

TOWN OF CLARKSTOWN  
PUBLIC HEARING

Town Hall

11/5/80

7:35 P.M.

Present: Supervisor Dusanenko  
Councilmen Holbrook, Lettre, Longo, Maloney  
Everett J. Johns, Town Attorney  
Patricia Sheridan, Town Clerk

RE: PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE 1981 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Supervisor Dusanenko declared the Public Hearing open; Town Clerk read notice calling Public Hearing and testified as to proper posting and publication. Assemblage saluted the Flag.

Mrs. Dorothy Erard gave an explanation of the proposed budget figures. For an example Mrs. Erard said a \$50,000.00 assessed home in New City for 1981 would pay Town taxes of \$435.95 (an increase of \$78.15); your lighting district would decrease by \$1.24; the water district would be increased by \$2.95; the sewer district (MBSIA No.2) would be an increase of 9¢ and in the New City Fire District it would be an increase of \$3.59 for a total of \$83.54. This reflects a total anticipated increase in taxes of 20.2% which is being presented to you tonight.

She showed an explanation of the town taxes in comparison to the total tax bill for 1980. Town tax is shown as only 13.7% of the total. The remaining tax is: school - 58.3%; county -18.2%; sewer-7.6%; and special districts - 2.2% which totals 86.3% which is beyond our control.

The difference between the original 1980 budget and the 1981 Preliminary Budget is \$3,316,764.00. The reasons for these differences are mainly in the categories of salaries and benefits for a total of 56.2% of this increase and debt for 15.7%. These major categories account for almost \$2,400,000.00 of the \$3,000,000.00 increase.

Assuming almost no personnel cuts salaries and benefits account for 51.8% of the total Town spending; debt - 22.3%; special districts - 9.1%; tax on Town property - .3% and insurance 3.3% for a total of 86.8% of which we have absolutely no control, leaving 13.2% of the budget available for modification.

After more detailed explanation, Mrs. Erard said she would be happy to answer any questions for anyone at any time.

Upon inquiry, Supervisor Dusanenko explained that special districts include water districts, which provide fire hydrants and public water in certain areas; lighting districts, where there are street lights on Town roads; it also includes sewer districts - MBSIA No. 1 or No. 2 (most of the Town is in Master Sewer District No. 1. Also included are fire districts. There are also road improvement districts.

There followed a discussion on time allowed for speakers at this meeting. The Supervisor suggested a three minute time limit for all with an option to return after all speakers had been heard. Councilman Holbrook stated that there should be no time limit. Councilman Longo felt that a ten minute limit would be satisfactory.

RESOLUTION NO. (918-1980)

OVERRULING THE CHAIR ON A THREE  
MINUTE TIME LIMIT FOR SPEAKERS  
AT THE 1981 PRELIMINARY BUDGET  
HEARING

Co. Holbrook offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. (918-1980) Continued

RESOLVED, that the Chair be overruled in so far as a three minute time limit for speakers at the Preliminary Budget Hearing is concerned and after all speakers are heard, a speaker may return for further comments.

Seconded by Co. Longo

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Supervisor Dusanenko.....	No
Councilman Holbrook.....	Yes
Councilman Lettre.....	Yes
Councilman Longo.....	Yes
Councilman Maloney.....	Yes

\* \* \* \* \*

RESOLUTION NO. (919-1980)

ENFORCING A TEN MINUTE TIME  
LIMIT ON SPEAKERS AT THE  
PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING

Co. Holbrook offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that a ten minute time limit be enforced upon each speaker who wishes to participate in the Preliminary Budget Hearing.

Seconded by Co. Lettre

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Supervisor Dusanenko.....	No
Councilman Holbrook.....	Yes
Councilman Lettre.....	Yes
Councilman Longo.....	Yes
Councilman Maloney.....	Yes

\* \* \* \* \*

There followed a brief discussion with regard to restoring Mini-Trans to the 1981 Budget. Supervisor Dusanenko suggested there be a charge of 25¢ for senior citizens and handicapped persons. Other suggestions were that there be no charge for senior citizens and handicapped persons and that there be a 25¢ charge for all other riders.

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that the modified budget of the Recreation Department had been accepted and there were no cuts being made contrary to some misinformation.

Supervisor Dusanenko then read the following mailgram from Stephen Leeman of 525 North Broadway, Upper Nyack, New York

"SUPERVISOR TED DUSANENKO  
CLARKSTOWN TOWN HALL  
NEW CITY NY 10956

WE ARE SENDING THIS MESSAGE TO SERVE AS A REMINDER OF YOUR INTENTION TO INCLUDE IN THE BUDGET SEPARATE ADEQUATE AMOUNT FOR LITTER RECEPTABLE. WITHOUT ENOUGH RECEPTACLES, LITTER-ENDER EDUCATION IS

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OF NO AVAIL. WITHOUT RECEPTACLES, LAWS TO PUNISH LITTERERS ARE UNFAIR. ADEQUATE PUBLIC LITTER RECEPTACLES ARE A FIRST NECESSARY REQUIREMENT FOR CORRECTING THE BLIGHT OF LITTER IN CLARKSTOWN. THE LEAGUE OF LITTER-ENDERS, APPROXIMATELY 1,000 MEMBERS STRONG IS COUNTING ON YOU.

STEPHEN LEEMAN"

Supervisor Dusanenko then read the following letter from Harold P. Walker of 84 Waldron Avenue, Central Nyack, New York:

"Dear Mr. Dusanenko:

I the undersigned do take this opportunity to write you this letter regarding the proposed tax increases for the Town of Clarkstown for which I spoke to you briefly about when you were a guest on Hot Line nearly a week ago.

According to what you told me on Hot Line, the taxes in Central Nyack where I live will be about 3% higher than in New City and areas like that. This seems very unfair to us residents of Central Nyack for there are lots of services that we don't have, for which I will name a few in the following paragraph, as follows.

Our roads are poorly maintained with overgrowth of trees and shrubs, debris blocking the drains, sidewalks needed in some areas, and are poorly laid down in some areas, lots of garbage including soda and beer cans, broken bottles etc., litter the streets and curb walls, and these are piling up daily and will definitely cause a health hazard.

We have not had any drains cleaned recently, as the above mentioned garbage and/or litter collected. On previous summers it used to be done, sometimes by highschool students with holiday jobs, but nothing has been done this summer. Now the falling leaves are adding to the problems. Because we are not living in some of the affluent areas we believe that we are forgotten or otherwise insignificant.

I have travelled through most of the areas of Clarkstown and have not seen any in worse shape than Central Nyack. We don't think it is right for a proposal that we should pay more taxes and get less services. If I can get time off work on Wednesday, November 5th I will avail myself to attend the public Budget Hearing when I would like to ask a few more questions. As you mentioned on Hot Line, I would like you to take this letter along with you, and answer questions regarding same if you so desire.

Trusting that you will give these matters your prompt and kind attention and adhere to our requests in Central Nyack.

I remain sir,

Respectfully yours,

Harold P. Walker  
84 Waldron Avenue  
Central Nyack, NY"

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Supervisor Dusanenko then requested the speakers to stand up and be heard in number order.

APPEARANCE: Diane Cioffi  
22 Kohler Court  
Congers, New York

Mrs. Cioffi stated that she did not understand the budget as presented. She felt there was an excess of people on the Town payroll and the solution to the budget problem was ridding the Town of its excess employees.

APPEARANCE: Susie Covello  
Central Nyack

Mrs. Covello stated she was speaking on behalf of her two teenaged children and in support of many other teenagers in the Town. She urged the expansion of the Mini-Bus and the Parks and Recreation Services. Young people are in need of the bus services to get to jobs, social activities and shopping. Mrs. Covello felt that there were increasing activities for the senior citizens and the very young but that the age group of fourteen to twenty-five was sadly neglected. She felt that more attention be directed toward this group if we are to keep our young people living in this Town.

APPEARANCE: Fred Haeger  
Valley Cottage

Mr. Haeger asked if the Preliminary Budget was available to the public for the first time this evening. The Supervisor stated that the budget had been available in the Comptroller's Office for quite some time.

Mr. Haeger made reference to a letter which had been handed out prior to the meeting signed by all of the Councilmen. This letter set out some of the difficulties which had preceded the completion of the Preliminary Budget. Mr. Haeger stated that he had no confidence in the bookkeeping system of the Town and absolutely no confidence in the Budget as presented tonight. The Budget as originally thought out would have presented a 29% increase. After workshops and input more services were added and the Budget was cut to 25%. This is just voodoo economics which we will hear more about on the national level. If there are any surplus funds in this Town they should be expended on this budget. The Town should have some sort of contingency fund in case of emergencies. Priorities should be established for budget funds. There should be an open government. There is no confidence in this administration. The public cannot express an opinion on a budget that is presented in this form as it cannot be understood by most people.

APPEARANCE: Mary Riley  
Nanuet Senior Citizens

Mrs. Riley stated that she was representing all of the senior citizens of Clarkstown. She stated that they all hoped that the Recreation Budget would not be cut in any way and if you possibly can we would like to see a little addition to it. She also stated that they hoped that Mini-Trans would not be cut because it is needed by all senior citizens, handicapped and the youth of the Town.

APPEARANCE: Nathan Bayer, President  
New City Senior Citizens II

Mr. Bayer stated that there are about 135 members in their group. Our members are all on fixed incomes and are finding it

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extremely difficult to keep up with taxes. However, the senior citizens feel it much more than any other group. He felt that he had a little money put aside for his retirement but now he must be very careful. He said that the teachers were given a large raise and he wanted them to keep their hands out of his bankbook. He requested that the allotment for the mini-buses not be cut.

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that just for the record he wanted Mr. Bayer and all concerned to know that the Town of Clarkstown had nothing to do with teachers' salaries or the salaries of the school administrators. That is all handled by the School Board and the taxpayers.

APPEARANCE: Michael Lettre  
Congers, New York

Mr. Lettre stated that he was the brother of one of our councilmen. Mr. Lettre said he wanted to discuss the budget process. He felt that we had an improper approach to putting a budget together. He felt the level of the increase was unacceptable. Here we are at the beginning of November and we do not know where we are going. This budget process should have begun a long time ago and the problems worked out a long time ago. We do not know in what direction we are going to go. People who want to help do not have this information and he doesn't believe that the Board had the required information. He believes that the budget should be a month-by-month process. He would be willing to spend his time helping in this budget process and he would like to see the Town Board commit itself to lowering this tax increase which is anticipated by this budget.

APPEARANCE: Harold Peterson  
Valley Cottage, New York

One of the questions which has existed in this Town for the past eleven months has been whether or not there is a surplus. Another question is whether or not the 1980 budget which we are working under right now is an adequate budget. Despite what the Supervisor says or what I say there is one authoritative source and that is the certified public accountants who come into the Town to do the certified audit and they take full responsibility for the figures that they present for their report. The audit which I have in my hand states that as of December 1979 the surplus was over \$1,500,000.00. Of that amount approximately \$400,000.00 was to be applied to the 1980 budget to keep 1980 taxes down. The proposed budget can go up or down. It is up to the five individuals on this Town Board what happens to that budget.

One of the problems which we talked about last year when we were doing the budget for 1980 (the one we are currently operating under now) was the insurance problem. The Town Board felt we could not spend \$1,000,000.00 on insurance. Self-insurance was discussed. \$470,000.00 was to be spent for insurance from July 1, 1980 to June 30, 1981. Next year's premium (1981-1982) would be only slightly higher. \$675,000.00 at last count is budgeted for insurance now. He questioned the discrepancy.

Various other matters were mentioned by Mr. Peterson, including cuts in personnel and the issue of bonding.

APPEARANCE: John Lodico  
2 Birch Drive  
New City, New York

Mr. Lodico suggested an evaluation of the number of employees in the Town. There are people who have been professional provisionals in this government for at least a decade. Who will pay for the pickup of more litter containers? Blue Cross-Blue

Shield has urged everyone to get a second opinion. That costs. We go out on bid and the bid is accepted but the price goes over what has been bid. That is accepted. That costs. He suggests a review of the Middlewood Senior Citizen complex. That complex should be used for meetings of senior citizens rather than the rental of other buildings for their meetings. Landfill has not gotten new equipment but has gotten hand-me-downs from every other department in the hopes that it will run. Now he notes that revenues anticipated from the Landfill will approximate \$1,000,000.00. How?

Supervisor Dusanenko interjected that landfill dumping rates would be raised. Contractors will receive an increase in per tonnage dumping from \$2.50 to \$5.00. Those presently paying \$5.00 per ton will be paying \$7.50 per ton. These fee increases came about in between the tentative budget and the budget we are dealing with right now.

Mr. Lodico stated that private contractors were going to be used to balance the budget rather than do a responsible budget. You cannot give everything you gave last year and expect to save money this year. The idea of raising the rates and using those people as the whipping boys to balance the Town budget is immoral. This would negate the increase that was granted to the carters. You can't pass this on to someone else and have them carry it; you must do it yourself.

APPEARANCE:

John Cuff  
West Nyack, New York

Mr. Cuff recommended a citizens advisory committee to help work on the budget. Mr. Cuff stated that as a councilman each member of the board should know where the money is going or not be content to sit on the Board. He questioned the amount of money expended on gasoline at a time when we are supposed to be trying to conserve. He stated that Clarkstown looks seedy and is in the worst condition it has ever been in. He felt Clarkstown was going downhill and that condition should be looked into. The biggest problem facing young people in this Town is, that after they have completed their education, where do they live in Clarkstown? They can't afford an apartment; they can't afford a house here. In a few years, a thirty year old is going to seem like the teenager of Clarkstown because our young people will be driven out. We are setting up a tax structure which will deprive our children from living here when they are older because of the demands for their recreation now. The first cuts have to be made in the Recreation budget. We cannot cut back on our essential services but we certainly can cut back on recreation.

Mr. Cuff questioned the CETA program and the funds for it. The Supervisor told him that we are down from 130 CETA people to 30. At the beginning of the year the mini-bus drivers were all CETA people but as those CETA people left, either because their time was up or they found different positions, the Town had to fund these essential positions out of surplus funds.

Mr. Cuff urged that petty differences among the Town Board be put aside and they work as a team with the residents of our community.

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Supervisor Dusanenko thanked Mr. Cuff and stated that he, as Supervisor, was responsible for the tentative budget as filed. The tentative budget is a guide and not something which we must live with. When departmental requests came in which would have caused a 44% tax increase I worked on the budget and came in with a 29% increase. The tentative budget basically called for a 25-1/2% tax increase. This budget calls for approximately 20% tax increase. I do not mind the criticism because time will tell. If the services can be delivered during 1981 with this budget I will congratulate everyone on this Board but if services cannot be provided I cannot print money. A budget must be adopted that will provide services and emergency services. A Citizens Budget Group will be utilized next year, if possible. Total recreational expenses in this budget amount to approximately \$1,160,119.00. Of that the Town will subsidize \$470,726.00. Gasoline has been used by many Town departments. There will be a budget we can live with next year hopefully.

APPEARANCE:

Fred Seeger, Superintendent  
Highway Department

There are 270 miles of highway in the Town of Clarkstown and we plow approximately 300 miles including undedicated roads. We try to do a leaf pick-up every spring and one in the fall. We try to provide a bulk pick-up. We try to fix our pot holes and I think our roads are pretty good. We have about 5,000 catch basins in the Town and we try to keep them in good repair. My men are out doing the work and we work very hard. He questioned whether or not he would be able to hire summer workers for 1981 and if not the bulk pick-up would have to be eliminated. As for paving of roads I put in \$300,000.00 for bituminous concrete. This year we did pave a few roads. We paved South Mountain Road and Red Hill Road (although we could not complete it.) We paved Highview Avenue in Nanuet and Mountainview Avenue in Valley Cottage. This money came through on a bond issue under a safer roads program. Roads are very important to our community and our tax payers deserve good roads. I would appreciate restoration of the budget to cover road care. I asked for \$100,000.00 for culverts, catch basis, etc. I received -0-. If anyone has a catch basis collapse I cannot buy a block to repair it. Our pipe inventory is down to nothing. Frames and grates are down to nothing. Please restore that item. My other request is for salt. As of today we have about 3,000 tons of salt on hand. We have about \$86,000.00 left in the budget for last year for salt. When I inquired if I get that \$86,000.00 for 1981 the answer was "No." That means I have about \$25,000.00 for salt. With salt at \$30.00 per ton, \$25,000.00 doesn't buy much salt. I leave you with those comments.

Councilman Lettre stated that Mr. Seeger had requested \$125,000.00 for salt. We were informed that there was approximately \$100,000.00 in surplus for last year plus a surplus from the previous year which amounted to more than you even requested; this with an inventory on hand. If you have different information than this it is different from information that myself and the rest of the Board was given in allocating the money you see on your line.

Councilman Longo stated that with information they had been given they came up with \$190,000.00 for salt. We felt that would have been more than adequate for the 1981 budget. More than you requested.

Mr. Seeger said that was correct in the fall but that it is not there now because he had made purchases.

Councilman Lettre felt that there might be even more problems than were realized if the information at hand was incorrect.

In response to a question asked by Supervisor Dusanenko Mr. Seeger stated that approximately 700 lbs. per mile is used for one application.

Councilman Lettre stated that for the record his understanding was that the surplus that was left behind in your salt account was to remain in that account for the sole purpose of purchasing salt to aid your department for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of this Town not to reduce taxes.

APPEARANCE: Arlene Lundberg

Mrs. Lundberg stated that she was both sad and disgusted that she had to be here tonight. The Organized Taxpayers Association has backed school board candidates and you with our hearts. I can understand why there is apathy with voters because at this point I wouldn't back my mother. I don't trust anyone. I would like a straight answer to one question. Is there a \$1,000,000.00 surplus?

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that the answer to that question was "No?" The Supervisor gave a detailed explanation of what had been left in the funds for its utilization. He also explained what had been spent to date out of these funds, giving dates and amounts for these funds and the purposes for which they were earmarked.

Mrs. Lundberg questioned the use of Town cars and was given an explanation for their use by Supervisor Dusanenko.

Mrs. Lundberg urged the Town Board to get together and resolve their differences and bring in a lower budget than the one presented.

APPEARANCE: Steven Hoffman

Mr. Hoffman felt that there were people in the Town who would be glad to help if called upon. There should be a Budget Committee. He stated that to his mind it should be easy to determine if there is a surplus or not and to what that could be applied. The will of the people in this country and in this community is for a fiscally conservative situation. The Town has had enough. You have been elected to be the voice of the people and that voice says to knock this budget down. Set priorities and stick to them.

APPEARANCE: Connie Bosco

Mrs. Bosco stated that our transportation system was so totally unreliable that she felt there was little or no hope for it. The Town of Clarkstown has not been laid out with transportation in mind. Mrs. Bosco also questioned the problem she had read about in connection with an additional payday. She wanted to know if it would be handled with surplus or if there would have to be a bond issue.

APPEARANCE: Philip Bosco

Mr. Bosco felt actual expenditures should have been presented rather than adopted budgets. He had many questions regarding personnel. He also questioned our debt service. He noted that both of these items were the biggest part of our budget.

Supervisor Dusanenko gave a detailed explanation of our debt service. He went into specifics regarding highway equipment especially and discussed the merits of buying immediately or bonding.

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APPEARANCE: Dave Fromson

Mr. Fromson commented on the document signed by the four councilmen and handed to him by the new chairman of the Democratic Party. He felt it was a stinging indictment. Mr. Fromson questioned the tax increase and the Supervisor stated the increases granted in other towns in the County. He mentioned that in the County of Monroe the tax increases in that county's towns were between 10% and 38%.

APPEARANCE: Anthony D'Antoni  
Receiver of Taxes, Town of Clarkstown

Mr. D'Antoni questioned a discrepancy he noted in the budget with regard to lines in his department, specifically salary and part-time seasonal. He stated that he had requested \$18,000.00 for seasonal part-time workers. He could not get through the collection of taxes if that figure is left at \$14,000.00 and he is not granted the increase.

Councilman Longo asked if we charge the schools a service charge for the collection of taxes and Mr. D'Antoni said that we do not. We would be allowed to charge up to 1% for their collection. Mr. D'Antoni stated that if we charged the schools 1/2% with the fees we could anticipate a revenue of an additional \$200,000.00 per year.

Supervisor Dusanenko wished it noted, however, that the school district does not charge the Town of Clarkstown for use of their facilities during the year - athletic fields and other school facilities, etc. This should be explored with the School Board because if they are going to charge us more than we are going to charge them the implementation of this service charge could prove to be very foolish.

APPEARANCE: Philip Turino  
West Nyack, New York

Mr. Turino asked if this was a one shot situation and with this increase are we trying to catch up with inflation or is this something that we can expect to continue from year to year.

After a lengthy explanation the Supervisor stated that he did not think this was just a one shot deal. Costs are continually rising and next year it will be just as difficult to maintain services. Bonded indebtedness will increase as well. Salaries must increase according to contract. Realistically we must expect increases each year. Hopefully we will be slated for Federal Revenue Sharing but if not the picture looks even more gloomy.

Mr. Turino thanked the Supervisor for his honest answer and he also requested that priorities be established and if possible a cap be put on spending even so far as reasonable services go.

APPEARANCE: Adolphe Salaun  
So. Conger Avenue  
Congers, New York

Mr. Salaun said that he would like to hear more talk about efficiency and productivity not just facts and figures and rhetoric but simply increase the level of efficiency of every town employee.

At this point Mr. Edward Ghiazza, Superintendent of Recreation wanted to clarify one point. He stated that the Mini Trans does run on all holidays with the exception of Thanksgiving and Christmas. It runs on a Saturday schedule so we do not have to pay employees double time on a Town holiday.

APPEARANCE: James Cropsey

Mr. Cropsey asked for an explanation of the buy back of sick time in the police department.

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that police contract calls for the Town to purchase back accumulated sick time for cash for the police employees. After 10, 13, 17 and 20 years of service or retirement receive from the Town payment for their unused sick time. One half million dollars was borrowed in 1979 for this purpose. Some of those funds were still available in a special fund for that purpose in 1980. These funds were exhausted during early 1980. This Town Board (4 to one) borrowed an additional \$360,000.00 this year to meet this police sick time as it was part of their contract. After a lengthy explanation the Supervisor noted that \$860,000 had been borrowed to date, plus interest and that it will not be paid off for at least five more years.

In answer to a further query the Supervisor stated that some members of the police department had collected \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 in addition to their salary for sick time.

Mr. Cropsey stated that that was an average of \$5,000.00 per man for what he considered nothing. If a person was sick they were entitled to be paid but to be paid for not being sick is just ridiculous.

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that contracts were under negotiation at present for both Town employees and Police Department members and he could not comment further at this time.

APPEARANCE: Martin Feldi  
Little Tor Road  
New City, New York

Mr. Feldi requested that in future negotiations with any Town employees the sick pay clauses should be renegotiated. When a man is sick he should be paid but he does not believe in the non-sense of paying a man when is is not sick.

Supervisor Dusanenko stated that the police contract went to binding arbitration and that the sick clause was awarded along with a bond being purchased for the police employee every time one was purchased by the employee with the effect that every time a bond was purchased two were being purchased (up to twelve a year.) Any roll backs would have to be negotiated through the PBA.

APPEARANCE: Stanley Feld

Mr. Feld asked who was on the Town Board when that contract was made.

Councilman Holbrook stated that the contract had been made about twelve years ago and that none of the present members were on the board at that time. However, the present contract was negotiated with the proviso that sick time could be bought back after 10, 13, 17 or 20 years rather than at the time a person retired so that such huge amounts would not have to be paid out at retirement time. One way or another the sick time had to be bought back as that clause was in a previous contract. This present clause just made it easier for the Town to buy the sick time back. A patrolman could accumulate his sick days and hold them until retirement, at which time he might conceivably be the Chief of Police and his sick days would have to be bought back at the higher rate. This way the sick days could be bought back at the rate of pay at which he is paid today.

APPEARANCE:

Peter Palko  
Maintenance Dept. Employee  
Town of Clarkstown

"First of all, I would like to say that I am an employee of the Town. My father has been working for Lederle for forty-two years. My mother has been working for the school district for over twenty years. They now find themselves in a position that they have to move. They can no longer afford to live in Clarkstown. I have lived in Clarkstown all my life. I live at home. I have a very close relationship with my parents. So what I am about to say I want all those people who will say he doesn't know what he is talking about, he doesn't pay taxes. That's true. I don't pay taxes but I will honestly say that I do help out. (Mr. Palko noted that he meant he did not pay property taxes.) I have been working for the Town since 1973, actually since 1970 but full time since 1973. At the present time, this is what I get over the course of a year. I get 6 personal leave days. I get 12 sick days. I get 30 vacation days. I get 11 paid holidays. Now if my math is correct - that all comes out to 59 days, not counting weekends, of course, so that is almost twelve weeks. I could take every single Friday off for the next year and by this time next year I would have more time than I have now. This is ridiculous. I am forced to take vacation during the year because in all honesty I also accumulate comp time. Actually, I believe the way the contract reads I am not allowed to ask for comp time. I am supposed to be paid time and one-half. However, maintenance has not budgeted for over time for the last three years. So I did take the comp time. I would rather take the comp time because by the time taxes are taken out in my overtime it is less than my regular salary. I am now in a position where I am taking approximately twelve to thirteen weeks off each year just so I do not accumulate anymore than the 60 to 65 days I have coming already.

"Another way in which the Town ought to be able to help themselves is that no agency, Town, County, State or otherwise pays any fee for use of our facilities. Obviously nobody is going to go to the school system, the Knights of Columbus Building or the American Legion Hall and pay a charge per night if the Town Hall is giving their building out for free. All we ask is that they follow the No Smoking signs and do not have refreshments and that they are orderly. The problem this creates is that I am presently the Head Night Custodian. I have three full time men and a part-time man working underneath me and what happens is, on a very busy night - tonight is only an average night although there is a lot of people at this meeting - we could have as many as five, six or seven meetings in this building on any given night. The men clean what they can and normally then they do nothing for an hour or two or perhaps they do something like windows that does not need to be done at that time. Now meetings end and we have to rush to get done. What has happened recently is we haven't had the time to get done and I have had to send them home at their regular time and I have stayed overtime getting this comp time. My only suggestion to the Town as far as possibly as far as revenue is concerned is to charge people for the use of the building - I mean other than the Town or governmental commissions. Actually as far as I am concerned I would like to see a complete end to all meetings except Town Boards and Commissions because it would make our job a lot easier. But realizing that this Town Hall is paid for by the people and therefore should be used by the people I would think my only suggestion is that perhaps we could charge people. We are getting school organizations and teachers' organizations now. I think if we charge them perhaps a nominal fee - we are talking easily about 1,000 meetings a year. That is my suggestion."

APPEARANCE:Fred Haeger  
Valley Cottage

There has been much said about the Police Contract and he was sorry that there was not more time to go into the issue more fully. There were only two people who spoke out against that contract and they were John Lodico and myself. I think it was a very bad contract. We gave away too much. The sick clause provision should never have been negotiated in the first place. It is not only the police who have that clause. The teachers also have it. I certainly agree that if a man is ill he should be paid. No one will quarrel with that. But to have a provision where a person is paid when they are not sick or to build up sick credits is a provision which is scandalous. It cannot be justified. As far as I am concerned a provision like that is extortion - outright extortion. There is no such thing as a give back in union negotiations. That statement is ridiculous. Because a thing was given years ago does that mean it must continue. I say that clause should be stricken from the contract. Try having John Lodico and I negotiate that contract. We'll have it stricken from the contract. I believe that things can be changed. He wanted all information made available to the public.

APPEARANCE:Harold Peterson  
Valley Cottage

I will reiterate that certified public accountants stated there is a surplus. That surplus was there on New Year's Eve when you took office (this to Supervisor Dusanenko and the Board members). What you did with the surplus is up to you. A detailed commentary followed.

APPEARANCE:

John Cuff

Mr. Cuff stated that he felt new employees should be hired with new series of benefits.

APPEARANCE:

Mr. Applebaum

Mr. Applebaum said he had sat through most of the budget hearings. You gentlemen have said you wanted to listen to the people. The people here said if you have to cut 50 jobs to get the budget where it should be that those cuts should be made. What has to be done should be done.

APPEARANCE:

John Lodico

Mr. Lodico stated that the police should not be treated any better than any other employee. A contract can be changed. There should be a beginning and an end. Just because you got something in the last contract does not mean that you automatically get it in the next one. Personal leave and sick leave clauses are abuses of the public trust when an employee has received his full salary. Mr. Lodico commended Mr. Palko for speaking up about the amount of time off he receives. To rescind a clause in a contract is a bargaining prerogative and a legislative right.

APPEARANCE:

Michael Lettre

Mr. Lettre stated that he would have to vote no on the Preliminary Budget as there is just not enough information.

Councilman Holbrook stated that innuendos were made in the press that the Town was in poor financial shape. When I found that that was not the case it sort of lead to a credibility gap. We are faced with a situation here between ourselves and the Supervisor that is not unbridgeable. We are going to take this budget and cut it down. We are going to continue to cut it down. I am not supporting a budget of 20.2% increase. That is what the Preliminary Budget is but that is not what the final budget is going to be and I think that I can speak for most of the members of the Board. It will take work. We will put more work into it. That's the way we have to go.

Councilman Lettre said that he would like to thank all the citizens who came out this evening to give of their time. We have heard a lot of rhetoric going back and forth from the five members of this Board. Obviously, there are differences of opinion. There may be some personality differences. In the best of marriages you have differences but it doesn't mean that you walk away and you get a divorce. You work together and you do what is best. I really don't like the accusation that was made by Mr. Dusanenko implying that simply because he can't get a second or a third vote that people are being obstinate; or that people necessarily are just trying to break his chops. There are certain philosophical differences between us. There are certain times when we don't believe that it is the best approach. There are certain times when we feel that a person isn't needed for a certain job. There are certain times when we think that possibly there is someone better equipped to handle a position and if certain members on this board, certain Town councilmen don't agree with something you can't just put your head in the sand and pout and say I can't get my way or the Town isn't going to function. It's a give and take for everyone. All five of us. I'd like to lay to rest these seemingly -- attitude that people are trying to break people's chops. There are differences again but I think that everyone has to give and take - not just the Councilmen alone, not just the Supervisor alone - I think everyone. I think when this give and take finally occurs that you will have a much better functioning Town Board that will benefit the people of the Town of Clarkstown.

Councilman Maloney stated that he had been sitting on this Town Board longer than anyone else. I'm finishing my seven years. I've been through many, many budget hearings and preparations of many, many budgets. The thing that concerned me this year in preparation of the budget is that I felt that we started too late. There was a time when we started budget preparation with input from Town Board members as early as July or August. Sometimes it is difficult when you are meeting at 2:00 A.M., 3:00 A.M. and one time it was 4:00 A.M. to really try to arrive at some cogent decisions. I think the Town Board members have worked hard but a 20% budget, let me tell you, I do not intend to vote for. I've sat on Town Boards where we have come in with budgets of 4%, 6%, 1% and 9%. I think there are some things we can still look at. I think there are areas where we haven't had the opportunity to really try to determine if there would be a saving. We've talked about eliminating the cars and granting people mileage. We have to look at that. If that will save us money, fine. I think we have to go back and look at every particular line again and see if we have calculated everything correctly. Remember when John Lodico gave us the silver bullet. I still have mine and keep it handy. It means we have to bite the bullet. It means, as a last resort, we may have to lay some people off to get down to a respectable budget that we all can live with. I think we'll have to look at it. I think first of all

we've got some more homework to do and we're going to be working and maybe until 2:00 A.M. or 3:00 A.M. but I think we can pull it off. I don't intend to vote for a 20 budget.

Councilman Longo said when he first came to this Town Board I was fortunate enough to be under a Supervisor who was here for four years. Whether you agreed with him philosophically or not he had a well-oiled machine. I think that most of us are in the learning process. First, learning to work with each other and secondly, I think the Supervisor is also going through a learning process and that he does have councilmen who have to help him make a decision. He can't come to us at the eleventh hour and say listen fellows, that's it and we have a few minutes or a few days or a few hours to discuss this and go over it. Something as important as the budget should have been started early. I will attribute that to a learning process or whatever. I too am committed to cutting this budget down as are my colleagues and I am sure we can show the supervisor where to cut it and I am sure that he is committed to cutting it down also.

Councilman Longo stated that in closing he thought the councilman had one resolution which they wanted to vote on. There followed some discussion with relation to the approval of purchase orders, vouchers, etc. Supervisor Dusanenko stated that he would close the Public Hearing but not the meeting and they would entertain that motion at that time. He then stated that he wanted to make his closing comments with regard to the budget hearing.

Supervisor Dusanenko said that he hoped and prayed that all of us would somehow, somehow come in with a budget that has lower figures and would provide enough cash to pay for the salaries, the debt and the materials and supplies that this town needs to provide its services for next year. I sincerely hope and pray and will work with all my fellow councilmen or I should say, fellow Board members. I just want to clear up one thing because I have heard comments like the first night that I adopted the budget. That's not the Tentative Budget. For two or three hundred years the Town had a Tentative Budget. All of a sudden it's the Supervisor's Budget. So if that's the Supervisor's Budget I don't know whose budget this is because we all five of us voted unanimously to adopt the Preliminary Budget. I want to get that on the record. The next item is - there are people who have already made commitments the night of the Tentative Budget - I am going for a zero budget. Fine. They didn't even look at the documents but they know they are going for a zero budget. Then another comment - This is insane, it's got to go lower. Well if you don't know what your expenses are and if you don't know what your programs are how do you pick a number out of the air and say that's all I'm going to do. That's like a doctor giving a diagnosis over the telephone. Okay. It's not the way to have a budget which is going to meet the needs of the Town with the services we have determined to provide.

The last comment I am going to make before I close is that this technique has been played sometimes and some places where all of a sudden this Tentative Budget is filed - in the County its by George Renck and the Budget and Finance Committee - in the Town right now it's the document that's been approved by five members of the Town Board and after all of these meetings that we are talking about that go on for the next fifteen days all of a sudden we have some people who say I'm not in favor of that document. I'm voting no on it. Everybody on this Town Board can vote no on it and guess what becomes the budget for next year. The same document. What we have to do is make changes at a public meeting because I am not going to have meetings in the Andrew Jackson room anymore because I'd like people to act just as they are this evening, to be cordial, polite, seated, as they all have been tonight - excellent members of the Town

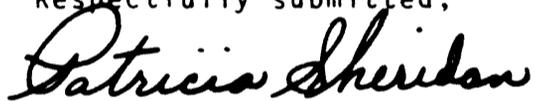
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Board this evening. Okay. So we are going to have any of those meetings in a public facility. I know. The truth hurts sometimes but we are going to have them in a public meeting unless it involves personnel and that is the only exception. I am not going to have any of these public meetings past midnight so that I can get a decent night's sleep and we won't have someone complain at the next meeting - It was insane to work until three or four in the morning - because as many nights as you gentlemen want we will be meeting from eight p.m. until midnight. One question I have is which night do you gentlemen agree since we need three votes to do such. What is the very first night that you would like to start doing this? I'm going to be very brazen and suggest tomorrow night. Now, will there be two other votes to have that first meeting instead of the normal workshop tomorrow night. May I see from a show of hands if any one else would like to start working from eight until midnight tomorrow night on this budget?

After much discussion it was agreed that budget meetings would be scheduled starting with tomorrow evening on until the budget process was completed.

There being no one further wishing to be heard the Public Hearing with regard to the budget was closed on motion of Councilman Maloney, seconded by Councilman Longo, and unanimously adopted, time: 11:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



PATRICIA SHERIDAN,  
Town Clerk

Supervisor Dusanenko then requested a return to a regular meeting at which the following resolution was presented:

RESOLUTION NO. (920-1980)

RESCINDING RESOLUTIONS (865-1980) and (879-1980) AND READOPTING RESOLUTION (788-1980)

Co. Maloney offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that Resolution No. (865-1980) and Resolution No. (879-1980) are hereby rescinded and Resolution No. (788-1980) is hereby readopted with regard to approval by the Comptroller of expenditures from Line 200 or Line 300 except for emergencies.

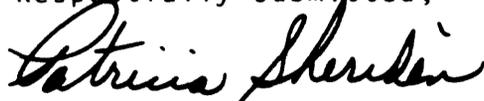
Seconded by Co. Holbrook

All voted Aye.

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There being no further business to come before the meeting at this time the Supervisor recessed the regular meeting until 8:00 P.M. tomorrow evening on motion of Councilman Maloney, seconded by Councilman Longo and unanimously adopted, time: 12:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



PATRICIA SHERIDAN,  
Town Clerk