The meeting was held in person. The Supervisor called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m. with an attendance roll call.

PRESENT: Kyle Noonan Councilmember

Patrick Killian Councilmember
Mark Stewart Councilmember
John Donohue Councilmember
Jesse A. Fish, Jr. Supervisor

ALSO PRESENT: Erin Trombley Town Clerk

Elizabeth Bennett Confidential Secretary
Jeremy Brogan Recreation Director

Leah Cronin Assessor

Kristian Mechanick Water Superintendent

Jeffrey McCabe Town Justice
John Hogan Town Justice
Reed Antis Town Historian

Mike Lesser Treasurer, The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage

Resolution 354-2024 A motion was made by Councilmember Noonan, seconded by Councilmember Killian to set a public hearing on the 2025 Preliminary Budget for November 4, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

Asked if all were in favor, the responses were as follows:

Councilmember Noonan Aye
Councilmember Killian Aye
Councilmember Stewart Aye
Councilmember Donohue Aye
Supervisor Fish Aye

The motion carried 5:0.

RECREATION

Principal Account Clerk Cruz directed the Board to Account A7140 for discussion and suggested wages be reviewed later. Councilmember Stewart said he knew the Supervisor's office had been working with the Recreation Department on an RFP for a galvanized cold storage building, which had been budgeted for, but based on current prices, he said he did not believe the concrete had been budgeted for. He estimated the current cost for concrete to be between \$5 a square foot and \$7-8/sq. ft. He said the building would be 50' x 50'. He said they could discuss it further after the RFP process was completed.

On the topic of equipment, Recreation Director Brogan talked about equipment including bases, tools, a portable fence for field 4, garbage cans, a new John Deere field rake, and golf carts. Councilmember Killian asked if the carts would be gas or electric. Director Brogan said he was open to electric carts but mentioned he would need a special adapter to charge it. Councilmember Stewart suggested this could potentially be integrated into the new building, and floated the idea of one gas and one electric golf cart. Director Brogan said he had put in for two used gas golf carts in his budget request. Councilmember Stewart said he preferred new because they come with 2-year warrantees.

Director Brogan raised the issue of the ice rink, saying the old one was 7 or 8 years old, and the newer one, bought 2 years ago, was thinner, had been left out too long, and that dogs' nails had ripped it, so they had returned to using the older one. a Another item Mr. Brogan requested was a portable pitcher's mound, because in turning over fields, it takes a lot of time to build up and take down pitchers' mounds. Councilmember Noonan 309

asked how portable mounds work and Director Brogan said they are they are the pitching rubber with a slope, and they work on flat fields line fields 5 & 6. He said they can make the fields more available for both girls and boys if they can relocate the mound. He also raised the need for barricades. He said the ones he was planning to use are six feet wide, portable, and can be filled with water or sand.

Under miscellaneous, he requested Ventrax attachments, and the proposed attachment goes in front of the Ventrax. He said the current drags behind the tractor, and he said there was potential to get a second one via a grant for the new trail.

Under Park Improvements/Material Director Brogan had listed soil, sod, fertilizer and clay. He said the MyRec software still needs to be integrated and that he was still working out technical issues. Councilmember Killian asked if it was Google-based or on a Microsoft platform. Mr. Brogan said the system was supposed to connect to the POS system at the Transfer Station. The Town Clerk asked if the MyRec software was an annual renewal. The Director said it would be. The Town Clerk said the issue of fees being charged to the Town while the software is not running should be discussed. She asked if the fees would be paid by users of the software once it was integrated, as it is with other credit card processors for the Town. Principal Account Clerk Cruz said there were minimum fees associated with the software and since it is not running, the minimums are not being met. He said once it is in use the fees should stop being charged. Mr. Brogan said by integrating with the Transfer Station the Town would be sure to meet the monthly minimum every month. He said the Highway Superintendent had a new register for the Transfer Station, but that wasn't compatible with the program's software, so he got a laptop for the Transfer Station but there was an issue with internet service there.

On the subject of dumpsters and Port-a-Potties, Director Brogan said in the past the price had been offset by a donation by the vendor, but for 2025 they may have to pay full price plus they added an additional station. Councilmember Stewart discussed that extra port-a-potties were less expensive that emergency pump-outs on weekends when use was very high and the units filled up. Councilmember Killian asked if it would be cost-effective to buy port-a-potties rather than renting. Councilmember Stewart said the rental includes cleaning, supplies and the unit, and he didn't think it would be much savings if the Town had to pay someone to pump it out and keep it clean. Also one of the units is handicap accessible, Director Brogan added. Councilmember Noonan said imagine using a 12-year-old port-a-potty. Mr. Brogan also said for some special events extra units had been rented.

Under Contractual, Councilmember Stewart mentioned stone would be needed for the batting cage parking lot and suggested adding a \$10,000 line for stone because with the new field going on, and with field 3 being done over, there will be additional parking needed. Even with 40 new parking spaces added in 2024, they were still overfilled, Councilmember Stewart said.

Under Account A7310, Lifeguard salary calculations of \$20 or \$21 an hour had reverted back to \$15. He asked that it be restored to the \$20 that had been approved for 2024 in order to successfully hire. Mr. Brogan also said beach swings will be needed, according to Mr. Brogan.

Under Account A8810, Cemeteries, Mr. Brogan said salaries remained the same and they will use Recreation Department equipment as they had in 2024. He said three cemeteries have been maintained by the Town, but Griswold and Rice Cemeteries received the most attention. Councilmember Noonan asked if there was any revenue coming in from the cemeteries, who could be buried there, and if fees are collected. Confidential Secretary Bennett explained that funeral homes collect a burial fee and hire a gravedigger who has been digging in the cemetery for years, and whose father had dug the graves before him. She said no paperwork is filed, no map exists, no one applies or asks permission of the Town, who is the current legal owner of these graveyards. Councilmember Stewart asked if this was criminal activity, that the funeral homes charge for burial. Councilmember Noonan said it costs the Town to mow and maintain the grounds.

Mr. Cruz said there was no salary request in the proposal and suggested a rate discussion of the Recreation Department. Councilmember Stewart asked if Bruce Siergiey's position was or was not eligible for overtime. Mr. Cruz said he did not know. Councilmember Stewart said that part of the rationale for the large raise and title change the year before was based on the change from Laborer with overtime to Lead or Supervisor on salary. He continued, saying that position makes \$3,100 a year less than the Department Head who has 2 roles and unlimited hours with no overtime. He pointed out that Mr. Siergiey's role is not aligned with the other laborers. Mr. Cruz explained that there had been FLSA changes in 2024 essentially making everyone eligible for overtime regardless of their role unless they were considered "white collar" exempt. Since Mr. Siergiey's job has him primarily working out in the field, and his title doesn't give enough information, the exemptions don't seem to match his role based on his responsibilities.

Councilmember Stewart said with overtime, labor could make more than the department head. Supervisor Fish said it was the same when Mr. Montgomery made more than Spoon Barody when he was the Highway Superintendent. Councilmember Stewart said the Recreation Department relies too much on part-time seasonal help and needs to add additional staff. Councilmember Killian asked at what rate a laborer should start. Councilmember Stewart said it should be the same as labor in other departments. Supervisor Fish suggested \$20-22 an hour. Councilmember Donohue said another full-time person is needed so no one needs to work 70 hours a week. Councilmember Stewart said he would support a part-time secretary and full-time laborer at \$22 an hour a year with benefits. Councilmember Stewart asked if what they had discussed was feasible. Mr. Cruz said he would put all the figures into the preliminary budget and he believed it could be possible. The Councilmember asked if the salaries would come from the same fund as Highway's new hires, and if so, instead of hiring two people for Highway, should they add only one? Mr. Cruz said they are paid from different funds, but the departments share a revenue stream, which is sales tax. He said they could take some sales tax from one and allocate it to the other.

Councilmember Stewart said approximately \$5,000 raise had been penciled in the Recreation Director, who has been working 7:00 a.m. to close, covering two titles, and with no overtime, but more overtime should be approved for his department so he can go home. Councilmember Killian asked the Director if he was okay with working so many hours. He indicated that he wanted to stay married, and that he guessed he was making an average of \$3 an hour presently. Councilmember Stewart said with the addition of the showcase stipend of \$10,000 would bring Mr. Brogan's salary closer to what it should be, but he suggested that he also be compensated for acting as the buildings and grounds supervisor, which is not in his job description. Councilmember Killian asked what Mr. Brogan's year-round weekly hour average was. Mr. Brogan said he had put in 140 hours for 8 straight paychecks. He asked if the Councilmember was okay with paying him minimum wage for doing essentially two jobs for the Town when in other towns these are two separate \$75,000 positions. Councilmember Donohue said Mr. Brogan needs compensation for both positions.

Councilmember Stewart suggested the \$10,000 showcase with \$72,000 salary and the new hires for Mr. Brogan. Councilmember Noonan said they should rely less on the showcase stipend, because what if something happens and the event is a bust? Councilmember Stewart then suggested \$70,000-\$75,000 for Recreation Director. He continued saying he was confused about Mr. Siergiey's position because he thought that role was supposed to relieve the Rec Director of grounds and maintenance responsibilities, essentially making him head on the maintenance side without overtime. The Board agreed that these job descriptions and titles need definition. Councilmember Stewart said the new laborer would work under maintenance. Supervisor Fish suggested Buildings and Grounds be treated the same way the Transfer Station is handled, a stipend to oversee those areas. Councilmember Stewart said perhaps a stipend should be granted to oversee both Grounds and Maintenance and the Transfer Station. Councilmember Donohue said they oversee, not manage, and he said he felt management was needed to coordinate operations better.

Councilmember Noonan said Halfmoon pays their Recreation Director \$76,658, Malta pays \$72,701, Wilton pays \$85,000. Councilmember Killian said \$77,500, Councilmember Donohue said \$72,000. Councilmember Noonan suggested \$75,000. Councilmember Stewart said he wanted to see the preliminary budget with \$75,000 allocated for the role, with the additional new hire and part-time clerk as previously discussed.

ASSESSOR

Account A1355

Councilmember Noonan asked Assessor Cronin if her online training had gone alright. Ms. Cronin said it had. Mr. Cruz said, on the contractual part of the budget, the proposal was the same as 2024, including general contractual, legal fees, and special services, particularly GAR Associates. Mr. Cruz said the adopted figure from 2024 doesn't change even if the figure changed in the meantime. Councilmember Noonan noted an additional \$900 for the Senior Assessment Clerk, or a 2% increase. Councilmember Stewart asked if the Assessor was okay with the proposed sum. The Assessor said she was hoping for 3%. Supervisor Fish said he had included 2% because he started at a higher rate and the employee was hired 6 months prior. Councilmember Stewart said he was okay with the figure either way. Councilmember Noonan said \$450 is not a lot of money and does it say to the employee that they are not worth 3%? He said he supported 3%. Councilmember Stewart suggested the Board set the minimum increase at 3%. Councilmember Donohue agreed. Councilmember Killian said inflation is 4-4.5%. Supervisor Fish said they are earning \$4,000 more to start. Assessor Cronin said Matt, Senior Assessment Clerk, was doing an excellent job. The Board agreed that 3% should be the minimum raise across the board.

WATER/SEWER

Mr. Cruz directed the Board to Account CW8310.

Councilmember Noonan asked if Mike Mooney was 100% gone. Supervisor Fish answered yes. Regarding equipment needs, Water Superintendent Kristian Mechanick said he had requested a Demo Saw at \$1,300, and a Vibratory Tamper for \$2,200, which would be needed in the event the road had to be cut. Mr. Cruz asked how much would be needed for master meters. Mr. Mechanick said \$6,500-7,000 which represented \$300 each. Councilmember Stewart asked if the request set the Town up for commercial growth. Water Superintendent Mechanick said yes. Supervisor Fish said new meters are needed to replace failing meters. Councilmember Stewart asked about a boring machine. Supervisor Fish said CL17s were an issue and someone came out to take a look, who estimating the cost at \$30,000 to replace four. He said these monitor residual chlorine levels at all times, which is required by NY State. Mr. Mechanick said he needed to take the boring machine apart. Supervisor Fish said that boring machine was \$4,500 in 2008-09, and that it would probably be \$8,000 now. Councilmember Stewart asked if they should budget for it based on the cost of time and labor and because they need reliable equipment. Councilmember Stewart said a line should be added for a new borer and suggested \$8,000-10,000 for the preliminary budget, especially in light of new fees having been established. Mr. Mechanick said he would look into the actual cost and review figures with Principal Account Clerk Cruz. Mr. Cruz said that traditionally, department allocations were divided 85% & 15% for water and sewer. He continued, saying former Water Superintendent Mooney had structured things differently, and had allocated 95% to water. He said following discussion with the Water Superintendent and Supervisor Fish, he would go back to 85%/15% allocations for water/sewer. He said he wanted the Board to be aware of that when looking at the budget figures year-to-year for those accounts.

The Board was directed to Account G8110.

Mr. Cruz said the sums on the contractual line were similar to prior years, and E1 grinder pump repairs were removed. Councilmember Stewart asked Superintendent Mechanick what his salary was upon hiring. Mr. Mechanick responded that it was \$62,000. It was clarified that in the initial draft budget the Supervisor had

added a 2% raise, to which Councilmember Stewart reiterated his position on 3% minimum raises. Supervisor Fish explained that they started Mr. Mechanick out with an extra \$2,000 above the original \$60,000 when he was rehired based on experience, particularly with grinder pumps, and mistreatment in the past. 3% was agreed upon. Councilmember Stewart asked about a Miscellaneous \$69,000 which the Supervisor and Mr. Cruz confirmed was a Schermerhorn upgrade. On the topic of a part-time water laborer, Supervisor Fish suggested a part-time employee to start in April, who could go full-time by 2026 because there is plenty of work in the department.

TOWN COURT

Jeffrey Cruz directed the Board to account A1110.

Judge McCabe said a JCAP grant of \$30,000 to digitize the court's records down to the size where it can be stored and managed on a flash drive. Records could still be expunged in that form, he said. He said they got three estimates on the work at around \$28,000-\$29,000 and any leftover funds would go to New York State. Justice McCabe said his clerks had requested more filing cabinets and \$25,000 of contractual allocations were reserved for that. Last year, he said they only used \$15,000 and had a shortfall as staff transitioned. He said printer cartridges were the Court's biggest expense with 8 or 9 commercial printers running in the court. He said usually if a printer goes down they just replace it. He said so far, they haven't had issues, but some of the printers date back to 2011, adding that the State assists if they break. He said they spent \$150 for repairs by Seeley in the past 5 years, and they often do minor maintenance themselves.

Regarding staff raises, Judge McCabe said the previous Supervisor tried to structure salaries. He said he looked at the County salary figures and Malta, whose caseload is slightly higher than Moreau's, pays their Chief Court Clerk \$61,000 and Deputy Court Clerk \$45,500. He continued, saying the Chief Clerk in Clifton Park earns \$70,000, with 6 deputies, all making between \$51,000 and \$59,000. Halfmoon, where the caseload is most similar to Moreau, pays the Chief Court Clerk \$56,255, and two Deputy Court Clerks are paid \$48,408. Wilton's Court Clerk makes \$56,492 the Deputy Court Clerk makes \$53,489. He said he wanted to retain his amazing clerks. Judge Hogan chimed in the say with out the clerks, they cannot do their jobs. Judge McCabe referenced the Town Clerk's office, saying he had some knowledge of it as well (referencing his wife, who retired as Town Clerk in 2022), saying clerks are not cashiers, they are chief office administrators for the offices. He also said the Senior Assessor's Clerk position is a lateral position to the Court Clerks. Supervisor Fish said you need to have two of a Clerks for one to be senior. Judge McCabe said Kara Gutowski, one of his Court Clerks, walked in from Washington County Superior Court with more experience in her position than Matt Espey, the current Senior Assessor's Clerk. He said Ella McFadden, another Court Clerk, came with an accounting background. The Judge agreed that Matt's rate was not out of line, but by comparison, he felt his staff was underpaid.

Supervisor Fish had penciled in a 3% increase for the Court Clerks. Judge McCabe said he had requested \$50,000 for 2025 salaries based on comparative salaries across the county, but he said he would be satisfied if they could match the Senior Assessment Clerk's salary. Supervisor Fish had proposed a 3% raise. Councilmember Stewart said he supported a raise to \$45,000 which would be an 8% raise. He said a 12% raise would be \$46,000, and 15% would be 46,350. The justices said their staff is phenomenal, and that they had cleaned up the books. Supervisor Fish said for 15 years people have said to make all the clerk salaries the same, to make it flat. Councilmember Stewart questioned how to handle seniority. Councilmember Killian offered a 7.5 or 8% increase. Councilmember Stewart said he would support every Clerk making \$46,350 because of the cost of living and the rates in other Towns, as long as it isn't a decrease in pay for anyone. Councilmember Killian agreed. Councilmember Stewart said in his time they have hired many people, that there had been significant turnover and that he would like to see staff retained, and if that meant raising the budget over 2% cap overall, sobeit. He suggested they may have to re-look at equipment allocations.

Justice McCabe said the previous Wednesday he had handled 78 cases, and Justice Hogan would have 68 the following day. He said the court had seen a 25% increase in civil cases, many related to evictions (5 or 6 a week), and that they had 300 criminal cases leftover from last year that hadn't closed yet, plus some from 2022. The justices detailed the complications resulting from bail reform and what kinds of offenses do not qualify for lodging, which has resulted in these cases remaining open due to a failure to appear.

Councilmember Stewart asked about a Court Officer. Justice McCabe said the current Officer is working fewer hours so they were looking for someone to make up the other hours, particularly a retired police officer. He said a Court Officer could be assigned by the State but it is a Civil Service position. A retired officer is desirable for this because they are already trained in Court proceedings, he said, and there is potential for an active officer to moonlight in this role if it is done carefully to avoid reassignment. Judge McCabe discussed Central arraignment when prompted by Councilmember Stewart.

TOWN HISTORIAN

Principal Account Clerk Cruz asked the Board to turn to account A7510.

Town Historian Reed Antis and Mike Lesser with Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage brought hats for the Board from Grant Cottage. They confirmed the value of the hats was less than \$10. Mr. Antis said people have lived in Moreau their whole loves and had never visited Grant's Cottage, so they suggested a Town Day in 2025 at Grant Cottage. He said Friends of Grant Cottage had grown since the prison closed and New York State has been helpful, they said. Among their goals for the future are an ADA compliant trail and a pavilion. He said they were looking for \$5,000-10,000 to support Grant Cottage. Mr. Cruz said money for Grant Cottage was in the budget under account A7520 and had been increased to \$7,500 from \$6,000 the prior two years. Mr. Antis wanted to make the Councilmembers aware that the road to the facility is problematic, and there is a question of who is responsible to maintain it – the County, State, or Wilton.

Providing some history, Mr. Antis said that when Metropolitan Life took possession of the property in the early 1900s, they owned a right-of-way to the mountain. In the mid-1940s, he said, when the property was dedicated to veterans, the State had the right-of-way and maintained it. Since the prison closed, he said, the Department of Corrections stopped maintaining. The shoulder could collapse, he said. Wilton Town Supervisor Lant is trying to get the State to take responsibility, at a cost of \$8 million, and then give the road to Saratoga County. Supervisor Fish said multiple entities had been working on it, and Supervisor Land had a grant offer of \$1.8 million, which was insufficient to fix the road with drainage and a retention pond. Mr. Lesser said the County is willing to maintain and repair the Road with reimbursement by the State, and that Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner could obtain about \$2 million, which was not enough for what was estimated at about a \$7 million project. He continued saying it was all state land and asked for any help the Town officials could give, because he described the situation as a danger. Reed Antis said funds that were offered to the three towns when the prison was closing, to offset the economic impact, never materialized.

Mr. Antis listed for historical items Grant's Cottage, Parks Bentley House/Historical Society of Moreau and South Glens Falls [a 501('c)(3)], the South Glens Falls Village Museum at Betar Park that he helps maintain, and the Historian position., He also wanted to bring up the topic of cemeteries. Mr. Antis said that in the 1930s, four Methodist cemeteries were abandoned and the Town took them over: Rice, Griswold, Reynolds, and Old Bend. He said somewhere between 1938 and now the Town had stopped taking care of them. He said the Town does a little maintenance at Rice and Griswold only. He said there were others the Town should be taking care of, such as Roger's on the river, which is a superfund site. He said in the State report it states the Town is responsible. He said there were some small grave sites with just a few stones in the woods. What he asked was that the Town put aside a few thousand dollars a year to work on Rice Cemetery, which contains 45 trees, many of which need to be removed. He said grave stones are being absorbed into tree trunks in some cases. He asked for a small amount to move the work ahead in increments.

For himself, Mr. Antis said the room where the Historian works has no lighting, so included in his \$300 budget request would be lamps and office supplies, \$50 for annual New York Association for Public Historians of NY membership, \$1,250 for annual conference, \$100 for mileage to travel to the County for historical meetings. He also suggested adding a "Heritage" line. Mr. Antis said he would like to have bird's eye antique maps of the Town and Village made and framed for display. Councilmember Donohue suggested Mr. Antis see Building, Planning and Development Coordinator Josh Westfall about grant funds that might be available.

Mr. Antis said that under the law, volunteers can help with cemetery maintenance without the Town being liable for injuries. He suggested a volunteer organization be assembled to do some cemetery maintenance to move the work forward. He said there is a State fund from vandalism fees from which they may be able to fund any dangerous work that needs to be performed. He gave an example of a tree hanging that could fall and would present a danger that could potentially be funded, but a tree that is already down and posing no threat would not be eligible.

Councilmember Killian asked about the fees funeral homes collect for burials. Mr. Antis said Griswold Cemetery, near exit 17, is the only one receiving burials, and they are sporadic. He continued, saying that in his opinion it is a Town cemetery, and with no title or deed, no one should be buried there. He said the law says the Town must be compensated for a grave site at fair market value. He said by not charging for the graves, the Town is breaking the law. He also said people want to be buried in Griswold or Rice Cemeteries but it is a major undertaking, and the Town can sell plots, because there is a lot of room left. Councilmember Killian asked what price or percentage the funeral home is paid for burial. Mr. Antis said the Funeral home charges for the gravedigger, a burial permit is filed with the Town Clerk, but nothing is charged for the plot.

For comparison, Mr. Antis suggested looking at pricing in Queensbury, because it is the only non-denominational cemetery in the area. He said the State regulates only non-denominational cemeteries, like Southside, which is a nonprofit. Councilmember Killian asked if the Town could get comparable pricing. Mr. Antis said prices range widely from \$800-\$4,000 or more typically for a plot. He identified this as an issue that needs resolution. Councilmember Stewart said he supports adding up to \$3,000 for tree removal for a few trees per year if there were no grant funds available. Rice, Reynolds, Big Bend, and Griswold were identified as priorities of the 17 total cemeteries in the Town by Mr. Antis.

The total request by the Historian, including the Association fee, Conference, mileage, stipend, and office supplies was \$3,200. Councilmember Stewart said asked about a letter from the Historical Society asking for \$20,000, an increase of \$4,000. Mr. Antis explained that historical societies are shrinking in membership and have limited revenue streams, and that he was willing to share with the Historical Society. Councilmember Stewart asked if \$2,500 in addition to his stipend would be acceptable to cover as much as possible from Mr. Antis' list. Mr. Antis said it would be great. Councilmember Stewart said since the cemeteries were not in the Historian's budget, after exploring grant options, he would work with Recreation Director Brogan to make funds available for tree work without impacting the budget. Clarifying what cemeteries are the responsibility of the Town, Mr. Antis said the State says if they are abandoned for 14 years, they become the property of the Town, and he said if you look them up, the owner of the property is listed as the Town of Moreau in many cases. He said what he thought should be done is to work with counsel to get permission to access some of the properties to take care of them where they may be on private property. Councilmember Donohue agreed and asked Mr. Antis to provide a list of all the cemeteries the Town is responsible for to Councilmember Noonan, since he is the Board member assigned to cemeteries. Mr. Lesser wanted the Town to know that about 10,000 people visit Grant's Cottage annually. He offered the Board to come and take a tour within few weeks that followed if they would like to.

Resolution 355-2024 A motion was made by Councilmember Noonan, seconded by Councilmember Donohue to adjourn the meeting.

Asked if all were in favor, the responses were as follows:

Councilmember Noonan Aye
Councilmember Killian Aye
Councilmember Stewart Aye
Councilmember Donohue Aye
Supervisor Fish Aye

The motion carried 5:0. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Trombley

Erin Trombley

Town Clerk