

A budget workshop was held by the Town Board of the Town of Moreau on October 4, 2016 in the Town of Moreau Municipal Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York.

The Supervisor called the workshop to order at 6:30 p.m.

Town Board Members Present

Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
Alan VanTassel	Councilman
Todd Kusnierz	Councilman
Gardner Congdon	Supervisor

Town Board Members Absent

Bob Prendergast Councilman

Also Present: Lisa Sperry, Deputy Town Clerk; Malcom O’Hara, Attorney for the town; Fran Thibodeau, Principal Account Clerk; Paul Joseph, Highway Superintendent; Elizabeth Lanfear, Supervisor’s Confidential Secretary; Reed Antis, Planning Board Member and Town Resident; Kevin Feuka, C2ae; Jason Denno, NYSEFC; Town Residents: Mary Jenkins, Terry Clark and Bobbi Spaulding; Village Residents: Cheryl Lawyer and Brigid Martin.

Supervisor Congdon announced the budget workshop was in session. The first item for discussion was the first page of the budget. Supervisor Congdon stated the first page of the budget doesn’t show the prior year and that there has been a significant increase in the General Fund in the past year. He would like the Board to keep in mind, as they go over the budget, that he has not touched the unexpended. He stated that he did this on purpose so as to give the board the opportunity to see the affect without touching the balance and leave it up to the board to work from that. Supervisor Congdon then began going over the line items of the budget, stating that the Library and Reserve items were items we didn’t have much control over. The lighting districts were by agreement, Fran has the methodology and that seems to work and therefore we will continue with that. Fire Protection will be zero, we can use the Sales Tax revenue for that, per Supervisor Congdon.

He suggested that as they go through the General Fund Appropriations, rather than try to compute the cost, he feels it would be more appropriate if they looked at each item and look at the need and appropriateness of the appropriations rather than the effect on the tax rate. Supervisor Congdon then asked if there were any questions so far.

Councilwoman LeClair asked if the Fire Department will be coming in at all. Not at this point per Supervisor Congdon. It was agreed that if the Fire Department should decide to come in, there will be further discussion at that time.

Supervisor asked if there were any questions on the first page. Councilman Kusnierz asked if we were going to go through line-by-line. Supervisor Congdon advised it can be the board’s choice, however they wanted to do it. They agreed to continue by page, stopping to discuss any line items they wished to go over. It was noted by Councilman Kusnierz that there will be no increases for Town Board Members and that the first page looked ok as is. Court Justices’ salaries would remain the same. Councilman Kusnierz asked that we go over wage rates for hourly workers and salary adjustments to let the public know. It was stated that there will be a 2% raise across the board for salaried employees and the minimum wage for hourly employees will be \$12. It was recommended by Councilwoman LeClair that as we hire new employees we should take into consideration job skills, experience and job duties when deciding a wage rate for each individual within each department. She suggested we have a minimum and a maximum wage rate. Supervisor Congdon recommended a \$12 per hour minimum wage rate and to use contingent funds for merit increases and adjustments. Councilwoman LeClair suggested we revisit this discussion at a later time. Supervisor Congdon noted we received some good information from Carol Alden regarding this matter.

Next items discussed were any questions regarding line items in the budget. Councilman Kusnierz asked for clarification on the Court line items and the Court Grant. Fran Thibodeau clarified what those items

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were. Councilman Kusnierz asked why Rudy Kick's budgeted wages are down from last year. Fran Thibodeau explained she based Rudy's wages on the number of hours he is expected to work to come up with the amount budgeted.

The next discussion was regarding the part-time Assessor's Clerk position. Supervisor Congdon advised Peggy Jenkins, Town Assessor, he would like the position to be full-time. Councilman VanTassel suggested if this is full-time, we should consider sharing services with the Building Department. This will be revisited at another time. Regarding the Contractual tentative budget for the Assessor's office, Councilmen Kusnierz and VanTassel both expressed concern that we are only budgeting \$50,000 for the upcoming year when we have already spent \$58,000 YTD. Supervisor Congdon stated \$300,000 was removed from litigation fees in the 2017 tentative budget and put aside in Contractual fund balance to be used as needed for litigation. It was agreed by all to revisit this Contractual portion of the budget at a later time.

Reed Antis requested to speak to the board. He would like the board to ask Peggy Jenkins, the Assessor, to enumerate the responsibilities of the Assessor Clerk position, what job duties will they have? He stated as per the last Part-time Assessor Clerk, there wasn't anything to do. Supervisor Congdon advised this has already been done and this will be a full-time position. Fran Thibodeau advised this will change the whole budget, she needs to amend salaries, health insurance, retirement etc. A salary needs to be determined for this position now that it will be full-time. Supervisor Congdon advised to double what has been budgeted for the Part-time position. Councilwoman LeClair advised we need to consider the staffing. We previously had more staff in these departments. She stated we had a Building Inspector, an Assistant Building Inspector, a Building's Inspector's clerk and an Assessor and an Assessor's clerk. Now we have only a Matt, Kathy and Peggy.

Councilwoman LeClair stated she would prefer department budgeting, not reviewing all of them together. That way the departments would be here to ask questions. Councilman VanTassel agreed and stated we need to allocate time for a couple of departments per meeting. Councilwoman LeClair noted it was getting close to 6:30, at which time we had scheduled a Sewer Workshop. At 6:30 p.m., it was agreed to conclude the budget portion of the meeting and schedule department workshops possibly starting next Tuesday.

At 6:30 the Sewer Workshop began.

The meeting began with Jason Denno, NYSEFC and Kevin Feuka, C2ae introducing themselves. Jason is a Project Manager Engineer out of the Warrensburg office. Kevin Feuka is an Engineer with C2ae out of Canton, NY. Councilman Kusnierz thanked them both for coming. He then asked them for an overview of the Town's options at this time with regards to the EFC funds for the proposed sewer district extension down Rte. 9. He mentioned our score of 61 is just above the EFC funding line. He would like to know where we go from here, what the time line is now, do we still have the ability to make changes that would still give us access to the funding. Councilman Kusnierz stated he would like to hear EFC's perspective as to what our options are now in light of the fact that the Town's last referendum was voted down.

Mr. Denno then responded stating he has been working on this project for a couple years. He stated we are currently on track for the draft 2017 Intended Use Plan with a project score of 61. He stated they do not know where the funding line will be drawn this year. Mr. Denno stated the Town is considered a Category A, there are four categories. A funding line is drawn every year in September/October to determine funding. He feels our project score of 61 puts us in great shape.

Mr. Denno advised if we move forward with the original plan, plus or minus property, we are on a tight schedule to meet the March 1st deadline. There will be map changes, environmental and district formation revisions etc. There are a lot of administrative items that are necessary to complete prior to the application submittal. He stated we would have to have our financing application completed by March 1, 2017 and he reviewed a list of engineering items that need to be completed prior to March 1, 2017. Some of those items he mentioned were additional engineering, supplemental bond resolution, professional service contracts etc.

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He advised a decision needs to be made by the board to finalize the direction we are going. He stated if we plan to go an alternative route it would be with an extended time line. He mentioned The Town of Moreau was never a hardship community back when the original financial application was submitted in 2013. Supervisor Congdon asked what the criteria for the hardship was. Mr. Denno answered the 2013 criteria used the 2000 census and the median household income of \$58,000 to determine this. We were just above that threshold at \$58,534. He advised they will resubmit a hardship application and would expedite the application if we are at or near the hardship level.

Mr. Denno stated that the timeline to apply for the Engineering Planning grant is just as tight as it was in 2013. Any changes made to the original plan would extend that timeline. Mr. Congdon asked how much of the 5 month window would be used up if we looked into alternative plans. Mr. Denno stated all of it.

There was some discussion on alternative ideas including utilizing Glens Falls or Fort Edward. Mr. Denno advised these changes would put us back at the beginning of the process and would delay things possibly up to a year. It would change the review timeline of our funding. We could possibly lose money from the grant.

Supervisor Congdon stated his concerns for district approval with current residents in homes vs. future homes and vacant land.

Mr. Denno advised a delay would cause us to lose our funding opportunity this year, we would need to have a new score and would have to apply for next year's funding. The program or score is based on water quality need not just by economic development. Our score determines the interest rate. A subsidized rate will be 1.49% for 30 years. The hardship rate is 0%. It was noted that in 2013 our rate would have been 2.08 %.

Councilman Kusnierz state that there is \$14 million of funding that we will lose access to if we do not move forward now.

Mr. Denno stated this is round 3 for these funds. We have been at the threshold of meeting the criteria for the hardship rate. Round 1 the Town of Moreau did not meet this criteria. Round 2 we were eligible but not competitive. Now in round 3 we have a chance. If we don't meet this criteria we can still fund the project it would just be for the unsubsidized rate of 2.98 %. (50% higher). It was noted that the first 5 years is at 0%

Councilman Kusnierz asked for confirmation of Mr. Denno that we cannot submit the same proposal, we need to make some changes. He asked if we can submit a new proposal and do we have to re-apply. Small changes would keep us within the timeline for this year's funding but a big change would put us out another year. Mr. Denno confirmed this stating that Supervisor Congdon's suggestions would be considered a big change and would delay the process.

An audience member asked if there is a price difference between the prior project and this one. Mr. Denno stated this was a good question. He noted that if we have an increase we will need to show we are prepared for cost increases. If this is something the community wants to move forward on and there is a slight increase in cost, if we are confident this is what we want to do then we need to move now. We are running out of time.

Councilman Kusnierz asked if there is a possibility a proposal could be drawn up that would decrease the cost. Mr. Feuka noted that is possible but it has to happen fast as costs are increasing, adding costs to the project, we shouldn't keep waiting. Councilman Kusnierz stated we need to have regulations in place for those that don't want to be hooked up and for future hook ups. Mr. Denno noted if we can fall into the category of a subsidized rate, it may offset some of the costs associated with any increases since the last proposal.

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Councilman VanTassel asked for time line specifics. Mr. Feuka stated once they receive verbal authorization from the board, they can review and come back in a month with revised costs for these changes. He stated the EDU costs need to be current.

Councilwoman LeClair stated the community wants to know a timeline. Mr. Feuka noted an estimated timeline as follows:

- In 3-4 weeks the engineers can present the changes to the Board in a Workshop. They will then run it by the state to see if we will qualify.
- Mid-Nov. /Dec. there will be a formal notice to the public 10-20 days prior to a Public Hearing. (He noted the District has to be formed prior to the 3/1/17 deadline.)
- Public Hearing
- Subject to Permissive Referendum
- If a vote is necessary, it will take a minimum of 55-60 days.
- The Board will then adopt a resolution
- All needs to be done by 3/1/17.

Supervisor Congdon stated we need to find a way to get public support. We need to make changes to get that support.

Councilman Kusnierz noted we need to get suggestions/recommendations for what changes can be made to get public approval ASAP.

Councilman VanTassel stated the public didn't like the cost, we need to change how we spread the cost.

Mr. Feuka and Denno stated they would leave the maps with us. The gray shaded areas are parcels proposed for the new districts.

Councilman Kusnierz proposed the Town Clerk's office can post the map on a wall in the town hall for the public to view and comment on.

Mr. Denno reiterated that if there were to be bigger changes those changes would have to have been in by April to make the draft and tentative use plan. August first is usually the final engineering report. Minor edits are ok. Town law states we cannot submit the same plan, there must be some change to resubmit to the public but these changes have to be small in order to stay on schedule for this year's funding.

Mr. Feuka advised he needs to know ASAP what changes we are making.

The Board was in favor of making a decision by next Friday (10/14/17). They can take action at the next board meeting to give them the ok to go forward.

Mr. Antis asked that we be more prepared this time than we were in 2013.

Mr. Kusnierz stated this is a different board this time, they are willing to look at the issue again.

The meeting ended at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Sperry
Deputy Town Clerk