

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 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  
Councilwoman Gretchen Stark

**ABSENT:** Paul Winchell- Highway Superintendent  
Mark Miller-Enforcement Officer  
Shannon Celeste-Dog Control Officer

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Helen Denno-Budget Officer, Miranda Herringshaw- Town Clerk, Jennifer Jackson-Clerk to the Supervisor, Christine Milligan-Fort Ann Town Historian, Mary Davis, Jon Lashinsky, Rick Dumas, Regina Ladd, Allison Bailey, Lyle Washburn, Mike Gould, Rick Dumas, Floyd Ladd, Jon Pollock, Jason Pollock, Steve Wade, Andrew Call.

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 October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Supervisor Hall stated that this is the public hearing pertaining to A Local Law to Override the Tax Levy Limit established in General Municipal Law Section 3-C. He stated that we would start the meeting by reading the resolution and then have a discussion with anyone in the audience, then the Town Board Members would vote on the Resolution. 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](http://www.townoffortannny.com)

**Resolution #85-2022  
ADOPTING A LOCAL LAW TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW SECTION 3-C**

On the motion of Councilman Sexton, seconded by Councilman Smith to accept resolution entitled "Adopting a local law to override the tax levy limit established in general municipal law section 3-c"

Adopted            AYES 5            Sexton, Smith, Stark, Witherell, Hall

**RESOLVED** that the Town Board finds that the proposed Local Law is required pursuant to General Municipal Law section 3-c and is in the best interests of the residents, inhabitants and guests of the people of the Town of Fort Ann; and be it further **RESOLVED**, that the proposed Local Law, copies of which are attached hereto and made a part hereof, is hereby adopted; and be it further **RESOLVED**, that the Law shall take effect immediately upon its filing in the Office of the Secretary of State; and be it further **RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

Supervisor Hall asked if there were any questions regarding the resolution.

Lyle Washburn stated he was concerned with the Highway Superintendent being given a \$5,000.00 raise when the highway workers were only given a .60 cent per hour raise, Mr. Washburn stated that it doesn't look right and doesn't help morale. He also stated that the Town Clerk was being given a raise, as well as Clerk to the Supervisor.

Supervisor Hall stated that he understood Mr. Washburn's concerns and stated that there were a few reasons why that decision was made. The first reason being that with the new Highway Garage Project beginning that Paul Winchell will have many more responsibilities for the next 1.5- 2 years, and that he needs to be compensated for the extra time and effort that will be going into his daily job duties. The Town Clerk and the Clerk to the Supervisor will be taking on additional responsibility's as well due to short term rental laws that will be going into effect in the coming months. Along with more responsibilities with these positions the Town is trying to get these salaries to the appropriate amounts due to the positions being under paid for many years.

6:05 PM- Motion was made by Councilman Sexton seconded by Councilman Smith to close the public hearing.

**Supervisor Hall** - "I know we just voted on this, and it's all done but just know we did not do this lightly. It's been two years of COVID we weren't sure what the future was going to hold. And, you know, in some regard, we're still in that with the economy being what it is but if we don't take action, sooner or later, it's just going to get out of control, and would be a huge spike in everybody's taxes. I appreciate people understanding that as we speak today, and the purpose of the revaluation is going to be to get the taxes more equitable, so hopefully that it works out that way. So, some pay more that should be some pay less that are overpaying now or whatever the case may be. Okay, thank you very much on that."

Supervisor Hall stated that there were no changes in contract amounts for the following first responder's agencies, Fort Ann Fire Company (\$233,813.00) Pilot Knob Fire Company (\$112,350.00), Fort Ann EMS (145,000.00) there was a change in West Fort Ann Fire Company's contract requested amount was (\$226,553.00) amount on that was subtracted from contract amount was \$56,000.00 bringing West Fort Ann Fire Company's new preliminary contract amount (\$226,553.00). The decision to reduce the WFAFC budget by the \$56,000.00 was due to the fire company purchasing a new truck last year, and looking into the truck purchase further, it was found that the fire department did not seek proper approval for the purchase of this truck, the only thing the Town Board approved was for the fire company to be able to use the Town's Sales Tax ID number so the fire company would be exempt on the tax. No further decision was ever discussed on the actual purchase of the truck, then the fire company purchased this truck. The truck payment is \$56,000.00 per year until 2036 so due to not seeking proper approval for the truck purchase the Town will not be held liable for this payment.

**Chief Floyd Ladd**- "West Fort Ann Volunteer Fire Company acknowledges the notice given last night via phone call by Fort Ann Supervisor to myself, you could possibly not receive funds for EJ42 for our 2023 budget. A special meeting will be called to inform our membership of this decision so that we as an agency can decide where we can go from this point with the truck. I'm not going sit here for three hours arguing it."

**Councilman Smith**- "Chief may I ask you a question?"

**Chief Ladd-** “My statement says it all.”

**Councilman Smith-** “I have an unrelated question. Last time you were here you stated you sold the old fire truck, correct, how much did you get for it?”

**Chief Ladd-** “Approximately \$50,000.00”

**Councilman Smith-** “And have you heard any updates on the new truck?”

**Chief Ladd-** “No. No, Sir.”

**Councilman Smith-** “Thank you.”

Chief Floyd Ladd exited the meeting at approximately 6:12 PM.

**RESOLUTION 86-2022**

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT 2023 TENTATIVE BUDGET TO BECOME PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

On the motion of Councilman Sexton, seconded by Councilman Smith to accept resolution entitled “Resolution to adopt 2023 tentative budget to become preliminary budget”

Adopted                    AYES 5                    Sexton, Smith, Stark, Witherell, Hall

**RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of Fort Ann adopts the 2023 preliminary budget with changes made to the 2023 tentative budget.

**Public Discussion:**

Christine Milligan- “Does the Town have an idea on the amount that the Town will be going over the tax cap?”

Helen Denno- “The total amount the town will be over the tax cap by is \$165,353.00. Town is allowed to increase expenses by \$78,817.00 staying within the tax cap. The Town will be over the tax cap by an additional \$86,536.00”

Supervisor Hall- “And the problem is, I mean, we could have cleaned out everything we'd have in reserve to get it down there and then next year, we would just be you know, it'd be double trouble. I mean, we got that at the county this year, because last year they wanted to go to zero increase. And now you know, it is about three and a half percent increase instead of trying to keep it level it's going up and down, up and down. And that's why some of the raises were given and some of the things that we did with this year so that we can get an even keel and work from there. So, it won't be continually going up and down.”

6:20 motion by Councilman Smith seconded by Councilwoman Witherell to adjourn meeting.

Motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Dated: October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022,

DRAFT