

Town of Austerlitz
Budget Meeting- Sept. 23, 2014
Town Hall

Present: Supervisor Robert Lagonia, Bryan Geel, Jon Mesick, Matthew Verenazi, Greg Vogler
Meeting called to order: 6:03

Budget Review and Preparation

Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer Lee Heim's report noted reduced revenue from permit issuance and renewals. Town policy calls for 2 yr. renewal. Other towns have one yr. or year and a half renewal .

Members noted enforcement may be costly. Stop work order may be required.

A discussion about a possible change in the new year may lead to a change in our renewal policy.

Budget Review materials for meeting included all contractals , with none denied.

Projected Expenses were reviewed and discussed. Among them increased cost of Road Salt, increased rent on salt shed, Unexpected machinery breakdown.

Equipment Requests: Judicial needs : a safe, books , conference attendance costs, possible increase in Sheriff detail; Clerical need : new computer

Salary increases weighed for each department of town services.

Review on continuance of programs , ex. Summer Recreation Program.

No availability to grants emphasized the needed revenue problem.

Salary increases approved, Mary Davis, Sue Haag, Pam Cook, Assessor 3 % , Lee Heim 2%

For Deputy Town Clerk, small allotment for needed services rather than a salary of \$2100.00

No replacement of Deputy Court Clerk when present clerk retires at yr. end becomes a saving.

Programs were reviewed . To be retained: Recreation program.

Discussion entailed its value, the cost for bus for afternoon swimming, student employment, etc.

Noted, this discussion will be useful if program is brought to attention at a public meeting . Town Bd. members will be able to address it as done at this meeting.

Yearly donation to church, Meals on Wheels , SS program to remain in place.

The saving on the proposed salary for a Deputy Town Clerk, and if no furnace is needed, possible expenses are reduced by \$8,000., far from the short fall of \$138,000.

The need to raise revenue led to discussions on raising the millage rate on property, incrementally, over the next three years . Using an assessed value of \$300.00, millage rate for 12%, then 15% were discussed. Comparisons with other town similar in size and population were used from Town Budget journal.

Following a pros and cons discussion on all the aspects of contractual data and the plan to increase the millage rate on property incrementally, for the next several years, it was agreed that a preferred plan is to prepare a balanced budget with assistance from accountant Nelson Furlano by Sept. 30th. This will be sent to Town Board members. A balanced budget will set the millage rate that will not require removing money from savings to meet expenses.

The savings insure that our town rating meets the requirement for any need for a bond issuance as well as serving as a contingency to meet an unexpected emergency, or machinery failure, in order to maintain services required for public welfare and safety.

Need for furnace will be known this week in report from Main Care. If no need, the cut on furnace cost will remain.

Nelson Furlano will be asked about the contingency fund listing in other town budgets indicated in Columbia County Town Budget Journal.

Following the presentation of this budget to members it will be made known to public in a description avoiding the use of percentages, but with explanation of millage rates and the proportion of property tax money that comes to the town. The article in the newspapers following the last budget workshop was considered to be a good description. Once this information reaches the residents a public hearing will be announced for mid October.

The budget meeting adjourned at 8:10

Respectfully submitted,

Constance Mondel

