

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE FORT ANN TOWN HALL**

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

**ABSENT:** Mark Miller, Enforcement Officer  
Lisa Barbato, Dog Control Officer

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Paul Winchell, Highway Superintendent, Helen Denno, Budget Officer, Barbara Winchell, Town Clerk, Jennifer Jackson, Clerk to the Supervisor, Christine Milligan, Fort Ann Town Historian, Richie Moore, Kevin Lovely, Mary Davis, Jon Lashinsky, Jon Pollock, Rick Dumas, Mike Gould, Floyd Ladd, Robert Cutter, Regina Ladd, Thomas Noble, Tony Cantanucci

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 28, 2021.

Supervisor Hall started the workshop advising that the Fire Companies and the Rescue Squad have been put into the 2022 budget at the same amounts as their 2021 contracts because we are still working with 2% tax cap.

Supervisor Hall turned the meeting over to the Budget Officer, Helen Denno, to read the 14 page 2022 tentative budget and answer any questions people may have. Everyone that was present had 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](http://www.townoffortannny.com)

The Budget Officer mentioned that the Account Clerk's (Helen Denno) hours are decreasing for 2022.

Some Department Heads asked for a 2% raise.

The Budget Officer stated that the Town of Fort Ann is the only town that prepares the annual financial statement to the Comptroller's office and it's getting very involved so the Town of Fort Ann is considering looking for a CPA and are adding \$5,000.00 to the 2022 budget for that.

Supervisor Hall stated the Town Board made a decision back in the Spring of 2021 when the Tax Collector decided not to run for office that the town & county taxes will be paid at the Washington County Treasurer's Office like the Fort Ann School taxes have been for three (3) years. So this shouldn't cause any kind of hardship for anyone paying town & county taxes. This should be a substantial savings for the taxpayers of Fort Ann. There will be a contract between the Town of Fort Ann and the Washington County Treasurer's Office to perform the town & county tax collection duties.

The line item for Budget Officer increased from \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 as it hadn't been raised in awhile.

The line item for the Attorney for the Town was increased by \$5,000.00.

The line item for the Town Engineer remained the same in hopes of Battle Hill getting underway.

The Old Stone House Library put in a \$650.00 request for a new air conditioner and dehumidifier.

The line item for Central Communication for the Town's website services and WiFi was increased by \$500.00.

The Budget Officer stated that what used to be known as Cool Insuring is now Gallagher and the town should plan on a 7% increase.

The Registrar's salary was increased by \$500.00.

Supervisor Hall mentioned during the 2021 budget process there should be a reserve set up with money being put aside each year for the next three (3) years for the purchase of a Harvester.

Supervisor Hall mentioned that minimum wage going up has an impact on the budget.

Councilwoman Stark had a hard time finding lifeguards for the summer for \$14/hr. She is asking the Town Board to consider \$15, \$16 or \$20/hr as they get paid in other places. Supervisor Hall asked the Town Board what they thought and all agreed on \$16.00 an hour for lifeguards in 2022.

Christine Milligan looking for \$5,000.00 for the Fort Ann Historical Society. Needs to purchase scanner system and paid intern to preserve records as library cannot support a fireproof safe.

Supervisor Hall asked the Fort Ann Volunteer Fire Company how much approximately has been lost by not being able to have fundraisers due to COVID? Supervisor Hall needs to know that figure. Christine Milligan added that they haven't been able to have dinners &/or Senior lunches during the months of September – June because of COVID.

Jon Lashinsky stated that the Fort Ann Volunteer Fire Company is looking to replace a truck in the near future and will have to look at repairs on driveway in the future.

Supervisor Hall asked about grants. Jon Lashinsky said they did apply last year but were denied but they do seek grants and use Brian Brooks/Whitehall as a grant writer.

Christine Milligan stated the Fort Ann Historical Society applies constantly for grants.

The Highway Superintendent requested a \$.50 an hour raises for the Highway workers.

The Budget Officer went over the Town of Fort Ann Budget Summary 2022 sheet paying special attention to the last line (Increase/Decrease from 2021 budget; Allowable increase per tax cap calculation: \$46,958.00 and amount under tax cap \$2,404.00). The Budget Officer stated there's a reduction of approximately \$20,000.00 for retirement.

Supervisor Hall advised that they'll still be reviewing the 2022 budget and the next workshop is scheduled for October 14, 2021 at the Fort Ann Town Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Motion was introduced by Councilman Sexton, seconded by Councilman Smith to adjourn tonight's meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Motion was carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Barbara J. Winchell, Town Clerk  
Town of Fort Ann, New York

Dated: October 6, 2021