

Budget Workshop Oct. 17, 2023 Minutes

The Town Board of the Town of Kingsbury conducted a Budget Workshop on October 17, 2023, at 6 Michigan Street, Hudson Falls, NY.

PRESENT: Dana Hogan, Supervisor
Richard Doyle, Councilman
James Lindsay, Councilman
Rebecca Pomainville, Comptroller
Michael Graham, Highway Superintendent
Todd Humiston, Code Enforcement & Dog Control Officer

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Hogan at 6:11 pm and opened for the order of business with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Lindsay.

Comptroller Rebecca Pomainville reported the Tentative Budget reflects the requests from Department Heads, no adjustments have been made to their requests; the Board has the opportunity to see the raw data and make a decision as to accept the requests or modify them.

Highlights in the Budget Message for requests are as follows:

The Highway Superintendent is requesting a new truck at a cost of approximately \$60,000.00.

The Water Department is requesting a new truck at a cost of \$65,000.00, it has a different body.

The Part-time Code Enforcement Officer is requesting an increase in salary, approximately a \$5,000.00 increase.

Highway Superintendent is requesting reducing the staff from 8 full-time to 7 ½ and give the staff a \$3.00 an hour increase. This will reduce the overall payroll due to retirees this year by \$12,500.00.

The Court is requesting a 5% raise for all employees.

The revenues have been reduced for fines and forfeited bail has been trending down every year.

The revenues have been reduced for mortgage based on the current interest rate and the lack of inventory, sales are going down.

Supervisor Hogan asked if there was anything for the Moss Street Cemetery. The Comptroller stated no, we should add \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 to this year's budget; she recommends they reduce the contingency that is in the budget now instead of adding to the tax levy.

Councilman Doyle asked if the County was going to give the Town \$168,659.00 in sales tax without knowing consumer spending for the year because the consumer spending is down. Supervisor Hogan said gas prices are up, car sales are up, the value of the cars is up which results in more sales tax. At this time if they remain flat, they will be up over 3 million this year. As more and more broadband starts taking effect in Washington County it will result in more online sales and sales tax distribution to the County.

Supervisor Hogan reported there was a discussion at a Joint Finance Meeting of increasing the sales tax rate and offset it by reducing property taxes in Washington County. The discussion continued.

The Board discussed the amount budgeted for mortgage tax; Councilman Doyle is concerned with the high interest rates sales may drop.

Councilman Doyle asked why fines and forfeited bail were going down. The Comptroller stated the Judge reported he could no longer scoff traffic violations. People are fined but they can no longer suspend their license or impose any penalties for not paying the fine.

Highway Superintendent Graham is requesting a new truck estimated at \$60,000.00 to replace a 2004 pickup truck. There have been a lot of issues with the truck.

The Water Department is requesting a new truck estimated at \$65,000.00 to replace a 2008 truck which has had many issues.

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Councilman Doyle asked about the dump trucks. Superintendent Graham explained at this time the orders are two years out. A letter of intent is required stating the Town plans to purchase a truck and gets the Town's name on the list. A brand-new tandem truck is approximately \$300,000.00. He is looking at a single axle with the cost being \$270,000.00. No deposit is required.

The Code Enforcement Officer is requesting to be re-classified from hourly to a salary rate. After discussion the budget will include a salary of \$23,000.00 for the Code Enforcement Officer.

Superintendent Graham has a good staff at this time and would like to increase their hourly rate by \$3.00 per hour; the increase will be in line with other municipalities. The staff of 8 fulltime would go down to 7 ½ with one guy working 20 hours a week. Some of the retired guys will come in per diem at \$22.00 an hour when needed to help with the snowplowing. This should help the Superintendent keep his staff.

The Board discussed the cost of health insurance the Town provides to their employees. Beginning October 1, 2024, employees will be required to pay the first \$250.00 on their deductible.

Judge White has requested a 5% increase for the Court staff; after discussion the Board decided they should receive 3%.

The Comptroller reviewed the changes made to the Tentative Budget:
\$15,000.00 is added for the maintenance of the cemetery.
The contingency fund will be reduced to \$28,000.00.

The Comptroller asked if the Kingsbury Sewer District # 1 was going to be dissolved by the end of the year, she did not include \$14,000.00 in the tax cap. She kept the Town at \$23,000.00 below the tax cap, keeping in mind that \$14,000.00 of that is the Sewer District that we are not currently taxing any more. If the sewer district is added in we would be \$9,000.00 below the tax cap.

A Public Hearing will be scheduled for November 6, 2023, to review the proposed contract between the Town of Kingsbury and the Kingsbury Volunteer Hose No. 1 Inc. Immediately following a Public Hearing will be conducted to review the Preliminary Budget for 2024.

Code Enforcement Officer Humiston requested to add \$750.00 a year to the annual subscription of IWorks for software for mapping and updating names and addresses. The Board has no objection to the request.

The Board discussed starting funds for maintenance on the Highway Garage and the Town Hall. The Highway Garage is paid for, and the Town Hall will be paid for in 2025. This will be discussed when preparing next year's budget, reserves should be set up for maintenance of the buildings.

The Kingsbury Vol. Hose Co. did not submit a budget request; the Comptroller increased their amount by 3%. The Board approved the 3% increase.

The workshop was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Bardin, Town Clerk