

SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS

February 23, 2012

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Highland Falls was held in Village Hall, 303 Main Street, Highland Falls, New York on February 23, 2012.

The Meeting was called to order by Mayor D'Onofrio at 6:00 P.M.

Members present were:

Mayor Joseph E. D'Onofrio
Trustee Harold Brown
Trustee James DiSalvo
Trustee Joseph McCormick
Trustee Richard Parry

Also present were:

Village Clerk, Regina M. Taylor
Treasurer, Ralph J. Walters
Street Superintendent, Pat Patterson
Chief Water Plant Operator, Kevin Hurst
Fire Chief, Erik Smith
2nd Assistant Chief, John Rush
News of the Highlands Editor, Mary Jane Pitt
Village Resident - Ray Deveraux- 48 Ondaora Pkwy, Gus Koutsourades – 156 Main Street (WP Motel), Mervin Livsey – 107 Mountain Ave.

Village Treasurer, Ralph Walters presented the Board members with the Requested 2012-2013 Budget and explained that the numbers shown were taken from the requested budgets of the department heads and what they believe their contractual expenses will be based on actual spending to date and last year's expenses.

Mr. Walters reminded the Board that this is a Requested Budget and that the assessment roll is still being completed. The roll should be completed before the Tentative Budget needs to be turned into the Clerk, by March 20th. Mr. Walters remarked that the 2% tax cap refers to the amount allowable to be levied, not a cap on the tax rate.

Chief Water Plant Operator, Kevin Hurst, presented his 2012-2013 Requested Budget to the Board for review. The Board asked Mr. Hurst if the cost of the fuel oil estimate is realistic. The Board will look at this again before the Tentative Budget is set.

Mr. Hurst pointed out a request in this budget of \$30,000 to replace the Jeep. Mayor D'Onofrio reminded Mr. Hurst and the Board that when the Jeep was given to the Water Department, from another Department, it was stipulated that it would not be replaced when it stopped running. The Mayor recommended to remove it from the budget. Trustee McCormick responded he thought the intention was to replace the Dodge with a new vehicle and let the Dodge replace the Jeep. Trustee DiSalvo recommended an increase to the Water Fund Equipment Reserve of \$10,000.

Trustee McCormick reminded the Board of other items that need to be done in the Water Fund., ie replacing some mains and work at Jim's Pond. The Mayor responded that some work is going to be done through FEMA projects and others are long term projects that need to be planned out.

Mr. Walters reminded the Board that the Village pays school taxes, Fire District, & ambulance taxes, on Bog Meadow and that this year he is estimating \$38,000 for that expense. The Mayor responded that the assessment on Bog Meadow is going up and we are not sure how this will impact the increase of taxes paid. Trustee DiSalvo recommended that the Village Board should utilize the grievance procedures when the information is known.

Mr. Walters reported that Retirement Contributions are increasing and this information is based on salary projections. Mr. Walters told the Board that salary increases are mandated by Union Contracts and there is at least a 2% increase associated with any contract that is being negotiated.

Mr. Hurst thanked the Board for their support and providing the Water Plant staff with the funding necessary to maintain the daily operations of the plant and ensure the safety and quality of the Village water supply.

The Village Board thanked Mr. Hurst for his work on this budget. No action taken.

Village Street Superintendent, Pat Patterson, presented his 2012-2013 Requested Budget to the Board for review. Mayor D'Onofrio welcomed Pat to his first budget meeting as Street Superintendent.

Mr. Walters pointed out that Mr. Patterson is responsible for many codes. Mr. Walters asked Mr. Patterson to check around on the fuel prices. Mr. Patterson pointed out he expects to see a decrease in phone charges after he switches to Time Warner for phone and internet service. He also pointed out an increase in training costs because of more mandatory courses that are required for compliance with MS4 regulations as well as DEC requirements.

Other requests from Mr. Patterson included the following: increases in the Street Maintenance code of \$80,000 for a 1 ton truck; \$10,000 for a utility vehicle to clean sidewalks of snow; \$7,000 for the brine system; \$12,000 for a fuel management system, \$14,000 for sealing of cracks and \$12,480 for a part time administrative clerk.

The Village Treasurer reminded the Board that Mr. Patterson does not include labor costs. Mr. Walters commented that he included a 2% increase in salary for the Street Superintendent based on the Supervisors Union Contract and included 2% for the DPWEA union employees since their contract is currently in negotiations.

Trustee McCormick asked if a conversation should be held with the Town regarding Refuse & Garbage pick-up and if it should be a Town wide expense. The Mayor agreed that this is something the Village should look closer at.

The Board thanked Mr. Patterson for his work on this budget. No action taken.

Fire Chief Erik Smith presented his 2012-2013 Requested Budget to the Board for review. Before he began, Mr. Walters reminded the Board that the Chief has no control over the workers compensation insurance or truck room rent that is paid. Mr. Walters explained that the truck room rent is negotiated through a lease agreement and the amount of workers compensation is based on prior expense history.

Fire Chief Smith reported to the Board that he looked very closely at the department's expenses to date and budgeted accordingly. He reminded the Board that the department is regulated in certain areas by OSHA and NAPA and they must be compliant in these areas. This affects the safety of the volunteers and Village residents. Mr. Smith reported that he tries hard to develop a budget that will maintain the services already provided.

Trustee DiSalvo recommended that the Board start a vehicle reserve fund for the Fire Department similar to the ones started for General, Water & Sewer.

The Board thanked the Chief for his work on this budget. No action taken.

The Village Treasurer responded to a couple of general public comments regarding the tax cap and the benefit codes.

A motion was made by Trustee DiSalvo to enter Executive Session to discuss Union Contract Negotiations.. The motion was seconded by Trustee McCormick and unanimously carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:35pm.

Trustee McCormick motioned to come out of executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and unanimously carried. The regular meeting reconvened at 7:55pm.

Trustee McCormick motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and unanimously carried.

The meeting closed at 7:55 P.M.

Regina M. Taylor, Village Clerk