

October 4th, 2012

The Special Town Board meeting of the Town of Stony Creek was held on October 4, 2012.

Supervisor Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with members present:

Councilman Harry Paul Gill

Councilman Nathan Thomas

Councilwoman Doreen Ryan

Absent: Attorney James Cooper who was not required to attend.

Supervisor Thomas reported the purpose of the meeting tonight is the presentation of the Tentative 2013 Town Budget. It's the night the Budget Officer puts forward his budget and its also the opportunity for the Town Board to agree, disagree, change things, whatever you want to do.

Retirement:

Supervisor Thomas stated the cost for December 2011 was \$82,328.00 the 2012 budget had \$83,000.00. The retirement cost for December 2012 is \$107,316.00. This is going to be short \$24,988.00. This is about a 30% increase.

Contribution rate has gone from 15.6% to 18.4% and that's of the payroll. He didn't budget the whole \$25,000.00 be budgeted \$18,000.00. The remaining \$7000.00 will have to, from his opinion, come from the fund balance.

There is also a 2% tax cap in play. We can go over 2% but that takes a Local Law from the Board and a vote to go beyond 2%.

General Fund:

Supervisor Thomas stated he cut out \$9,108.00 of Appropriations. He gave some positions a 1½ % pay increase, which amounted to \$1,587.00.

Workers Comp:

Supervisor Thomas stated this increased from around \$38,000.00 to \$41,188.81 an increase of about \$2,842.00.

General Fund Revenues:

Supervisor Thomas stated they were increased by \$7100.00. Most of that was sales tax.

Highway Fund Revenues:

Supervisor Thomas stated he removed \$900.00.

Unexpended balances:

Supervisor Thomas stated he increased these which you will see as we go through the budget.

General Fund Unexpended Balance: was increased from \$60,000.00 to \$65,000.00

Highway Fund Unexpended Balance: was increased from \$45,000.00 to \$47,000.00.

Supervisor Thomas stated the budget he put forward this year, 2012 we raised \$648,293.00 from the taxpayers and for 2013 budget we will raise \$648,425.00, which is an increase of \$132.00. That equates to a 2% tax increase. The town tax rate will go from \$432.40 to \$441.05, that's an increase of \$8.65 per \$1000.00. The reason for this is the assessed value of the town. Each year the value of State land is decreased by approximately 2%. This year it was 1.98%, which equated to \$29,118.00. Our value is at 1% assessment. It's down from \$1,499,303.00 to \$1,470,185.00. So thereby in order to raise approximately the same amount of money we have to take more money from the taxpayers of \$8.36 more per \$1,000.00 to generate the same money. Councilwoman Ryan stated this isn't to bad considering what some people have to pay in increases. Supervisor Thomas stated when he first started doing this the value of the town was 1.8 million. Councilman Nathan Thomas asked how the State finds the decrease in their property? Supervisor Thomas stated he doesn't know if it's the State, Assessors or what. Nobody has mentioned transitional assessment or mentioned other things. It has to stop and he thinks.

Councilwoman Ryan stated they are devaluating us because of not keeping up with technology and we'll have to have technology come in, that's what they are basing the value of the lands on. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated he doesn't know the assessment rolls

Supervisor Thomas stated he doesn't know how they exactly get to that. That's 2% each year approximately. Sometimes it's a little less sometimes its more. As you can see if this continues and it keeps going the town is going to run out of money. When you have to cut \$12-\$13,000.00 out of the budget every year to keep even and then you get a \$25,000.00 increase on your retirement cost and almost \$3000.00 on the Workers Comp. It gets pretty precarious there, so it's a situation where it has to be remedied, whether the values increase or if you just leave it alone, put it at a number and leave it there and stop devaluing every year. The town would be much better off.

Supervisor Thomas stated this is something we aren't going to take care of tonight but its not going away. There aren't really any pockets of money left in the budget to keep cutting. As time goes on we are going to go above the 2% and go 5-6-7% tax increase or we are going to start cutting into money that we need basically.

Supervisor Thomas asked if the Board had any questions and as they go through the budget and they have questions to speak up.

6:40 PM: The Town Board reviewed the Tentative 2013 budget.

The Town Justice, Secretary/Bookkeeper, Town Clerk, Town Attorney, Supt. of Highway and the Dog Control Officer received 1½% pay increase. The Court Clerk was increased from \$10.50 per hour to \$11.00 per hour.

General Debt Service:

Town Hall and Highway Garage Interest on Bonds: There is a reduction of \$1,858.00.

The total on Bonds is \$11,597.00 for a total of \$48,264.00 of Debt Service. This is the last year we will have to budget for the Town Hall as of December 2013 this will be the last payment on the town hall. That will remove about \$800.00 worth of interest and \$16,666.00 of Principal the rest will be the highway garage.

Total General Fund amount to be raised by tax \$146,117.00.

Total Highway Fund amount to be raised by tax \$502,308.00.

Total to be raised by tax \$648,425.00.

Fire Protection \$111,000.00 is a separate tax. There will be an increase there.

The salaries for the Highway crew, Maintenance man and Landfill/Recycling Attendant will be determined during union negotiations. That could change or might not change.

No adjustments were made to the 2013 Town Budget.

130-12. A resolution was made by Councilman Nathan Thomas seconded by Councilman Gill to adopt the 2013 Tentative budget and move to the 2013 Preliminary Budget and hold a Public Hearing on November 7, 2012 at 7:00 PM on the 2013 Town Budget along with the 2013 Contracts on the Stony Creek Free Library, Stony Creek Fire Protection and the Stony Creek Historical Association. Roll call vote, all in favor.

Other business:

DEC Order on Consent:

Supervisor Thomas reported Supt. Bradley and himself signed the Order on Consent on September 24th, 2012 and Attorney Cooper sent it to Ray Brook NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation on the 28th and he hasn't received back an executed copy of the agreement. Region 5 Mr. Stegman was supposed to sign it and whenever he signs it, it becomes effective.

Highway:

Retaining wall on the corner of Harrisburg Road and Swears Road.

Supervisor Thomas stated Elisa Downing sent a letter asking the town to repair the wall. He knows the town did build the wall, he thinks Simeon Braman was Highway Superintendent at the time but he isn't sure. Supervisor Thomas stated Supt. Bradley said something about the County might replace it maybe. If not his way of looking at it would be an opportunity for us to put something that looks nice there and spruce it up a little bit.

Councilman Nathan Thomas stated they have interlocking quick sets like they used to build the wall at the landfill you have a good base to build to. The cause of it was loss of logs off a log truck. There was an accident there, he doesn't know if there was a report filed and possibly they could come back on to their insurance for that.

Supervisor Thomas stated he has his doubts that the County will fix it, they might.

This is something to be thinking about, to go up, and look at it and at the board meeting maybe come up with a plan. If only to stabilize it this year and do something else next year.

Buildings:

Highway Garage Doors:

Supervisor Thomas stated the door at the highway garage got damaged. He heard someone ran into it and then he heard they didn't, anyway two of the panels got damaged on the bottom. The insurance co. was called and there is a \$1000.00 deductible.

Supt. Bradley has received quotes.

- 1) \$1358.00 Repair door and replace the two bottom panels.
- 2) \$2638.00 Replace the door with a new door with an R-value of 14.86.

It's like the same door that is there.

- 3) \$2899.00 Replace door- R17½, instead of 1-5/8 in. thick it is a 2 in. thick

Councilwoman Ryan asked what kind of doors they were. Supervisor Thomas stated they are foam inside and metal with weather stripping. They include installing. They are good doors they are 14 foot wide and 12 foot wide.

- 4) \$19,998.00 Replace all 7 doors, 3 in. doors, It's a little heavier door with glass windows, insulated, 27 gauge R22.22 with 3 in foam. The individual price for R22 was under \$3000.00. Councilman Nathan Thomas stated if we do replace it he would like to see us hang on to the other three or four panels that are good because they are the same panels and can be used to replace the other.

Supervisor Thomas stated if you are going to replace them to replace them with a 3 in. door. It would be a better-insulated door.

Anna and Ernie Randall's dust problem:

Councilman Gill asked if anything was heard from Anna (Sissy) Randall, they told him they got a quote and one guy said it would cost \$10,000.00 to clean there house. Supervisor Thomas stated he heard a rumor she was offered \$2500.00. They didn't make an attempt to clean their own house. They could have cleaned there house and turned around and seek reimbursement instead of waiting a month, month and a half for someone else to do it.

Councilman Gill stated we talked about putting up a fence last month. He has an appointment with a representative from Wal-Mart because the fence behind Wal-Mart is sound proof. He is suppose to be getting the representative that puts the fence in and he will be talking to the neighbors to see what they think about the fence. Supervisor Thomas stated he checked the Internet and you can get slats or various things for the chain link fences also. It would probably cost \$1000.00. If we could add more chain link fence to make it higher it would block them off pretty good. Councilman Gill will check it out and Supervisor Thomas will get more information on the slats to maybe relive the situation.

Meals on Wheels:

Supervisor Thomas reported that Anthony Lamenzo and his wife have volunteered to deliver Meals on Wheels in town. Barbara Mitchell from Lake Luzerne talked to them about it and they volunteered to do it. If anyone is interested in it you have to be 60 years or older. Unable to prepare a balance meal and be home bound. You have to contact the Office of the Aging to fill out an intake form and he thinks they come out to visit. The Office of the Aging's phone number is 761-6347.

Councilwoman Ryan asked if the Hamlet Plan that LaBerge did. Fixing things up in the town would that increase the towns value? Supervisor Thomas stated they don't assess the town property. Private property yes.

The biggest thing is the State Land. He has talked to Peter LaGrasse, Assessor about before and Peter said to challenge the State, the State sets their own assessment and they give him the figures and he really doesn't want to challenge them. We did challenge the State back in 1990's. It ended up in court we spent \$75,000.00 for an appraisal and spent \$200,000.00 on lawyers. We did gain more value out of them but it seems to be dwindling again. He can understand see where he is coming from to end up in court and spend all that money but somehow we have to come to an agreement and set the price somewhere and leave it alone. They are shifting the cost to the private property owners and have all along. He doesn't want to threaten anybody but that is something he is going to pursue because he has had enough of it. Whatever happens happens.

A motion was made by Councilman Nathan Thomas seconded by Councilwoman Ryan to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Harrington
Town Clerk