

A public hearing was held by the Town Board of the Town of Moreau on November 10, 2016 in the Town of Moreau Municipal Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York for the purpose of hearing comments from the public on the 2017 Preliminary Budget.

The Supervisor called the Public Hearing to order at 7:03 p.m.

Town Board Members Present

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

Town Board Members Absent

Bob Prendergast	Councilman
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Also present: Leeann McCabe, Town Clerk; Francine Thibodeau, Principal Account Clerk; Elizabeth Lanfear, Supervisor’s Confidential Secretary; Kevin Elms, Zoning Board member and Town Resident; Reed Antis, Planning Board member and Town Resident; Town Residents: Vince Sporrer, Mike Shaver; Village Residents: Harry Guthel, Tony Girard, Pete Lemery

The following order setting the public hearing was published as a legal ad in the Glens Falls Post Star Newspaper on October 5, 2016.

TOWN OF MOREAU

NOTICE is hereby given that the Town Board of the Town of Moreau, County of Saratoga, State of New York, will hold a Preliminary Budget Public Hearing for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2017 on November 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town of Moreau Office Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York. At such hearing any person for or against any item therein contained or in favor or against said budget as compiled may be heard. Further notice is hereby given that said Preliminary Budget is on file in the Town Clerk’s Office at 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York, where it is available for inspection by any interested person during business hours. Copies of said budget will be available for distribution at the Preliminary Public Hearing to be held on November 10, 2016. Pursuant to Section 113 of the Town Law the proposed annual salaries for 2017 of Elected Officials are hereby listed as follows:

Supervisor	\$45,076.00
Councilpeople	4 @ \$11,300.00 ea.
Town Justices	2 @ \$27,478.00 ea.
Town Clerk	\$44,361.00
Highway Superintendent	\$55,658.00

Dated: November 5, 2016

Gardner Congdon, Town Supervisor
Town of Moreau

The Supervisor welcomed everyone to the public hearing and asked if anyone wanted to be heard on the 2017 budget.

Vince Sporrer asked what the total sales tax received was and it was replied \$2,100,000.00. The Supervisor reported that \$600,000.00 went back to the County, \$505,000.00 to the Fire Co. and the balance to the Highway. He stated that the paper mentioned \$200,000.00. Councilman VanTassel stated that he didn’t understand their point either. He thought that the sales tax used to go into the general fund and the Supervisor replied “no”. The general fund is the whole Town, sales tax money doesn’t go into that fund. Mr. Sporrer stated that the money is going into the Fire Company this year but was on the tax payers last year. The Supervisor stated that he wants to be fair but the laws prohibit the Town from

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putting the sales tax into the general fund. He stated it needs to be kept separate. The Supervisor stated that they've had to take \$400,000.00 out of general fund for this year's budget. Mr. Sporrer stated that he was trying to get a handle on the numbers and asked if X is greater than X this year. The answer was "no". Mr. Sporrer stated that they had to take money out of the general fund to keep the numbers the same and asked if the Town did that last year. Councilman Kusnierz answered "yes". He stated that they used \$67,000.00 out of general fund for this year. Mr. Sporrer stated that he couldn't wrap his hand around this and asked about the Fire Tax. He stated that last year it was in a different category. Councilman Kusnierz stated that it's a separate taxing authority. He stated that last year there was a tax rate of \$.426 and this year it's \$0.0. He stated that because of this, it impacted other areas of the budget. He stated that the tax rate from the general fund last year was \$.567. Reed Antis stated that if you add the two numbers, it's \$.08 less than last year. Mr. Sporrer asked if the 2% is based on the general fund alone. He thought that the Fire District was separate. Councilman Kusnierz stated that the Fire District is not part of the 2% cap.

Reed Antis asked how much the Town is funding the Highway Department. Councilman Kusnierz stated \$2,371,940.00. Francine Thibodeau stated that \$2,015,000.00 will come from sales tax.

Mike Shaver asked about Water District 2 and stated that there is \$24,285.00 in equipment and asked what it was for. Ms. Thibodeau stated it was for hydrants. He asked if there was any money in the budget for stortz fittings because he hadn't seen any put on in the last few years. He thinks that there are about 25 hydrants that don't have stortz fittings. The Supervisor wasn't aware of what the Water Superintendents plans were. Mr. Shaver stated that there is money in fund balance and that this would help out the Fire Co. He asked about the .4 in Water District 2 and stated that it's up \$84,000.00 over last year. Councilman VanTassel replied that was for power washing and painting of the Nolan Road water tower. He asked if District 2 would be paying the full cost of that. He asked if there's money in other districts that use the tank. The Supervisor stated that the question is if all water users can legally pay without having just one district. Mike Shaver stated that everyone uses the tank so everyone should pay for it. The Supervisor stated that the decision is not the Town's. Councilman VanTassel stated that Jesse had estimates and that they will have to see if the cost can be spread between districts. The Supervisor stated that he would like to sit down with Mr. Shaver. He thought they had looked at spreading the costs and understood that unless the districts were consolidated, it can't be done.

Ms. Thibodeau stated that they do it all the time. She said they just can't consolidate debt. She stated that if he bought a new truck it would be distributed between all districts.

Mr. Shaver stated that District 2 shouldn't be paying for the whole project. He stated it should be resolved before the job is done.

Harry Gutheil stated that it's complicated because the Town has 3 tanks. Some districts are paying for the debt on 2 tanks and district 2 has no debt. He stated that when they painted it the last time, they did charge other districts. He thought that it cost over \$250,000.00. He didn't think that \$80,000.00 would paint a 300,000 gallon tank. Mike Shaver stated that when they structured the rate, when district 4 came on, in the rate, the user fee that the Town charged, there was money put there for the tank.

Mr. Gutheil asked when the last time the tank was inspected and asked if a diver went in. The Supervisor stated that it's inspected on a schedule. Mr. Gutheil questioned if the tank needs to be painted if it hasn't been inspected. The Supervisor stated that he would look into it.

Kevin Elms stated that the Town is using \$682,952.00 in fund balance to offset the budget and asked how much is left and how many more years will they be able to handle this. The Supervisor stated that he would have the information available at the next meeting, when the budget is adopted.

Elizabeth Lanfear gave an update to the Board on prices she had found for push buttons for Handicapped Accessible doors and reported that they would be between \$8,000 to \$10,000 and we would have to run electric. She stated that this was just a ballpark figure. Kevin Elms stated that he has a contractor that he

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deals with all the time and thought that he would be cheaper than that. He stated that he would give the Supervisor's office the name of the company.

The Supervisor stated that the Highway Department agreed to do the cut in the curb for a handicapped accessible ramp and then they would just need someone to do the cement work.

Mike Shaver asked what the \$83,000.00 was for in Water District 6. Ms. Thibodeau stated that it was to pay for the water.

Mike Shaver asked if they were planning on lowering the rates again in District 2. Ms. Thibodeau stated "no" and that the revenues were less than the expenditures.

Harry Gutheil asked about miscellaneous revenues on page 10, in the amount of \$148,500.00. Ms. Thibodeau stated that this is a new fee for users to pay back the general fund for a loan on the force main. The Supervisor stated that the fee is based on the amount of units right now but based on a 7 year pay back and that as more users hook-up the fee will go down. Councilman Kusnierz stated that it's not a buy-in fee rather a pay back. Mr. Gutheil asked how much they would be collecting when done. Councilman VanTassel stated it would be that number times 7 years. Mr. Gutheil asked who would be paying this fee and the Supervisor replied that all the sewer users would pay the fee. The Supervisor stated that once they get the budget passed they'll work out the details. Mr. Gutheil asked a few more questions about the manner in how this would be billed. The Supervisor replied that this would be a fee not a tax.

Mike Shaver asked for a consensus of the Board on the big project in Water District 2 and how it will be funded. Councilman VanTassel replied that they would look into it along with the stortz fittings.

Councilman Kusnierz thanked the Supervisor for putting forward a tentative budget that had an ultimate goal of reducing taxes and that it went a long way in addressing the concerns that he has had over the years. He stated that he hasn't voted for budgets over the years if he didn't feel that they were in the best interest of the Town. He stated that this budget goes a long way and recognized that the Board has put a lot of time into going through the budget line for line. He stated that he has three issues and that he always looks at whether they have a sustainable budget on behalf of the residents. He thought there were a couple things that could be done. His greatest concern is with fund balance. He stated that Francine Thibodeau has charted out fund balance since 2007 and how much they've used in different funds. He stated that it gives the Board members a sense in which direction they're going in. The framework in place for the preliminary budget has no fire protection tax. He stated that he's all for reducing taxes the best he can. His concern is that they're funding it completely with sales tax, which results in a 0 tax for fire protection. His belief is that tax payers don't like to see wide swings in their taxes. They like to see taxes go down but not to go back up. He stated that there are a couple areas where they can tweak the budget. Ms. Thibodeau has worked some numbers for the Board. Before Councilman Kusnierz made the first suggestion he stated that he's always been a staunch supporter in properly using sales tax making sure it goes to Town Outside. He brought up the fact that Village residents, through no fault of this Board, will be looking at a 50% increase in this year's budget with a 64% increase in the Town portion. He stated that, at the end of the day, they're all residents of the Town of Moreau. They can take action as a Board to help mitigate that. He thought that some will say it's not the right thing to do but that as a onetime effort, this might be the year to do it. He stated that we can be helpful with sales tax in how we structure our budget. He stated that one of the things they can do is to change the Fire Protection District instead of funding it exclusively with sales tax and eliminating the tax, they can reduce the tax 50% if they raise revenues for them in some sort of a fire protection tax. His suggestion is, instead of using \$505,000.00 in sales tax revenue, to scale it back to \$305,000.00. This will leave \$200,000.00 to be raised by a fire protection tax for Town Outside. The Village residents wouldn't have a separate line item for fire protection as they are already funding a significant amount for the fire house they have in the Village. This would leave \$200,000.00 in sales tax revenues to be used in Town Outside. In the current structure they've used \$237,745.00 of fund balance and with this change, they would be using \$200,000.00 in sales tax and only \$37,745.00 of fund balance. He stated that they are trying to protect their fund balance.

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He stated that in the past they've used over 1/2 a million dollars from the general fund. Ms. Thibodeau stated that this year they used \$451,350.00 in fund balance and in 2015 it was \$513,000.00. Councilman Kusnierz asked if we would be maxing out the 2% tax cap and Ms. Thibodeau replied yes. Councilman Kusnierz asked, with the change, how much we would have to raise. Ms. Thibodeau replied that we would be raising \$1,082,075.00 with a tax rate of \$0.77. She stated that we would be using \$267,214.00 from fund balance.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that Ms. Thibodeau thought personal services was high in the Highway portion of the budget and she agreed. She felt it could be lowered by \$132,000.00. She stated that this would lower the appropriations and lower the fund balance usage.

Councilman Kusnierz asked Ms. Thibodeau, if the above change was made, how that would affect the tax rate for Town Outside residents and Village residents. She stated that it would have no bearing. Councilman Kusnierz stated that he was talking about all of the changes. Ms. Thibodeau stated that the tax rate with the changes would be \$.95 Town Outside and \$.77 for Village residents. She stated that it would be a reduction of \$.04 for Town Outside and an increase of only \$.20 for Village. The Village increase as it is right now would be \$.36.

There seemed to be an agreement with these changes.

Ms. Thibodeau stated that she had made an error in the salary for the Building Department Clerk, which she has corrected. She calculated the \$1,000 and 2% on top of the tentative salary instead of the 2016 salary. The correct salary is \$33,091.00.

Ms. Thibodeau asked the Board about the CT Male proposal for the Spill Prevention & Control Counter Measure that needs to be done at the Highway Garage at cost of \$2,980.00. She stated that there is nothing budgeted and hasn't been since 2008. The line item is A5132.411.

Mr. Antis asked about the need for the Assistant in the Assessor's office. It was stated that they are trying to provide a better situation and that a part-time position is in the budget. Councilman Kusnierz stated that there will be a detailed job description along with who the Supervisor will be. Mr. Antis asked if the Highway Clerk position is in the budget for full-time and the answer was yes. Ms. Thibodeau stated that she split out her salary 75% and 25% but asked her to track her hours for next year.

The Board went back to discuss the SPCC plan and were in agreement to put \$2,780.00 into next year's budget.

Reed Antis asked how the Village rate would be going down. It was explained that between the preliminary budget and now, they will be using \$200,000.00 more of the fund balance, which is offsetting the tax.

Councilman VanTassel stated that he wasn't sure if they put enough money into Zoning Administration and the proposal to do the codes. He stated that they had put in \$30,000 and \$30,000 between planning and zoning. Councilwoman LeClair stated that Ms. Thibodeau is going to estimate where they will be at, at the end of the year. They'll try to get some done this year but Councilman VanTassel is of the opinion they may be a little short for next year.

A motion was made by Councilman Kusnierz and seconded by Councilwoman LeClair to leave the Public Hearing on the 2017 Preliminary Budget open.

Roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilman VanTassel	Yes
Councilman Prendergast	Absent
Councilwoman LeClair	Yes
Councilman Kusnierz	Yes

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Supervisor Congdon Yes

Mike Shaver stated that the Queensbury contract for water was a 20 year contract and he believes it's up this year or next. Ms. Thibodeau thought it was up in 2019. Mr. Shaver stated that they'll need a definite answer.

The public hearing adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leeann McCabe
Town Clerk