

RED HOOK TOWN BOARD MEETING

November 9, 2010

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York was convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Deputy Supervisor Robert Latimer
Councilman James Ross
Councilwoman Micki Strawinski
Councilman Harry Colgan
Councilman William O'Neill
Town Clerk Sue McCann
Absent: Supervisor Sue Crane
Also Present: Attorney for the Town Christine Chale

Deputy Supervisor Latimer welcomed everyone and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

The Supervisor's report dated October 31, 2010 was read as follows: Opening balance - \$1,879,926.74; Receipts - \$812,323.56; Disbursed - \$812,971.76; Balance - \$1,879,278.54.

On a motion of Councilman Ross seconded by Councilman Colgan moved to accept the Supervisor's report as read with budget adjustments.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

Copy Attached

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report for the period of October 1, 2010 – October 31, 2010 was read as follows: Total local shares remitted to the Supervisor - \$1,862.95; Amount remitted to County Treasurer for dog licenses - \$135.12; Amount remitted to NYS Ag. & Markets - \$18.00; Amount remitted to NYS Dept. of Health for marriage licenses - \$90.00; Amount remitted to NYS Environmental Conservation - \$3,737.18; Total State, County & local revenue - \$5,843.25.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deputy Supervisor Latimer made the following announcements:

- November 18th the Town Board is invited to meet with NYS Office of Real Property Tax Service and a representative from Dutchess County
- November 22 at 7:30 p.m. will be a Special Town Board meeting. Greenplan will present proposed zoning amendment modifications
- November 22 at 6:30 p.m. the Town Board will meet in Executive Session to discuss the hiring of a particular individual(s)
- The Community Development Block Grant sidewalk project on Linden Avenue is progressing. Construction is anticipated to conclude by the end of November.
- Town Hall NYSEERDA sponsored roof panel (photovoltaic) project is underway. Roof and trusses have been reinforced. The contract was awarded to Hudson Valley Clean Energy and completion is expected by mid-December.
- NYSEERDA Energy Personnel Grant: Notice of Proceed has been received. Member of CAC and Town administration will engage in a search for filling the position and holding interviews.
- NYSEERDA Red Hook Firehouse solar panel project is waiting for Notice to Proceed
- Grants update: EPF Smart Growth Grant through NYS Dept. of State for \$50,000. The intent is to close on the grant in 2010/11 for \$50,000 for consulting fees associated with the development and implementation of the proposed zoning amendments.
- Traveler advisory: Route 9 G bridge in Germantown & Livingston will reopen beginning Friday, November 5th at 1:00 p.m.
- December 7, 2010, the DC Supervisor's and Mayors Association will hold its annual holiday meeting and dinner at Cappolla's in Hyde Park.

Town Clerk Sue McCann made the following announcement:

- There will be a free Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thanksgiving Day, November 25th at 12:30 at the Red Hook United Methodist Church on Church Street in Red Hook. Reservations are encouraged. Call Holy Cow at 758-5959. Transportation is available and take-out is offered between 1:30 and 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING - RED HOOK FIRE DISTRICT CONTRACT 2011/12 -TOWN OF RED HOOK/VILLAGE OF RED HOOK/RED HOOK FIRE COMPANY

Town Clerk Sue McCann read the notice of public hearing.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer opened for public comments regarding the fire service agreement with the Village of Red Hook fire department.

Robert McKeon thanked our volunteer firefighters for the work they do for us both in Red Hook and in Tivoli.

There were no further comments.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING - TIVOLI FIRE DISTRICT CONTRACT 2011/12 TOWN OF RED HOOK/VILLAGE OF TIVOLI

Town Clerk Sue McCann read the notice of public hearing.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer opened for public comments regarding the fire service agreement with the Tivoli fire department.

There were no comments.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2011 BUDGET (CONTINUANCE OF NOVEMBER 3, 2010)

Deputy Supervisor Latimer read several letters regarding the Village of Red Hook police budget line item. Those in support were from: Marie Gleason, Diane Rowan, William & Linda Bard, 3 Bard College students, Donna Coon, Michelle Claser, Michael Cloichico, Robert Tiedtke, Ron (no last name provided).

Business Manager Deborah Marks gave a presentation of the budget.

Budget Officer Rose Rider pointed out that they cut the budget even further than last year. She explained that expenses are down but the biggest problem is that the tax base has decreased by almost \$58 million dollars and revenue has decreased.

Deb Marks explained how the numbers translated. Based on a home assessed at \$280,000, the Village taxes will show an increase of \$29.51 for the year and the Town taxes will increase \$33.64 per year. She then addressed the fund balance and explained the situation the Town is in. Deb offered to answer any questions.

Councilman Ross explained that Supervisor Crane is unable to be at the meeting so she asked that he read a letter she prepared. The letter explained facts about the development of the tentative budget. She stressed that Deputy Supervisor Rob Latimer was not involved in the development of the tentative budget. As a businessman he has been valuable counsel to the Town Board during recent preliminary budget meetings. In the letter she explained that the tentative budget is a planning document. It reflects a Town tax base with the 2010 loss of \$58 million in taxable assessed value and conservatively estimates falling revenues in mortgage and sales taxes which must not be overstated in the year ahead. Unhappily, it accounts for additional costs in mandates over which we have no fiscal control. As an operating budget, it does not address the large infrastructure needs which from time to time we must borrow funds. The year ahead will challenge us to develop strategies that will allow us to address the substandard highway garage. Because we have carefully managed our finances for many years, we enjoy a bond rating of AA-, perhaps the highest in Dutchess County. It enables us to qualify for the lowest interest rates available. She shares the public's disappointment in the tax increase. While our 2011 projected expenditures decreased again this year, the result of aforementioned pressures find us with a tax rate increase. The preliminary budget will be available on the Town website as well as at the Town Clerk's office. The letter stressed that politics must be left out of the conversation when all of us are working so hard to do the right thing for our community. No campaigning allowed. This is serious business and is a time to come together to problem solve. We are all proud of our community and she intends to continue to improve it through cooperation and collaboration.

Councilwoman Strawinski read an e-mail she received from Gary Coon who is angry about the Town even considering raising taxes. An e-mail she received from Caroline Rider was also read. It asked that the Town cut back on shorter term expenses in order to stay on track with some of the larger, longer term projects that will be so vital to the health and vitality of our community. Kevin Zulch also sent an e-mail which Councilwoman Strawinski read. He is very concerned for the future of our town with respect to the budget that is pending. He gave a list of suggestions including imposing a salary freeze, reduce department headcount, increase employee contribution for benefits by 25%, lower salaries for department heads, consolidate jobs, create multi-use workstations, review the tax structure and exemption status of non-working farmers,

manage open space with strict zoning and planning, and lastly, merge the three local governments.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Deputy Supervisor Latimer opened for public comments.

Robert McKeon thanked the Board for putting in the time and effort for developing a budget. He does not support the budget for 2011 because he thinks it increases expenditures dramatically. He thinks the budget is inflated. He referred to the Supervisor's comment that expenditures have been decreased two years in a row and said that is not the truth. He handed out figures that he came up with and explained his version of a budget.

Rosemarie Zengen asked Mr. McKeon where he comes up with his figures. Does he have a Certified Accountant? Where do his numbers come from and how can he call the Supervisor a liar?

Councilman Ross said she had a valid question and that he would ask Mr. McKeon. In directing his comments to Mr. McKeon he stated that the real important issue is what line items were modified and why were they modified. That you don't tell us, you just tell us the figures. He told about last year's budget. He stated that many of the modified line items are associated with the Centers & Greenspace plan. If you are going to tell a story, tell the whole story and not portions thereof.

Robert McKeon told Rosemarie about his figures

Business Manager Deb Marks told Mr. McKeon that numbers don't lie, there is no grey area. She explained the unique area of municipal law and what the State Comptroller requires. She also reminded him that all revenue does not come in at the same time. It is the same with the expenditures. She gave examples and said the budget makes perfect sense.

Rosemarie Zengen said that Business Manager Deb Marks said the Village taxes will increase \$29.52 and the Town \$33.64 on a house assessed at \$280,000. She asked if that was correct.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer responded that is what his paperwork says.

Rosemarie Zengen asked if the Board believes this to be true.

Councilman Ross responded that is according to the preliminary budget. He explained the budget process. The figures are accurate now but he told Mrs. Zengen that the Board has not yet agreed on the budget.

Councilman Colgan reminded her that the assessments have gone down.

Rosemarie Zengen repeated the proposed increases in the Village and the Town and said if those numbers are true she is sure the taxpayers wouldn't mind adding \$2 to have protection from the Red Hook Village police. If it is a matter of \$2 she thinks the residents would go along with it.

Richard Gordon asked about the projected tax increase per assessed valuation. It seems that \$29.00 is not a 20% tax increase.

Councilman Ross explained that it is 20% of what you paid in the past. We've always enjoyed a very low tax rate so if we get hit in one year, it is a bigger percentage of a small figure. County taxes come on the same bill.

Mr. Gordon commented that it still does not make sense to him.

Councilman Colgan told him that he has to be careful to realize the difference between tax rate and tax increase.

Mr. Gordon encouraged the Board to communicate the budget in a way for residents to understand.

Fred Pavlich thinks the Board has done a decent and very tough job. It seems like everything is going up and that we are in an economic vice. He asked that the Board look harder and try to find more things that can be cut. He appreciates the Board.

Nick Sperry received a flyer in his mailbox. If he did not receive it he would not know anything about the budget. After speaking to nearly 40 people, no one knew about it. People don't know what is going on and asked the Town Board to notify people.

Councilman Ross said it is on the Town website and in the newspapers. He asked Mr. Sperry if he had any suggestions. It is on PANDA as well.

Town Clerk Sue McCann added that she also put in special news briefs.

Councilwoman Strawinski offered to add him to her e-mail list.

Mr. Gordon thinks there is a need for better communication.

Robert McKeon thinks there are many residents who can't afford last year's tax bill so an extra \$30 does mean something to them. Until Albany solves the property tax issue there has to be no increase in taxes.

Councilman Ross said we are all faced with that. He feels this entire Board has been much more prudent with taxpayer dollars than any other taxing agency authority that he's aware of. They've cut and cut and cut the budget to the point that it could hurt Town residents or Town employees.

When you cut to the point where you hurt your own employee that is like throwing the baby out to save the bathwater and he will not do that. He feels this budget has been cut too drastically and he for one does not like to spend any money.

Karen Jerro addressed the public safety issue regarding the Village police. Why do we pay the Sheriff's Dept. \$15,000 and what does the budget we are giving the police officer get us? She asked what the current contract with the Village of Red Hook is.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer said there is a contract with them that gives us two eight hour patrols a week.

Karen Jerro asked if the Board feels that is sufficient for our Town residents.

Councilwoman Strawinski responded "no, this Board member does not".

Karen Jerro asked someone to address what would be sufficient on behalf of the residents of the Town and Village.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer told her there is a room full of people here who could address that but what matters is her opinion. He asked her opinion of what should be done.

Karen Jerro responded that her opinion is that they (Village of Red Hook police) should be our police force in the area; she doesn't think we need the Sheriff in the Town. She doesn't know why we pay the Sheriff when we have a legitimate police force here. What is their hourly rate in comparison to our local guys?

Councilwoman Strawinski told her that she presented that at a previous Board meeting. We all pay for Sheriff coverage in our County tax and she does not understand why there is \$15,000 in our budget for Sheriff's. She supports the idea of transferring the \$15,000 from the Sheriff's line into the Village police line.

Karen Jerro asked if the Board asked the police for specifics before they made cuts.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer told her that she has to determine what she can afford to pay so that the Board can decide or help her decide what she can pay. Coverage 24/7 gets expensive. Where is the balance?

Karen Jerro told the Board that this is a matter of priority. She feels this is of the utmost importance on this budget.

Patty Gordon asked what happens if she calls 911.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer explained that D. C. 911 calls for the closest available unit.

Councilman Colgan told her that we get police reports from various agencies and the Board does look at them. The Supervisor met with the Mayor of Red Hook and agreed on what was appropriate and that is what is in the budget as it stands now.

Councilwoman Strawinski said we heard that when the Village police responded near disasters were averted. Last year the Village budget was \$75,000 and the preliminary budget is to cut that down by \$15,000.

Dan Dantzic asked if the Board benchmarked our budget and increases in our budget with those of surrounding communities.

Deb Marks told him that she meets with County Business Managers and they are as concerned about the rates. One member suggested focusing on the decrease in the total assessed valuations.

Dan Dantzic thinks we should benchmark ourselves against other Towns to see how we compare. We should look at what other towns are doing and see if we can do better.

Councilman Ross told him that we have about the lowest tax rate in Dutchess County.

Councilman Colgan thinks we are being very prudent with our budget. He knows of a couple of Towns who came out with good budgets who had big reserves.

Mr. Dantzic asked if the Board ever thought about consolidation and what its impact would be.

Councilman Colgan responded that is something they've been working on for some time and they've had rather modest success so far. He cited the Assessor and Building Department in regard to shared services. Sharing highway operations has been discussed but that is more complex.

Town Clerk Sue McCann informed him that we've had shared services for a very long time in the highway department.

Councilman Colgan is not talking about shared services he is talking about having one highway department. We have shared on projects even with some other Towns.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer explained the difference between shared services and consolidated services. Shared services are a much simpler thing to orchestrate. All of those efforts continue all the time.

Councilwoman Strawinski said that is while that is something we should consider down the road it does not affect this particular budget. She said she has ideas where they can cut more.

Larry Thetford trusts that the Board is controlling the line item budgets. He asked they keep in mind there are residents living on a fixed income.

Billy Cole thinks the Board has done a good job on the budget. He spoke in support of the Village Police Department. He said he's found heroine needles at the Rec. Park and knows there are people in Town who have drug problems. He'd like to see patrols at the Rec. Park.

Jim Truitt, Village of Red Hook Police Chief, answered some of the questions that were raised. He explained how many hours the police patrol and the allocated budget. They know what the demand is and gave the number of calls in the Town. Every other week they make a drug arrest. They know there is a drug problem in Red Hook. He put together statistics and shared them with the Board and also explained the demand on the police department.

Larry Thetford said it sounds like those that live outside of Town are third in line when it comes to dispatch.

Chief Truitt told him that it depends on the situation. If it is an emergency situation they will be there. Police coverage in the Town cannot be subsidized by the Village taxpayers. 85% of what the Village police do is quality of life issues.

Councilwoman Strawinski asked Business Manager Deb Marks about the budget for the DC Sheriff last year. We budgeted about \$30,000 for the DC Sheriff's department last year. That was for one dedicated 8 hour patrol and for whenever else we needed them. Our year to date expenditures for the Sheriff's Department as of October 31 was \$7,445, leaving a balance of \$22,554. The taxpayers already paid the \$30,000 and we're not getting the service so where does that \$22,554 go?

Business Manager Deb Marks explained that Supervisor Crane questioned them to see if we had the need. She determined that \$15,000 would be sufficient this year. The balance of \$22,000 goes back into the B Fund.

Councilman Ross explained that the unexpended amount is part of our projected fund balance.

Business Manager Deb Marks explained that there is enough money in the fund balance hopefully to last until the end of the year. If you start taking money from this to apply to next year and something happens this year like we had to have repairs to the roof, the air ducts, the furnace exploded in the Highway garage, the awnings fell apart in front of the building, none of those things were budgeted for.

The Board continued to discuss budget issues and the fund balance.

Business Manager Deb Marks stressed that the fund balance isn't indicative of the cash you have. You have accounts receivable and accounts payable that you have to make. For the last month of the year and the first two months of the ensuing year you have to have enough cash on hand to pay your bills and meet payroll. If you deplete the fund balance too drastically you will not have enough operating cash. What happens then? You would have to go and borrow money which projects that we don't have enough fiscal sense. You'd have to raise taxes to pay that anyway. You have to keep a lucrative fund balance on hand. We have never kept an excessive fund balance. We've always been the model and have been given kudos and awards. We have an example of every type of fund the Comptroller has. It is a model example of all the different funds for municipal bonding. In regard to trying to keep the taxes at 0%, the State Comptroller's Office recommends that you increase taxes between 2% and 4% every year. Because of our taxable assessed valuation dropping we don't know where that fits in the scheme of things. She explained how the numbers were arrived at this year and explained we are doing the responsible thing here. We have a responsibility to maintain the fiscal integrity of the Town.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants to look at certain items in the A Fund that she wants to the Board to take a look at.

On a motion of Councilwoman Strawinski seconded by Councilman Colgan moved to close the public hearing.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

Business Manager Deb Marks asked for some closure on the budget and that the Board adopt section by section. There are three areas she feels confident about.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer explained that they are going to move on to that part of the agenda next.

RESOLUTION – TO ADOPT RED HOOK FIRE CONTRACT 2011/2012

Deputy Supervisor Latimer read the resolution.

Business Manager Deb Marks explained that the two libraries have to be included in the calculations resulting in the percentage increases.

Councilman Ross explained the library funding is separated on the bill so the taxpayers realize that we are paying \$270,000 because of the referendum they voted on and passed.

Councilwoman Strawinski pointed out lines in the budget that she would like to see reduced further. She began with the General A Fund.

The Board reviewed and discussed the lines she was concerned with. One issue discussed was to eliminate cell phones for certain employees.

Budget Officer Rose Rider told the Board that cell phones were issued to select employees who were considered emergency personnel.

The Board decided to reduce the line for cell phones, with Councilman Ross disagreeing.

Councilwoman Strawinski feels that perhaps a full time Assessor is not needed. The Board discussed that line.

Councilmen Ross and Colgan do not agree with cutting back that position. No one else was in favor of cutting that line.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants the Town Clerk's cell phone taken away because she does not feel that position is "emergency personnel".

Town Clerk Sue McCann reminded the Board that she did not request a cell phone; the Disaster Preparedness Committee recommended having certain employees available in case of emergency.

Councilman Ross said it doesn't make sense to cut out the Town Clerk's cell phone because she is part of the chain of command.

Councilman Colgan said there was a standoff because it is a 2 - 2 vote and he was not going to vote for it.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer commented "then that's staying at \$3500".

The Board continued to discuss and review the lines she wants cut in the General A Fund. Some lines were reduced. A Payroll Clerk line was one, another was to cut the line of \$854 for the gentleman who collects recyclables weekly. The job description for the recycling coordinator will be changed in order for the recycling center to remove recyclables from Town Hall. At the time of the budget changes the job description was not changed.

Councilwoman Strawinski recommended reducing the line for buildings equipment such as computer needs and paint for Town Hall.

The Board, Business Manager Deb Marks and Budget Officer Rose Rider discussed that line.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer told Councilwoman Strawinski that he does not think it is ethical for her to bring the same topic back up that was voted down last week.

Councilwoman Strawinski responded when it's not a final budget it is. She wants the line for painting Town Hall dropped by \$3,000 and wants it put off again or get volunteers do it.

The Board decided to leave the line as it is.

Councilwoman Strawinski wanted the line for utilities cut.

Business Manager Deb Marks told her that she doesn't even think the amount budgeted is enough.

Councilman Ross added that it is not enough. If we cut it then have a shortfall, what do we do?

Budget Officer Rose Rider told her that line includes oil, propane and telephone.

The majority of the Board decided not to touch that line.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants the line for supplies reduced by \$1,000.

The Board reviewed and discussed the line and it was decided to leave the line alone.

Councilwoman Strawinski moved to the line for data processing equipment that included five new workstations... She asked if it would be possible to buy one or two workstations out of this year's fund and reduce the line.

Business Manager Deb Marks doesn't see why not. She did not attend the last IT meeting but she said they did ask her if the Board cut the equipment line. She told them no.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants that line reduced and purchase just what is essential.

Councilman Colgan told her we don't know what's essential. It is a technical question.

The Board discussed that line.

Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke told the Board that two of those workstations are for the Highway Department if not this year, then next year. They are running into problems because a lot of the programs they use are being upgrading to Windows 7 and won't be offering support for Windows XP very much longer. They are running into problems using the XP machines.

Councilman O'Neill feels in an awkward spot regarding this line. He asked if anyone was at the meeting from the IT Committee.

IT Committee member Deputy Town Clerk Claire Horst told him that the plan is to replace a 2002 computer in the Highway Department this year because it doesn't serve its purpose.

Councilman Colgan has been over there and agrees.
The Board would not agree to reduce that line at this point.
Councilwoman Strawinski moved to Highway CE.
Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke explained the line is for training.
After discussion the Board decided to add to the line for required training.
Councilwoman Strawinski turned attention to the Highway utility line. In keeping with our 10% Challenge she wants to reduce that line.
Councilman Colgan asked if that was only for electricity.
Business Manager Deb Marks responded that it is for electricity, telephone, fuel and heating oil.
Councilman Colgan confirmed the garage is being carefully monitored to keep the lights off.
Highway Superintendent Burke asked if that line also includes the utilities for the trailer as well.
The heat in the trailer is electric and that will probably offset the savings for the garage heat.
The Board did not agree to change that line. It doesn't make sense to under budget.
Councilwoman Strawinski referred to Sidewalk CE and wants that reduced.
Councilman Ross said if it is a light winter cutting the line would be ok but if we don't we might have a shortfall.
The Board reduced that line.
Councilwoman Strawinski brought up Dial-A-Ride and feels it should be reduced. There are going to be changes to that program.
It was decided to reduce the budget line for Dial-A-Ride.
Councilwoman Strawinski questioned the Transfer to Capital Project – Garage.
Councilman O'Neill asked if the recreation park line includes the stipend for the Chair of the Recreation Park.
The Board discussed stipends for the Chairs. They had decided to put them back. There are four Chairmen who get \$1,000 stipends. They are Planning, CAC, Recreation Park and ZBA.
Appropriations to the fund balance from Con. Ed. were discussed. They wouldn't lower the budget this year or next. They reviewed the reductions.
The General B Fund was discussed next.
Councilwoman Strawinski recommended moving \$15,000 from the Sheriff's line to the Village Police to increase their line to \$75,000.
Councilman Ross said he is opposed to removing the money from the Sheriff's line but after hearing public comment he is not opposed to increasing the line for the Village Police to \$75,000. He thinks it would be prudent to increase the line for the Village Police.
Councilmen O'Neill and Colgan do not want to change the police coverage lines, they want to keep them as they are this year.
Councilwoman Strawinski likes Councilman Ross's idea.
Deputy Supervisor Latimer told the Board that the line will have to stay as is since there are two for and two against changing those budget lines.
Councilwoman Strawinski addressed the Building, Fire & Safety Department. She said that last year they had numerous discussions about cutting back the man hours in that department to the equivalent of one. She would like to see one person working three half days, and the other person working seven half days which would still allow that person to have health benefits. It would decrease man hours in that department to the equivalent of one. She reviewed the decrease in the budget lines that would create.
Deputy Supervisor Latimer asked her to clarify "seven half days".
Councilwoman Strawinski explained if you have five days in a week, that would be ten half days. The same would hold true with corresponding budget lines for that department.
Councilman Ross is not in favor of making any changes in that department. He feels it is covered properly and it makes no sense to slash anyone's hours.
Councilwoman Strawinski thinks this is a reasonable accommodation to make sure employees are not laid off altogether.
Councilman O'Neill cannot vote to reduce the hours in the building dept.
Councilman Colgan thinks there are other ways to approach this and does not want to change it.
Councilwoman Strawinski wants to remove funds for Disaster Preparedness.
The Board agreed to that reduction.
Councilwoman Strawinski wants to reduce Zoning Office expenses.
The Board agreed to the reduction.
Councilwoman Strawinski questioned the transfer of funds to the DB Fund. She doesn't feel it makes sense.
Business Manager Deb Marks explained it and the Board discussed that transfer of funds.
Councilman Ross said funds from the B Fund can be transferred to the DB Fund any time. Once they are in the DB Fund we cannot move it back.

Councilman O'Neill brought up reducing the amount of transfer to capital improvement/CHIPS money.

Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke is concerned that the CHIPS funding may decrease. Cost of repairs is going up and roads need to be maintained. If you want to continue to maintain roads on the schedule that they need to be maintained, even \$150,000 is not enough. With the rising costs and the maintenance schedule falling behind we would have to play catch up. Look at our fleet. We've been doing the same thing. We haven't been maintaining what we've got over there, we haven't been maintaining our building, we haven't been maintaining our fleet, and we are trying to maintain our roads because that is what the taxpayers use every day. We use the building and equipment so we're suffering with that. If you are not going to give the taxpayers the money needed you are going to continue to fall behind. The asphalt is based on the price of oil. They did a little bit more than half a road last year. Guski Road cost \$80,000 of CHIPS money. They were able to do smaller pieces with their paver but if they don't have the material to put down with the paver they are not going to be able to do even that. They are falling behind in their maintenance schedule and are trying to make do with what they have. When the price of oil doubles the price of asphalt doubles. Everything in the Highway Department is based on the price of oil. They are trying to look at the minimum necessary to repair.

Councilman Ross told the Board that if they cut that they are doing nothing but cheating the taxpayer. We did that last year and every year it will get worse and worse.

Councilwoman Strawinski hopes as the economy improves we will gain revenues and make up for lost time.

Highway Superintendent Burke said if they can tell her how many storms there will be this winter then she can tell you how much money she is going to spend and what the condition of the roads will be based on those storms. We can hope for the best and prepare for the worst but we are not prepared for the best.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants to reduce that budget line. Councilmen Ross, O'Neill and Colgan do not. She asked Highway Superintendent Burke if there are funds to order the dump body this year.

Highway Superintendent Burke told her there are no more funds this year.

The Board took a break at 10:55 p.m.

The Board resumed the meeting at 11:13 p.m.

DOG LICENSING LOCAL LAW DISCUSSION – ATTORNEY CHRISTINE CHALE

Attorney Chale explained a meeting regarding the local law regarding dog licensing. She reminded the Board that it has to be passed by the end of the year. She referred to a draft local law provided by New York State Ag. & Markets and asked for any comments or questions on the draft local law. She hopes to have a final version ready for November 17th.

Councilman Ross questioned license fees regarding purebred licenses.

Attorney Chale explained that license and that it is for a breeder.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer noted that "breeder" is not defined in the local law.

Attorney Chale responded no, it is a purebred license.

Councilman Ross would like purebred and kennel licenses be defined.

Attorney Chale read the specific requirements for that type of license.

Councilman Ross asked about the surcharges to the State and commented that even though we are doing the work we still have to give money to the State.

Attorney Chale pointed out options regarding the fee structure.

The Board discussed the fee schedule for kennels as opposed to those residents who have more than one dog.

Councilman Colgan explained that we took advice from the State. There was a criterion to meet.

Attorney Chale explained that you are not required to have a purebred license. There has to be a \$5.00 difference between neutered and unneutered.

Councilwoman Strawinski is inclined to take out the purebred license line altogether and have owners pay for each dog.

Councilman Colgan will meet with Town Clerk Sue McCann regarding the fee structure.

Attorney Chale would like a final version of the law by the November 17 meeting so that we will be in a position to hold a public hearing.

**MOTION TO FILE FOR NEW YORK STATE AID FOR ANNUAL REASSESSMENT
(DEADLINE 12/6/10 FOR FILING)**

On a motion of Councilman Ross seconded by Councilman Colgan moved to file New York State Aid for annual reassessment.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

CONSENT TO TOWN OF RED HOOK PLANNING BOARD SERVING AS LEAD AGENCY FOR OAKS AT LAKES KILL MAJOR SUBDIVISION

Attorney Chale told the Board that the Planning Board is asking to be allowed to be lead agency for the SEQRA review on this subdivision. An issue the Town will have to consider is a transportation corporation for community septic system. She described the subdivision and the issue of the impact of a community septic system.

Councilman Colgan has a major concern about transportation corporations. He encourages the lead agency to address the septic system without the transportation corporation, meaning individual septic systems.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski moved to consent to the Planning Board to serve as lead agency of Oaks at Lakes Kill subdivision.

Adopted	Ayes 4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays 0	
	Absent 1	Crane

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Deputy Supervisor Latimer returned to the budget discussion.

Councilman O'Neill asked Business Manager Deb Marks to calculate the changes to see what effect it would have on the numbers. He hoped to have the Town budget at a single digit increase so he asked if it would be possible to remove \$25,000 from the General A Fund. After Deb returned with the numbers he proposed removing \$30,000 from the General A Fund reserves to reduce the amount of taxes to be raised. It would be a 9.94% which he considers a single digit percentage increase.

Deputy Supervisor Latimer asked the Board how to proceed with Councilman O'Neill's recommendation.

Business Manager Deb Marks told the Board that the Supervisor did not want to remove anything from the fund balance. Deb wouldn't want to go any further than Councilman O'Neill's suggestion of \$30,000.

Councilman Ross is not in favor of reducing the fund balance to balance the budget. There are too many unknowns.

Councilwoman Strawinski feels we have to make the tax burden as small as possible on the taxpayers so she is in agreement with reducing the fund balance.

The majority of the Board agreed to reduce the fund balance.

On a motion of Councilman O'Neill seconded by Councilman Colgan for discussion moved to adopt the budget for 2011.

Adopted	Ayes 3	Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays 1	Ross
	Absent 1	Crane

The vote was taken after the following discussion:

Councilman Ross said the Board worked very hard on the budget and cut a lot of things that he did not think they should have. However, he could never vote for this budget taking away a 3% raise for our full time employees. He knows the economy isn't great but our employees also live and pay taxes in Red Hook. We gave them nothing last year and to give them nothing this year he cannot be in favor of. You have to be right and fair to yourself and to your employees as well as to the taxpayers. The things we cut out he believes makes it more than fair to the taxpayers but unfair to our employees. This is their livelihood. 3% was a modest increase for our full time employees.

Councilwoman Strawinski does not want to give Town employees a raise again this year. She said the taxpayers are not able to afford it.

Councilman Ross thinks our employees are very low paid public servants and are not on the upper end of the spectrum. He feels it is vital to take care of them as well as the taxpayers. Councilman Colgan feels there is no good answer here and all he is hearing is “cut” from the public. He regrettably goes along with no raise for employees.

Councilman O’Neill said the employees become like a family but as an elected public official he feels it is right to reduce the cost of government and does not want to give raises to the employees. The message we are sending to the taxpayers is that we are not going to be frivolous with tax dollars. We have to address the issue of having employees contribute to health care. The balance this year is not getting pay raises but also not contributing to health care. He does not see that it is possible to have no increase because we do want to continue services.

CORRESPONDENCE

Deputy Supervisor Latimer shared the following correspondence:

- A letter with the subject of Tree City, USA Region III Application thanking the Town for participating in the National Arbor Day Foundation Tree City, USA program. There is an online version of the Tree City, USA application.
- Hudson River Valley Greenway outlining Greenway criteria and offering more information about Greenway services.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Deputy Supervisor Latimer opened for public comments.

Robert McKeon said the Board found it necessary to increase the taxes above 2% to 4% and thought they should know the Governor-Elect, State Senate and State Assembly are saying they are moving toward local property tax cuts. Next year at this time you may not be able to increase the budget. He gave suggestions of what to explain to the State in the event they may want to reach out to them.

On a motion of Councilman Ross seconded by Councilman Colgan moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 a.m.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O’Neill
	Nays	0	
	Absent	1	Crane

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McCann, Town Clerk