

RED HOOK TOWN BOARD BUDGET WORKSHOP
October 24, 2011

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

Present: Supervisor Sue Crane
Councilman James Ross
Councilwoman Micki Strawinski
Councilman Harry Colgan
Councilman William O'Neill
Town Clerk Sue McCann

Also Present: Business Manager Deborah Marks
Budget Officer Rose Rider
Town Accountant Rae D'Achille

Supervisor Crane welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. She referred to the preliminary in process document and the preliminary in progress with 2% increase document. She also referred to the formula the State Comptroller's Office proposes municipalities use to calculate the numbers.

The Board reviewed the budget with Business Manager Deb Marks explaining the tentative vs. preliminary columns.

Town Accountant Rae D'Achille spoke about a \$30,000 contingency line.

The Board continued review of the budget.

Supervisor Crane commented that there are drastic changes that could be made in the budget which include layoffs, cancellation of summer programs or severe reduction of summer programs. We've worked over every line we could think of collectively and those are the areas we haven't touched. She is not advocating any of those cuts and doesn't think we should make them. She referred to a \$25,000 election charge from Dutchess County and said there is a Town that is taking action to have that charge levied on the County tax, not the municipality's tax. It is a strategy that some Towns are taking.

Councilman Colgan commented that the County is reversing what they did to us.

Councilman Ross commented that they took our voting machines and took them over therefore they should be including the charge in their bill. When the mandate came down from the federal government years ago, the County took our machines. Prior to that we bought our machines, we serviced our machines, we maintained them, and stored them. Then the County chose to take them, store them, and bring them back and forth. When they got their new machines, then there was that big expense. If we have no control locally, the County should deal with it.

The Board continued reviewing the budget.

Town Accountant D'Achille explained the contingency budget line in relation to the fund balance.

The Board discussed dates for the next budget meetings.

Supervisor Crane suggested that the Board make a decision about 2% salary increases. She asked for their comments.

Councilwoman Strawinski is in favor of the 2% increase if we decrease the contingency line the same amount.

Councilman Ross is in favor of the 2% increase and wants to leave the contingency in the General A Fund.

Councilman Colgan thinks they should keep the 2%.

Councilman O'Neill has a problem with the Board getting a 2% raise.

Supervisor Crane is in favor of a 2% raise across the Board.

Supervisor Crane told the Board that Dog Control Officer Cecil Moore is retiring at the end of the month. She is going to speak with Rhinebeck officials to see about sharing services with them. Red Hook Village does not have anything in their budget for it and it is really our call. We have a vehicle, they have a kennel and we also have a contract with our veterinarian.

There will be an Executive Session at the Town Board meeting on October 26th.

Councilman Colgan asked about the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grant.

Supervisor Crane told the Board that we received notice from Hudson River Valley Greenway that they approved the grant that we applied for last year in the amount of \$10,000 for the study of the Historic Riverfront District. In looking at that grant proposal she realized there is no way we can undertake that grant with the budget that is proposed. She wrote to Mark Castiglione, the

Executive Director, and he responded to her immediately. He said they would still welcome a new grant proposal for a project that fits within budget realities. She proposes that we get back to him and say that 2012 is not a year we can undertake this. We don't have the money for planning and legal fees. They may say they'll keep the grant open and come back to us in 2013. Councilman O'Neill asked why we just can't spend up to the amount they want to give us. Councilman Colgan spoke to Michele Greig from Greenplan and there may be a different strategy to approach this. One is to do it over a two year period, the first year would be doing the analysis; the second year would be actually writing and preparing it. We can drop it this year and apply again next year or we could accept the \$7500 this year and not spend any Town money. He explained a process he reviewed. Supervisor Crane thinks if it is going to cost us \$8,000 in planning fees, we know it is going to cost 1/3 of that in legal fees. She doesn't feel we can take it on this year. Councilman Colgan feels that zoning efforts and management of this Town are important and we should keep moving ahead. Supervisor Crane feels the Town needs at least a year's break from consulting fees if we can avoid them. She thinks they should ask for a year's extension. That would give us time to know where we are next year at this time. Councilman Ross said that would give us a good handle on the "in kind" match. Councilman O'Neill said long range planning is preferred. Centers and Greenspace took many years but we were not laying money aside for the expense of the project which culminated at the end. We've got to keep the momentum going as far as zoning. The idea would be to use \$7500 to have a planner work with the Town through the task force and come up with the concepts regarding zoning. It is going to take a year more or less but at least we will be working on it. Then wait for another grant after that. Supervisor Crane suggested actions the task force could use without using a planner. Councilman O'Neill responded with reasons to use a planner. Town Accountant D'Achille had questions about the grant and advised that if you have to spend the money up front, watch your cash flow. When you get grants from New York State they tell you how to spend the money. She explained grant processes further.

On a motion of Councilman Colgan seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Adopted	Ayes	5	Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays	0	

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McCann, Town Clerk