7:20 PM -Supervisor Hall called the meeting to a close.

Respectfully submitted,

Miranda Herringshaw, Town Clerk
Town of Fort Ann, New York

Dated: October 10th, 2022,