

Town of Northumberland
November 5, 2009
Public Hearing

Supervisor Willard Peck called the Public Hearing on the proposed 2010 Town Budget to order @ 7:00 PM. Following the salute to the flag, roll call was taken. Those attending included Supervisor Willard Peck, Councilman Paul Bolesh and Councilman George Hodgson. Councilman Daniel Gale and Councilwoman Patricia Bryant were absent. Also attending was Clerk Denise Murphy, Highway Sup't Neil Petteys, Town Bookkeeper Judy Taylor and Town Attorney Douglas Ward.

Supervisor Willard Peck gave an overview of the proposed 2010 Town Budget.

Supervisor Willard Peck stated 2010 proposed General Budget is \$784,747 which is a 2.53% increase over the 2009 General Budget. The biggest increase is in the New York State Retirement. There still is no general tax. The proposed Highway Budget is \$1,060,050 which is a 1% increase over the 2009 Highway Budget. The overall the 2010 proposed Town Budget is \$1,844,797 which is a 1.6% increase over 2009.

Supervisor Willard Peck stated his biggest concern is the drop in estimated sales tax for 2010. These are hard times. He read an article in both Post Star and Saratogian listing Northumberland property owners that could not pay their 2009 property and school taxes. Residents can not afford higher taxes. One area Supervisor Peck would like to look at to change is on the 2010 Summary Page. Supervisor Peck stated he would like to put more of the sales tax revenue into the Highway Budget, reduce property tax revenue to the 2009 figure and to make up the difference in the General Budget by increasing the unexpended fund balance by the same amount. The only other option is to cut back on road paving for 2010. This is not a sustainable budget. We cannot continue balancing the Town Budget by using unexpended funds. Eventually they would run out. Supervisor Peck stated he thinks the economy is going to turn around in the next few years. Supervisor Peck stated he never budgets the full amount of Mortgage or Sales Tax. Supervisor Peck stated he has always been fearful. This is a conservative budget. Supervisor Peck gave a brief overview of the Special Districts which include Bacon Hill Fire Protection; Gansevoort Sewer; Gansevoort Fire; Moreau Emergency Squad and General Schuyler Emergency Squad.

Supervisor Peck stated that the Supervisor, Town Board Members and Town Clerk are not getting a salary increase. Other elected and town employees are getting a 3% increase. The Highway Sup't is getting a higher increase, which is based on keeping his wages ahead of the 2 highest paid Highway Employees.

Jamye Heber stated the landfill continues to lose money. Maybe the Town Board needs to consider closing the transfer station. Mr. Heber stated that maybe 10% of the residents use this service. Another option would be to increase the bag fees.

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Mr. Heber asked who is on the Town's Health Insurance. The costs keep on going up. Mr. Heber asked how many youth actually attend the youth program. Mr. Heber stated it seems like a lot of money for a few youth to attend. The money budgeted could be used to lower taxes. Maybe parents should volunteer their time working at the Youth Program instead of taxpayers paying for a babysitting program. Supervisor Peck stated he has been talking to Councilman Gale about the winter program. The winter program has extremely poor attendance. The summer program is filled completely. Mr. Heber stated it is getting harder and harder for seniors to pay their taxes. The Town Board needs to make a sure they keep seniors in mind when they prepare Town Budgets in the future.

Councilman Paul Bolesh made a motion @ 8:50 PM to close the Public Hearing on the proposed 2010 Town Budget. Councilman George Hodgson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Murphy
Town Clerk