

A budget workshop of the Town Board of the Town of Moreau was held on October 6, 2020 in the Town of Moreau Municipal building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York

The Supervisor called the workshop to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Town Board Members Present**

John Hogan	Councilmember
Kyle Noonan	Councilmember
John Donohue	Councilmember
Alan VanTassel	Councilmember
Theodore T. Kusnierz Jr	Supervisor

**Town Board Members Absent**

None

**Also present:** Tammy Daley, Deputy Town Clerk; Jeffrey Cruz, Principal Account Clerk; Paul Joseph, Highway Superintendent; Leah Cronin, Assessor; Steve VanGuilder, Moreau Emergency Squad; Don Ranck and Greg Eddy, South Glens Falls Fire Company.

The Supervisor welcomed everyone to the first budget workshop for the 2021 budget. He stated that they have a busy schedule with discussions on the following budgets: Supervisor Highway, Assessor, Moreau Emergency Squad, and Fire Company.

Supervisor Kusnierz stated that he wanted to share an overview of the budget that he put together, and that this is the tentative budget. He feels this budget is appropriate for the challenging times that we are currently facing, resulting primarily from the Covid-19 pandemic. This has had a dramatic impact on State, Local, and Federal Government. He said it most impacts the Town directly by the sales tax revenue that is generated in Saratoga County. The sales tax plays a major role in the Town's budget process. Even though the Town is facing a significant drop in sales tax this year, and probably will for 2021, the budget that is before them will continue to maintain all the Town's services that they have had in the past. The tax rate has been essentially flat at .979 cents per thousand, which is one cent over last year. This budget does stay under the tax cap.

The Supervisor stated the tentative budget for 2020 had appropriations just over \$9,000,000, and the 2021 budget appropriations are just over 7.3 million dollars. That is a reduction of over 1.7 million dollars. One of the ways that they achieved that reduction in the budget, is that there are no major repairs in the budget like this year. The big expense this year was that they repaired the Highway Garage roof with a bill of just over \$467,000.00. He stated in next year's budget, he has proposed eliminating two unfilled positions in the Highway Department that they have funded over the last two years. That will save \$121,000 in the Highway budget. There will be a decrease in the use of fund balance by almost 50% in Highway. In the general fund, the use of fund balance will go down from \$463,000 to \$250,000, which is a 46% reduction. He stated that these are big numbers. There are opportunities out there that are waiting in the wings. The Town has received commitment that these monies can be obtained, but the State has put a freeze on them. One is the SAM grant for the universal playground which is \$125,000. The other is a SAM grant for replacing the highway garage roof, which is another \$200,000. He stated last year they sent \$300,000 in sales tax to the County. This year they are looking to send \$200,000. This will be discussed throughout the budget process. He stated that the Town of Moreau is the only Municipality in the County that returns sales tax to the County.

The first department to discuss was the Supervisor's budget. The Supervisor stated, for the benefit of Councilmember Donohue, that they always address the discussion of salaries at the end of the budget process, after they get through all department head's requests. He stated, historically for budgeting purposes, they have put in 2% across the board for employees. He stated that they would skip over personal services in his office, except for the fact that there is money in the budget for a Clerk that they had budgeted for in the 2020 budget. This year the Special Projects Aid, who prepares the audits each month, has retired. What the Supervisor did for the 2021 budget, was role the Clerk and the Special Projects Aid jobs into one, and made it a full-time position.

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The next account they discussed was A1420, Attorney for the Town. The Supervisor stated that they changed that from last year. This year they put in \$30,000. This is because they changed how they allocate out the funding. They were allocating every single sub account. He feels that they are general Town legal expenses and they don't need to be accounted for at that level. There will be reductions in other sub accounts that will constitute for the increase. Councilmember VanTassel asked if they were using the same contract as last year for the Attorney, the Supervisor stated that was the goal. They haven't heard back from the attorney yet.

The next account was A1620 Buildings. The Supervisor stated that he raised the amount in Contractual by \$5,000 for Town Hall. It was recommended that they need to look at someone who oversees and does the inspection on Town Hall annually. He stated most Municipalities have a firm that goes in and inspects it. If the Board chooses to do that, there will be money for it. The Annex building was increased by \$500 and the former Sheriff substation has been increased also. He stated we now have a Town Historian that uses that building, so it needs to be cleaned and wiped down.

The Supervisor discussed Dog Control next, A3510. The Town does have a contract with an outside individual. He said he has allocated more money in this account. He is working with the dog control officer and is not sure if he will continue with the job. If he does, he wants to have help when he's unable to go on a call.

Jeffrey Cruz stated that it was 6:00 p.m. and the Highway Superintendent was there for his discussion on his budget. Supervisor Kusnierz stated that the Highway budget depends heavily on sales tax revenue. They started with A3310. Paul had requested \$44,240 for road striping. The Supervisor zeroed that out. He stated that he thought they should talk about that in the next budget cycle. Paul stated that if they are thinking about taking all the striping money out, depending on where they are with paving some of the roads, that what they pave won't have any stripes on them at all. The Supervisor stated they would go back to that when they have gone over the other parts of the budget.

The Supervisor moved onto account B3410, dry hydrants. He stated over the years they have had requests from the fire company to have dry hydrants in the parts of the Town that don't have municipal water. The new President of the fire company had two situations in the Agricultural District that had structure fires and they could not get water fast enough to the scene. Councilmember Hogan asked what a dry hydrant is. Supervisor Kusnierz explained that it's a pipe that is attached to maybe a bridge and goes down into a stream or body of water. Then a pumper can go and attach to it and pump water. He stated he believes it's a 6- inch line. They could be used on Clark Road, Fedor Road, and Mott Road. Councilmember Hogan asked if it is going to cost something to get a right of way for doing it. Paul stated that the bridges are County owned. He would have to talk to them and work it out with them.

The Supervisor stated, in account DB5112, Paul had requested a Fedor Road Culvert at \$336,560. In this year's budget they have \$334,560 budgeted. He stated, a while back he had asked Paul to get it done in this year's budget so it wouldn't be on the 2021 budget. Paul said the manufacturer was shut down for two and a half months, and they are running way behind. They would be looking at getting the culvert sometime in the first two weeks of December. That puts all the concrete work into the winter season. The Supervisor asked Paul if he could get any part of that project started in the 2020 fiscal year, then they could go into the 2021 budget without having an account for it. Paul stated he could get the culvert ordered, and other than that, it's all cement work and blacktop. Paul had also requested \$5,600 for crack sealer and the Supervisor zeroed that out. The Supervisor stated he had cut the cold in place recycling, and also cut by almost half, the blacktop /Nova Chip. Paul stated he was okay with this budget, except with the crack sealer. He stated, that with them not paving a lot of the roads, they will need the crack sealer. The Supervisor stated that he needs to work with what they think they will have for sales tax. Paul stated that he understands, but that he is just looking at the perspective of saving the road or letting it crack wide open. Paul also stated that he knows they cut the black topping in half and wanted to know what roads they were planning on paving. The Supervisor stated he looked at his requests, and he drove on those roads. In the budget, paving was for Woodlawn Ave, Mott Road, Selfridge Road, and Pine Road. Paul asked again if there was any way they could put the crack sealer back in. Supervisor Kusnierz asked if he could purchase it this year. Paul stated yes he could, and that will help a lot.

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The next account was DB5130, Highway machinery. The Supervisor stated that he was very conservative with the equipment list that Paul had requested. He removed quite a few things from his requests. Paul had one request to rebuild an engine on a tractor/ mower for \$10,189. The Supervisor said he thought it wasn't a good source of resources, and if the machine was that bad, they should just trade it in for a new one. He appropriated \$145,000 for a new tractor/mower, with a trade in for the one they have now. That will bring the price down from what they appropriated. He stated that he also left the pole saw in and took out the handheld blower and the weed whacker. The Supervisor stated that he did lower the amount for road salt. Paul had requested \$200,000 and the Supervisor lowered it to \$175,000. Paul stated that he was a little worried about the Supervisor lowering the number. Right now he has enough salt on hand for maybe two storms.

The Supervisor stated the next account to discuss was the Assessor account A1355. He stated that he wanted to point out for the record in the salary for the Senior Assessment Clerk, that the adopted budget for 2020 says \$45,000. The Board had allocated \$45,000 maximum for that position, the Board hired the individual at \$40,000. The salary, with a 2% increase, would be \$40,800.00. There was some discussion on the two GAR Associates proposals that were submitted. One proposal was for six months with maintenance, which would be \$80,000 for the year. The other was for 12 months, with maintenance and assessment for the whole year, at a cost of \$95,000. In the tentative budget it was changed to \$95,000 from \$40,000.

The Moreau Rescue Squad had requested \$60,000 for their new building. The Supervisor stated he put the same number in as year, \$15,000. Steve VanGuilder asked if they could do \$20,000. Councilmember Noonan stated that they would make note of it and maybe see if they can come back and take a look at it.

The South Glens Falls Fire Company was last with account SF3410.4. The Supervisor stated that they use all of the sales tax to fund various programs and services in our budget. He stated that fire protection is exclusively funded with sales tax. They anticipate the sales tax to be about what it was in 2011. It is a huge loss for the Town. The Fire Company has asked for a 2% increase in their budget. The Supervisor stated that they budgeted for the 2% increase. He thanked the Fire Company for working with them on keeping it at the 2% increase.

The budget workshop ended at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Daley  
Deputy Town Clerk