

**Danby Town Board  
Minutes of Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting  
November 10, 2014  
Draft**

**Present:**

Supervisor: Ric Dietrich  
Councilpersons: Rebecca Brenner, Leslie Connors, Jim Holahan, Jack Miller

**Others Present:**

Deputy Town Clerk Susan McLellan  
Bookkeeper Laura Shawley  
Public Ronda Roaring, Garry Huddle, Kenny Makosch

**The Danby Town Board Budget Hearing was opened at 6:30**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**, that the Town of Danby Town Board has completed the Preliminary Budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2015, a copy of which is available for review at the office of the Town Clerk, 1830 Danby Road, during regular office hours Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10am to 5pm and Saturday 10am to Noon.

Pursuant to Section 107 of Town Law, the proposed maximum salaries for the following town officers are specified as follows: Supervisor - \$20,920, Councilpersons (4) - \$10,327 (\$2,582 each), Town Clerk - \$30,409, Town Justices (2) - \$28,222 (\$14,111 each), Highway Superintendent - \$55,133.

**FURTHER NOTICE IS GIVEN** that the Town Board of the Town of Danby will hold following Public Hearing on November 10, 2014 at the Danby Town Hall, 1830 Danby Road, Ithaca, NY:

6:30 p.m. - **PUBLIC HEARING** to to hear any objections of and consider approval of the proposed 2015 Budget. All persons will be heard either in writing or in person. The Town Board will consider voting on the budget during its regular meeting held subsequent to the public hearing.

Supervisor Dietrich gave an overview of the 2015 Town of Danby municipal budget. This budget reflects a multi-year effort to stay below the 2% tax cap mandated by NYS. Dietrich explained how and why the Highway Department, in 2014, entered into some debt in order to improve and maintain its fleet of road maintenance equipment. Dietrich has some concerns that the Town has had to dip into its Fund Balance in order to stay within the tax cap. He has concerns about the health of the regional economy and how this will impact the Town in the long run.

There was a general TB discussion regarding aspects of the budget. This budget has been drafted in such a way that modest contributions can be made to the Danby Community Park Association and to the Finger Lakes Land Trust to support a desired acquisition in West Danby near the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve.

Bookkeeper Shawley provided information regarding the proposed 2015 budget and the tax cap. This budget is close to the tax cap. This was accomplished without cutting programs. Shawley reported that, compared to other municipalities in New York State, Danby is doing very well. Efforts will be made to control spending in order to avoid dipping into the Fund Balance. For example, the Highway Department will conduct monthly reviews of expenditures. The Town is already seeing a reduction in repair bills by having an experienced mechanic on staff.

There was a general discussion about reviewing expenditures in all departments at least quarterly. This can be done through a review of the monthly Supervisor's reports. Brenner asked how municipalities can raise revenue, other than through taxes? There are various permits and license fees, but this income is relatively stable year to year. Dietrich advised that increases in fees would not cover much in the budget. Shawley advised that the Town won't see much in additional revenues but may be able to see benefits from reducing expenses by several and various means.

## **The Budget Hearing was closed at 7:00**

### **The Danby Town Board Meeting was opened at 7:01pm**

There was continued TB discussion regarding aspects of the 2015 budget. Connors asked for some clarification regarding the gift to the DCPA included in this budget. Shawley reported that \$6,500 for park support is included in this budget. Dietrich and Shawley explained that amount will cover several items including liability insurance, audit expenses related to a previous grant, and other moderate expenses. In response to a question from Roaring regarding potential default of the park (which property would then become Town property), Dietrich stated that there are many good reasons to support the park with a goal of self-sufficiency as a separate organization. Connors asked whether there was the potential to sell/transfer a portion of Highway Department land, adjacent to the park, to the DCPA to support the park's goal of expanding its disc golf course to 18 holes? Dietrich said that this question will be further researched in 2015. Connors would like to continue this consideration.

Connors asked for clarification regarding any contribution to the TCAT/West Danby Van Pool project. There is \$1,000 for this project in the 2015 budget.

There was a brief discussion of potential funding sources for replacing/installing new drapes in the Town Hall meeting room. There may be grant funding related to historic buildings that might be available for this purpose. These funds were not included in the 2015 budget.

Connors opened a discussion of the need to revisit/negotiate a current contract between the Town of Danby and the Danby Community Council. Dietrich noted that the Youth Services Contract with the Tompkins County Youth Bureau also needs negotiation. Connors distributed copies of the 2009 DCC/TB contract and the most recent drafts as written in July 2013. This topic will be added to the Town Board/Community Council discussion for the next TB meeting.

The Board discussed whether these contracts need to be in place prior to approving the 2015 budget. Shawley advised the Board that a budget for 2015 needs to be approved by November 20, 2014. The budget can not be approved in parts. Shawley advised that payment approval for any specific line item could be contingent on a signed contract.

Dietrich provided an overview of other discussion items, to be put on the November 17 agenda, for the Community Council related to use of the Town Hall building for youth programs. There was some discussion of this issue and how to frame the discussion between the Town Board and the DCC. Related to this discussion, the Board discussed appointing a liaison to the DCC.

### **Privilege of the Floor**

Garry Huddle informed the Board that he likes the new web site. He also informed the Board that the Justices have begun the process of advertising for a new court clerk.

Ronda Roaring asked questions about the property, tax map # 18.-1-17.11 (the location on Sylvan Lane of the West Danby Water District tank)—whether this land is owned by the Town? What is the status of logging marks on the trees along the access road to the tank? Where will the money from logging go and how will it be use? Dietrich provided some information, that this was discussed at one time as a potential method of raising funds for improvements to the Water District. He stated that there have also been concerns about trees falling into the water district right of way. Roaring repeated her concern that the Conservation Advisory Council needs to create management plans for properties held by the Town. She asserted that no logging should be done prior to a management plan.

Additional research will be done as to which tax parcels in this location are owned by which government entities. The Water Commissioners will be contacted to clarify these questions.

## **Approve 2015 Budget**

Shawley presented a draft resolution for adopting the 2015 town budget.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 111 OF 2013 - ADOPT TOWN BUDGET**

**Resolved**, that the Town Board of Town of Danby adopts the Preliminary 2015 Budget as presented.

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **Warrants**

### **ABSTRACT #10 OF 2014: GENERAL FUND**

#464-498 for a total of \$24,439.69

**Moved by Connors, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

### **HIGHWAY FUND**

#214-241 for a total \$79,518.79

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

### **WATER DISTRICT**

#058-061 for a total of \$263.89

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Miller. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **Approve Minutes**

Brenner had proposed changes to the October 20 Town Board Minutes. Action on the October minutes was postponed until the Nov. 17 TB meeting.

## **Groundwater Protection Ordinance/Rural Water Study**

Dietrich gave an update on the time frame for completing work on these projects. The next meeting to review the draft Groundwater Protection Ordinance is Wednesday, November 19 at 7pm in the Town Hall. Dietrich suggested that public educational sessions be held in the winter and spring, related to zoning changes related to land use and water protection. He anticipated that the Rural Water Study and Groundwater Protection Ordinance would be ready for public consideration in the summer of 2015.

## **Municipal Email System and Web Site**

Jim Holahan gave an update on the status of the transfer from the old to new Email and web site system. Holahan and VanHam have been in touch with the fire district regarding municipal Emails and involvement in the new townofdanbyny.org web site. Emails have been established and are being used by primary staff and board members. A "How To" document will be sent to new users of the townofdanbyny.org email addresses. Email from the old town.danby.ny.us are being forwarded to the new Email addresses. Some problems were reported by Roaring and Dietrich regarding Email communication.

Garry Huddle asked that the justices individual Email addresses not be listed on the Town web site. There was a continued discussion regarding individual vs. department specific Email addresses.

Progress is being made in setting up the new web site. VanHam will begin training different departments in how to manage their web pages. Training will begin with the Highway and Code Enforcement departments in the next week. There was preliminary discussion regarding links and additions to the web site.

Holahan asked that the Email Policy and Procedures document be added to the next agenda.

### **Meeting Room Drapes**

There was a brief discussion regarding potential funding for replacing the Town Hall meeting room drapes. Dietrich reported that Code Officer Cooper has researched blinds vs. drapes and concluded that drapes are a better option. Bookkeeper Shawley reported on constrictions to the building reserve account. Additional research needs to be done into the intentions/definitions when the building reserve account was established. The Reserve Account could be redefined with a Board resolution, drafted by the Town Attorney. There was some discussion of other fundraising efforts including seeking a grant.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm

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Susan McLellan, Deputy Town Clerk