

A public hearing was held by the Town Board of the Town of Moreau on November 8, 2018 in the Town of Moreau Municipal Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York for the purpose of hearing public comment on the proposed 2019 Preliminary Budget.

The Supervisor called the public hearing to order at 7:04 p.m.

Town Board Members Present

John Hogan	Councilman
Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
Kyle Noonan	Councilman
Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr.	Supervisor

Town Board Members Absent

Alan VanTassel Councilman

Also present: Leeann McCabe, Town Clerk; Jeffrey Cruz, Principal Account Clerk; Reed Antis, Planning Board Member and Town Resident

The following notice of public hearing was published as a legal ad in the Post Star Newspaper on November 1, 2018:

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, 2019 on November 08, 2018 at 6:00 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 08, 2018. Pursuant to Section 113 of the Town Law the proposed annual salaries for 2018 of Elected Officials are hereby listed as follows:

Supervisor		\$46,898
Council people	4 @	\$12,000 each
Town Justices	2 @	\$28,589 each
Town Clerk		\$46,153
Highway Superintendent		\$57,907

Dated: November 1, 2018

Theodore T. Kusnierz Jr., Town Supervisor
Town of Moreau

The Supervisor started the public hearing by explaining the need for the hearing. He reported that the Appropriations total just over \$9.4 million, Anticipated Revenues total just over \$6.2 million, the amount of Fund Balance that will be used will be just over \$1.124 million. He stated that the tax rate will increase nominally.

The Supervisor went over some key items starting with Economic Development, explaining that they budgeted \$45,000, which is scaled back from last year.

Funding for First Responders was increased 50% over and above the increase for First Responders in 2018. He stated that the Fire Company is under a new mandate where volunteer fire companies have to provide cancer insurance for their members, with a 5 year look back. The estimated cost for insurance in the 2019 budget year is \$10,000.00. The Town Board modified its original budget to include up to \$10,000 for this expense.

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The Supervisor stated, that in addition to the 2% increase in funding for the contract, the Town Board agreed to earmark an additional \$10,000 in a reserve fund for the construction of Moreau Emergency Squad's expansion project. He stated that it won't be accessible to them until they move forward. The Board's intent is to keep rolling over the funding for a maximum of 5 years.

The Supervisor stated that the Town is using more fund balance this year than they did last year, as a direct result of a Comptroller's audit that was done in 2016/2017. The report stated that the Town should be using more of its fund balance.

The Supervisor stated that this year's budget maintained the elimination of a fire tax and no highway tax, which was funded by using sales tax.

The Supervisor stated that revenues were estimated conservatively with what will be received from sales tax.

In addition to utilizing General Fund fund balance, the Town will also be using fund balance in Water Districts 1, 4 & 6.

The Supervisor stated that some of the big ticket items in the budget are for the Highway Department. The Town Board has agreed to budget \$51,842.00 for a 1 ton 4x4 w/plow. There was a budgeted amount of \$16,500.00 for the engine repair of one of the dump trucks. However, it was determined that there were enough revenues from the sale of used equipment to take care of the repair from the 2018 budget year. The expense was able to be removed from the 2019 budget year.

The Supervisor listed a few other items that were budgeted for the Highway Department: a plasma cutter for \$2,800.00 and a service jack for \$1,800.00.

There was money budgeted for a used box van in the amount of \$35,000.00.

The Town Board agreed to all the equipment repairs that were submitted.

There was money budgeted to do building repairs at the Highway Department in the amount of \$16,200.00.

There was money budgeted to replace the Fedor Road culvert in the amount of \$284,230.00.

The Supervisor stated that there was a problem with the paving of the Palmerton Heights subdivision and they had to call in the note. The project is estimated at \$325,000.00. They received \$200,000.00 from the note and will use this toward the completion of the paving and they've budgeted \$125,000.00 for the expense beyond the \$200,000.00.

The Supervisor noted that the Highway Department will be doing paving next year on Elmwood Dr., Nolan Rd., Iris Ave., Azalea Ct., Cheryl Dr., Spier Pines Development (Evergreen Lane, Cedar Lane, Balsam Lane) and a portion of Old Saratoga Road. The budgeted costs for the overlays of these roads is \$327,835. The Town Board was in agreement to fund all of these projects. They've also budgeted \$12,000 to do shimming Town wide.

The Town has allocated funding for a new shared position in the Supervisor's office. Should the position be created, this person would assist with payroll, recreation needs and possibly some grant writing. The Supervisor stated that there will be conversation relating to this position in the new fiscal year.

The Supervisor opened the meeting for public comment.

Reed Antis had several questions and comments of the Town Board and stated that he understands that there won't be dialogue.

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He asked how many Firemen are involved with the cancer insurance. He then commented that the Fire Company is underfunded.

He commented that Moreau Emergency Squad is an organization that needs better scrutiny.

He commented that Sewer District 1 has fund balance and with the infrastructure being built in the 1950's, they should put some of that money aside to maintain the lines.

Mr. Antis reflected on the figure for appropriations and stated that the Town is spending more money. He stated that it's because of the use of sales tax money that the increase in spending isn't reflected in the tax rate. He asked how the public would know how much sales tax the Town has taken in.

Mr. Antis stated that the Town depends on mortgage tax and wondered how these numbers are reported to the public.

Mr. Antis stated that Saratoga County has the lowest tax rate in the State and to give our sales tax money back to the County is wrong. He would like to see the money put towards the Town's taxes instead. He commented that the Town could do more paving with the additional funds.

Mr. Antis wondered how much money is in the total reserve fund.

Mr. Antis commented that it's silly the public can't have a dialogue with the Board anymore.

Supervisor Kusnierz stated that any Board member can speak if asked questions. He stated that he was careful when he took office because there was dysfunction at every single Board meeting. He thought it was important to bring the decorum back in place, so the legislative body could conduct business. He stated that he thought it has been working well but it's not to say that a Board member can't respond to questions if they wish to. He stated that there's no rule on that. The Supervisor answered some of Mr. Antis' questions as follows:

Regarding the number of firemen involved in the cancer insurance, he has no hard numbers from the Fire Company because of the 5 year look back. He stated that he would reach out to them for better numbers. He stated that the Town has budgeted up to \$10,000 for this expense.

Regarding the Moreau Emergency Squad comment, the Supervisor stated that he would be able to speak to that during their public hearing.

The Supervisor agreed that there is fund balance in some of the Sewer and Water Districts. Some are higher than others and some are healthier than others. He stated, that if the Town receives approval for the creation of the Sewer District extension, his goal is to look into consolidation of the Water Districts. He stated that it's an administrative nightmare for Town Hall. He stated that if they have a sewer extension, they should look to see what that would entail as well, so they can plan for the future.

The Supervisor stated that they are sending \$400,000 of sales tax revenues back to the County. He commented that they sent \$500,000 last year. He stated that the Town is moving in the direction Mr. Antis would like them to. He stated that the Board is cognizant of the fact that they have citizens on fixed incomes. If they send no money back, it would be a big increase in the County portion of their tax bill. He would prefer to see a gradual scale down.

The Supervisor stated that he wasn't sure what Mr. Antis meant when asking about reserve fund and asked if he was referring to fund balance. Mr. Antis replied yes. The Supervisor stated that it's tricky when working in the current year because there are unallocated funds that can be spent before the end of the year. He stated that when they started the budget process, they were current as of August 31st. He stated that you can't determine the exact number until you hit the end of the 1st quarter in the following year, when the Town closes out its books.

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Mr. Antis remarked on the Recreation Department and how the Town has been struggling. He stated that he was disappointed. The Supervisor stated that he wouldn't characterize it as struggling, more so a work in progress.

Councilwoman LeClair commented that this was the easiest budget process ever and gave credit to the Supervisor. The Supervisor stated that Jeffrey Cruz deserved the credit.

A motion was made by Councilman Hogan, seconded by Councilwoman LeClair and carried, to close the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilman Hogan	Aye
Councilman VanTassel	Absent
Councilwoman LeClair	Aye
Councilman Noonan	Aye
Supervisor Kusnierz	Aye

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Leeann McCabe
Town Clerk