

Joseph P. Wilson Jr, Supervisor
Robert M. Biesemeyer, Deputy Supervisor
Budget Workshop
September 21st, 2021
6pm
Community Center Pavilion

Minutes of the Special Meeting Budget Workshop held Tuesday, September 21st, 2021 at 6:00 PM, at the Town of Keene Pavilion. The following Town Board Members were present: Joseph P. Wilson, Jr., Supervisor, Robert M. Biesemeyer and David R. Deyo, Councilmen, Teresa Cheatham-Palen and Jennifer G. Whitney, Councilwomen. Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk. Residents: Chris Daiy.

The Chairman, Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Wilson explained that the health care costs were not filled in yet, there is a meeting with the health insurance broker next week and we will have the final cost then. Right now it's estimated at a 9.8% increase but hopefully a little lower. The rate increase is higher because we are so small, the state won't let municipalities pool insurance costs. Benefit section is still pending until we have all the data.

Mr. Wilson discussed line 11 which is the justice salary with just 3% increase. It does not include a part time clerk, since we are still waiting to settle. The justices are coming to the board meeting on Tuesday to discuss the possibility of a court clerk.

Line 30 under assessor is the final payment to AMR, next year that will not be on the budget. The hope is that will be able to be covered in the budget, if not we will have to go to unexpended fund balance.

Ms. Whitney clarified that the Town Board was taking the 3% COLA increase, but questioned the Supervisors personnel services line, which is showing more than a 3% increase.

Mr. Wilson explained that last year the board nor the supervisor took the 3% increase in an effort to keep the budget balanced. It was discussed last year that this year the Supervisor would take the 3% from last year and 3% this year for a total of 6% increase.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked if the board thought that this increase might cause a problem?

It was discussed that this was agreed upon last year, that since it was Joe Pete's full time job that he should have gotten the 3% last year so it will be applied this year on top of this year's 3%.

The board discussed the reorganization of the budget assignment for the general fund laborers; it will be changed to just the 2 positions instead of breaking it up into all the different areas in which they work.

Mr. Wilson discussed line 80, the unallocated insurance was increased. We budgeted \$50,000 last year and this year we are currently over and have spent \$52,000 and change. So I anticipate that will go up again so it was increased to \$54,000.00.

Mr. Wilson explained on line 35 the salary was raised for the Town Clerk to \$30,000.00 and then we added \$2,000.00 for the deputy clerk.

Mr Wilson explained that he did increase the Code officer personnel services line, this is beyond a 3% increase. Looking at the actuals for 2021 we are on track this year to spend more than we actually budgeted because it's been a busy year and he has worked more hours. It's not that the rate of pay increased, it's because we budgeted more because he is putting in more time.

Line 120, the cost of insect control went up \$1400 this year. Totaling \$31,500.00

Line 139 street lights. There are still some lights to be decommissioned and some that need parts for LED. So I decreased this line by \$1700.00. Teresa explained about the different strength lights for the intersection and there still is more work to be done.

Hiker parking lot: Mr. Deyo asked what we have been reimbursed by the DEC so far?

Mr. Wilson stated that he has not submitted yet to the DEC. He has multiple submissions to do.

Mr. Deyo explained that this is a hot topic item and he would like to see the amount of money we actually receive from the DEC. Initially 4-5 months ago it seemed the DEC said they would be paying a lot more for the port and stewards.

Mr. Wilson explained that they would only be paying for a few of the port a Johns at locations like the garden, roaring brook, chapel pond. He stated the DEC is good for the money for the stewards and it's a reimbursement rate of dollar for dollar. The shuttle is a separate grant so we just started running the shuttle in August 21st. DEC has a track record of being good for the money. So we should see it.

Ms. Whitney asked if Mr. Wilson could remind the board of what the contractual expenses are for hiker parking?

Mr. Wilson stated in the past we have done street signs out of there, like the no parking, all the printing we do for the garden permits and envelopes, the road repairs and plowing. We maintain the private section of road which is part of our deal. So we maintain from where the pavement ends to the parking lot. We rake it, plowing, salt and sand. So it's all been related to outdoors and managing hikers. We also set aside \$5000.00 saving for a new shuttle bus.

Keene Youth Commission: suggesting to get rid of all the separate codes, would like to combine all the categories to youth programs. We also increased summer personnel and I think next year we are going to need to compete more on hourly wage.

Keene Valley Library Association, we all agree to continue to support this group.

Senior group, Mr. Wilson stated last year we lowered this due to covid. They would like to resume more trips again soon so I increased this line again compared to last year.

Transfer station: Mr. Wilson presented there is an increase so when Roger and TJ help with the metal bins and a new trailer comes in. That's to cover that personnel expense.

Revenues were discussed: Mr. Wilson stated line 282 sales tax did go down in 2020, sales tax was strong this year so we are on target to hit \$88,000.00 this year.

Ms. Whitney stated that it would be easier to see the actuals for YTD so we could review and plan better.

Mr. Wilson replied that with new staff it's really hard.

Mr. Wilson stated on line 287 Hiker parking. This did go up and based on our actuals he did raise this to \$57,000.00 so that helps our budget. Garbage I kept the same at \$70,000.00 revenue. That's what we bring in on the scale and we are right on track to hit that, looks to be good for next year. Line 294 Interest earnings last year we had to cut in half due to bad interest rates.

Mr Deyo asked about revenue for rental property of Marcy Field. He stated it seemed we already collected more than what is being estimated already.

Mr. Wilson stated we have one wedding outstanding and one cancelled, and we got our money from the farmers market. After looking at the operating statement it shows actual is \$5250.00 for YTD and we have a few more coming. So we may need to adjust that revenue.

Mr. Deyo: I think we should raise this up to estimated revenue, because we raised fees.

Mr. Wilson agreed to raise to \$4500.00 estimated revenue for Marcy Field.

Fines and Forfeits: ACTUAL YTD \$35,200 year to date collections.

Mr. Deyo: I think we want to revisit this again as it gets closer to the end of the year.

Mr. Wilson: We had this discussion once in a board meeting and Cori had asked why it was only showing as \$25,000.00 estimated revenue and it was because that's what it was showing at the time the budget was created. If we are at \$35,200 right now and have one quarter left to go, then I think \$50,000.00 is a good estimate. It's best to have these revenues as close to actual as possible.

Mr. Deyo stated that number also cannot be used on how we compensate justices. We shouldn't even have a discussion like that.

Mr. Wilson stated Line 315 mortgage tax is up a little so I raised it, it's a little bit of a gamble. I raised it up to \$30,000 from \$25,000.

Ms. Whitney asked about cemetery revenue. Are we thinking about ever changing the revenue stream for the cemetery? Would we appoint a cemetery sexton ?

Mr. Wilson said yes we do need to think about raising the fees and work that is done at the cemetery, as Cori outlined from other towns. We are kind of stalled on the cemetery right now, we are waiting on the mapping for the new plots, and settle the new rules.

Mr. Wilson asked Scott Smith about the increase of \$56,000.00 in snow removal personnel services for the highway.

Mr. Smith stated that he kept the 7th person in and figured out the new rate and added 200 hours of overtime. Then split the numbers a bit.

Mr. Wilson question about why he still budgeted for the 7th person

Mr. Smith said he can re-work it if the board wants, but at the end of every year he is out of money.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated that the only problem with that is that the Town seemed to be banking on that extra money and now it seems like it's not there.

It was discussed that Scott and Joe Pete would meet to go over the highway budget more. They also need to discuss CHIPS, Pave NY.

Mr. Wilson explained that he was planning on taking \$35,000 of the empty highway salary to more things in the general fund.

It was decided that a meeting with Scott and Joe Pete would be the best to resolve this.

The library was discussed with the CD for the library. Mr. Biesemeyer asked what happened to the \$10,000 CD and Mr. Wilson stated that it was put into the capital reserve and ear marked for the building project at the Library. There will be a lot of transactions at the library that we are not budgeting for. The library board did not want any cost added to the budget. A grant was applied for, they will be doing fundraising etc.

Mr. Wilson stated he would have more details tomorrow afternoon after he met with the library board and he will discuss the closure of the Keene library and hours and what we will be sharing with Keene Valley and cost and what we will be contributing. There were also separate grants applied for. So there will be more details to come.

Code officer I adjusted his pay based on the actual, he will get 3% but he is also getting more.

Water districts:

Personnel lines went up because we will be paying 2 people. Having Ryan holding the license and training. Ryan will be charging \$25.00/hr for hours worked.

Mr. Biesemeyer also commented that a big expense we are waiting on, is to see if we are getting FEMA reimbursement for water district 1 project. Mr. Wilson stated we are still waiting to hear.

Mr. Wilson explained that there was also a big jump for water equipment on line 422. This is for projects Ryan had planned for pump replacements etc. It's a \$5000 jump. He explained that the pricing is exact because Ryan got the parts estimates.

Mr. Wilson explained more hydrants came online so that increases revenue, but he also pointed out that he thinks the unpaid water bills are higher. He stated that 32% are unpaid as of now.

Discussion about the Water Collector and Water Biller, of where that is listed as personnel service. Since it is listed in the organizational meeting minutes as separate pay.

RESOLUTION No. 208-21

The following resolution was offered by Mr. Wilson who moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town of Keene Board has completed all business and will adjourn at 7:04 PM. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: Yes

Mr. Biesemeyer: Yes

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: Yes

Mr. Deyo: Yes

Ms. Whitney: Yes

Respectfully Submitted

Cori -Anne Favro, Town Clerk

10/4/21