

Town Hall

10/15/87

8:00 P.M.

Present: Supervisor Holbrook
Councilmembers Carey, Lettre, Maloney, Smith
John Costa, Town Attorney
Patricia Sheridan, Town Clerk

The assemblage saluted the Flag.

Supervisor Holbrook explained that the purpose of the meeting was to go over the Preliminary Budget and have a public hearing on it. Supervisor asked the Comptroller, Lou Profenna, to explain the Budget.

Mr. Profenna said the total Budget calls for a total spending of \$38,428,141. Included in that total spending is 1.1 million dollars which is budgeted for Ramapo using the Sanitary Landfill. How that works is that it is in the spending part only because it gets transferred to a capital account which is in a reserve fund for when we eventually close the landfill. It is shown in the revenue end and it is also shown in the expense end or the appropriation end so we can transfer it to a sinking fund. That's so when the landfill closes we'll have X amount of dollars in there to defer some of the costs.

Mr. Profenna said some of the highlights are as follows:

He said included are seven new Police Officers.

The Ramapo Landfill.

In the tax on the Revenue side we are using \$2,350,000 of surplus that has built up in the last year or two.

There is \$2,000,000 in the A Fund

There is \$200,000 in the General Fund in the B Fund.

There is \$150,000 in Lighting.

Also in our revenues we had budgeted an extra million dollars for mortgage tax because the monies coming in on that have been increasing over the next year or two so that is another reason for the excess revenue.

Councilman Maloney asked what other areas were there where more revenues anticipated excess.

Mr. Profenna said nothing that large. It was spread out over the whole thing.

On the money we are going to raise on taxes in the three major funds which is the Operating Budget, it is going down slightly. It's about a \$30,000 decrease. Last year we collected \$19,024,000. This year we're going to be collecting \$18,997,000. So it's a .14% decrease and that's without the extra assessments. The special districts which are the sewer district, lighting, water and fire, which basically we have no control over, are going to rise about 3%. Overall the Budget will be going in total dollars collected a little under 1% - .69. Taking into effect is some \$82,000,000 which is how much the assessment roll went up...Again based on the major three funds which is what most of the tax payers will pay, except for people who have special districts, we are looking at a 1.1% decrease in taxes.

Councilman Maloney asked what this would mean to home owners?

Mr. Profenna said it was \$5.75 on a thousand and it is going down to about 5.6.

Mr. Profenna said the Highway Department's spending is increasing mainly due to \$300,000 which is being put back into road paving.

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The Supervisor said there is also a quarter of a million dollars in there for snow plows.

Mr. Profenna said there is \$250,000 in there for equipment and whatever.

Supervisor asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to make a comment or ask a question.

Appearance:

John Cuff
5 Pheasant Drive
West Nyack

Mr. Cuff asked if the purchase of Street School was included in the 1988 Proposed Budget?

Mr. Profenna said the purchase of Street School would be a capital expenditure and it is not part of the Operating Budget.

Mr. Cuff said so what you are saying is that we are going to go into more Bonding.

Supervisor Holbrook said we have a Bond for the purchase of Street School.

Mr. Cuff said so that will be 1.8 million.

Supervisor said that will be 1.8 million less \$180,000 that we have gone to contract on.

Mr. Cuff asked if there was anything on the drawing board for modifications, changes, improvements or anything in the very near future as far as air conditioning, etc?

Supervisor said there will be some improvements made to the building. We have land adjacent to that and what we would like to do is to develop multi purpose fields which would supply that portion of Clarkstown with soccer fields and baseball fields and in the event some of the leagues have problems, it would provide some additional space.

Mr. Cuff said the only problem I have is this continued further bonded indebtedness which I have seen take place in the past two, three or four years. It doesn't show up in our tax bill all at once but it will show up in our tax bill for the next ten to twenty years depending on how it is funded.

Supervisor said that in recent years the rate of interest has come down. He said that it would add recreational facilities to an area of Clarkstown that virtually has no recreational facilities and at the same time it will open up areas of the southern part of Clarkstown and Congers where they get continued use.

Mr. Cuff said the only problem he has is with the school district charging us 1.8 million dollars for something that we already own and have paid for many times over. He said when negotiations go on between the Board of Education and the Town of Clarkstown that the purchase price should have been considered based on those residents of Clarkstown living out of the Clarkstown School District and base the price on that.

Supervisor Holbrook said if the District was willing to sell it to us for one dollar we would have accepted the offer. The building is used extensively and we couldn't allow the building to be purchased privately.

Mr. Cuff said the Senior Citizens who use that building have paid for it many times over.

Mr. Cuff asked if the Emergency Medical Service is part of the 1988 Budget?

Supervisor said "yes."

Mr. Cuff asked what the figure was on that?

Supervisor said at the present time it is about \$615,000.

Mr. Cuff said he questions the high figure. After doing some research with communities in the area that have that service I see that Yonkers appropriates about \$250,000 per year; New Rochelle is under \$200,000; Mt. Vernon is under \$200,000 and White Plains is about \$70,000 per year. When I quoted them the price of \$600,000, they couldn't quite understand it.

Supervisor said essentially it is for personnel. He said that just to start up the program in the Town of Ramapo the cost is in excess of a million dollars.

Mr. Cuff said please do not use Ramapo as an example. He said the only question that the professionals from the different communities that I talked to have, is are the taxpayers picking up the entire tab for this or are people that use this service going to be billed through their medical insurance plan for reimbursement?

Supervisor said it has nothing to do with the Medical. When the person is picked up and taken to a hospital, once he is at the hospital that's between himself and the hospital. The service rendered is to the taxpayers of the district.

Mr. Cuff said isn't the average person with an insurance policy in a position to submit a claim to the Insurance Company for the hospital to be reimbursed for that service which would bring the cost down to the community?

Councilwoman Smith asked if in other communities do Insurance Carriers pay?

Mr. Cuff said he hoped the Board would look into it further.

Appearance: Charles Borgman
10 Tudor Court
Bardonia

He wanted to know what was causing the dramatic increase in spending over the last couple of years?

Supervisor Holbrook said 1.1 million can really be subtracted because there are fees that will be obtained from the Town of Ramapo and will be placed into a sinking fund. From the 38 you can subtract right off the top 1.1 million that will be in the funds transferred to a special fund and will be used for the closing of the landfill. The other costs basically will be salaries which are contractual; the additional police that we have added; the additional amounts of money that have been allocated for equipment and also for bituminous. There have been some increases in workmen's compensation although we are reviewing whether or not we are going to stay with workmen's compensation in the county so we may effect a savings there. There has been a slight increase in insurance and those are basically the areas.

Mr. Borgman asked why we have this type of spending when last year you were only talking 6 and 7% spending increases?

Supervisor Holbrook said if you reduce the 1.1 million from there, which is not a cost to the Clarkstown taxpayer, I think you're talking about 10% increase in spending but I think you are also looking at the fact that you're adding police. We're trying to put more pavement on the road. We also need to expend money for snow plows. People in Clarkstown expect those services from the taxes they pay.

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During the '70's when times were tough and interest rates were high it was very difficult to do anything. The economy has been very good to Rockland. That's how we built up a fifty million dollar surplus in the county treasury. We have used our surplus, 2.3 million worth of it, to offset the increase in spending.

Mr. Borgman asked how much was the surplus used last year?

Supervisor Holbrook said 1.2 million.

Mr. Borgman asked if there was anymore surplus?

Supervisor said you have to have a certain amount of surplus on hand but good accounting practices dictate that you do not bankroll excessive amounts of surplus and that's one of the reasons John Grant (aside from the fact it should have gone back to the taxpayers anyway) sent that money back to the taxpayers. What we have done is take that surplus money and returned it to reduce taxes and we've kept an appropriate balance. He said we could have taken the fees that we've gotten from Ramapo (almost 2 million) and reduced taxes further but the Clarkstown taxpayer would only end up having to pay the piper in the long run. We have presented a reasonable budget that does the things people want and enhances the value of the property.

Mr. Borgman said he heard a figure that the assessments went up by 82 million.

Supervisor Holbrook said 45 million last year and about 82 million this year.

Mr. Borgman asked how much of the spending does that result in covering?

Supervisor Holbrook said that the tax increase without the increased assessed valuation was about 0.14%. With the additional assessed valuation it results in the decrease of 1.1%. Supervisor said if you look at the Clarkstown residents' homes on the average and properties in general, I don't think anyone would let them sell for what they are assessed at. The assessed valuation, given the inflation of the market, we could almost reevaluate at this point but we are not doing it.

Mr. Borgman said that the real estate market has been hot for a couple of years and you really have not seen much of an impact on the tax rate and 82 million now seems like it is so much higher than the past years. Supervisor Holbrook said Joe Holland said it all on the radio that in September with the mortgage tax in the county that last year they set the all time record in September which they thought was unbelievable. This year they broke last year's record. Mr. Borgman said when we do not have the extra revenue next year ... Supervisor said then you will have to retrench.

Mr. Borgman said there was the question of the rates of garbage going to go up to cover recycling and whatever has to be done. Supervisor said that is part of a special district and subject to a special hearing.

Appearance: Phillip Bosco
2 Short Street
West Nyack

He said when 50% of our budget or better is salaries and you see a budget book that shows one line for the total dollars, I don't think that is really fair to the public. I think we should itemize our jobs as is done in most Budgets in most municipalities. Supervisor said anyone that wants a copy of that is welcome to it.

Mr. Bosco said Hospitalization Funds appear to have significant increases - 49% in the A Fund, 70% in the B Fund, 64% in another Fund. He said he was wondering if there was a particular reason

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why the Funds in Hospitalization should have those kinds of increases and not be a pattern of say 49% in all or 25% in all.

Supervisor Holbrook said those Funds are based upon figures that have been researched and asked Mr. Profenna if that was correct.

Mr. Profenna said the figures that we got from our carrier for next year put a good 15 to 20% increase on them.

Mr. Bosco said he just mentioned the A and B Fund - 49% and 70% increase.

Mr. Profenna said he did a little research on it because he had noticed something similar himself and he said the '87 Budget is a little bit low. You are probably going to go over that somewhat. Last year I think with a combination of a good fifteen to twenty percent increase and last year coming in a little bit lower, then I guess we got some increases that we were were not expecting, can give you figures on what you are talking about. Are you talking about just the hospitalization or the benefit line in total because Social Security has gone up?

Mr. Bosco said the Social Security went from 7.15 to 7.51. He said the Social Security numbers have significant dollar figures far greater than the base. It would appear if you would take the Salary Account from the General Fund for example and multiply that as Social Security for the total dollars, it appears that is the number taken not considering the fact that some people will run out of maximum. Finally what concerns me is that last year we had a 7 1/2% property tax increase and this year we are having a 1% decrease. By the same token, we really have had a tax increase. We are just absorbing it with ratable growth and we have to be very cautious.

Supervisor asked if there was anyone else wishing to be heard?

No one appeared.

On motion of Councilman Lettre, seconded by Councilman Maloney and unanimously adopted, the Town Board Budget Hearing was declared closed, time:

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Councilman Carey.....	Yes
Councilman Lettre.....	Yes
Councilman Maloney.....	Yes
Councilwoman Smith.....	Yes
Supervisor Holbrook.....	Yes

Councilman Maloney said I know the Chief has given much consideration to the needs of the Department, but I do believe he underestimated the need for supervisory staff. I know he requested three additional sargeants but there are five squads so there really should be three additional sargeants to make up the five. I think you need five sargeants and not three because you have to anticipate vacations, time out, etc. One of the concerns is that almost 50% of the force next year will be under the age of 32 and I think we all have to be concerned about the need of good supervision and so I would like to request an additional two sargeants.

Co. Carey asked how is that going to impact the Budget?

Co. Maloney said it would be just a percentage over what the patrolman would get.

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NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, to amend the 1988 Preliminary Budget to increase Estimated Revenue Account No. 01-002773 (Special Road Improvements) by \$13,100 and the following Appropriation Account Numbers:

- A 9710-620 (Principal on BAN's).....\$7,500
- A 9710-720 (Interest on BAN's)..... 5,600

WHEREAS, there has been a personnel change in the Planning Board

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, to increase Estimated Revenue Account No. 02-002115 (Planning Board Fees) and Appropriation Account No. B 8020-110 (Planning Board - Salaries) by \$4,561, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, to increase Estimated Revenue Account No. 01-001001 (Real Property Taxes) and Appropriation Account No. A 3120-110 (Police-Salaries) by \$37,760.

Seconded by Co. Maloney

On roll call the vote was as follows:

- Councilman Carey.....Yes
- Councilman Lettre.....Yes
- Councilman Maloney.....Yes
- Councilwoman Smith.....Yes
- Supervisor Holbrook.....Yes

On motion of Councilman Lettre, seconded by Councilman Maloney and unanimously adopted, the Town Board Budget Hearing was closed, time: 9:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Sheridan

PATRICIA SHERIDAN
Town Clerk

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED (1058-1987) and (1059-1987)

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