

TOWN OF CLIFTON PARK TOWN BOARD
2023 PRELIMINARY BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

November 10, 2022

The special meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Clifton Park was held in the Town Office Building at 7:00 p.m. Supervisor Barrett presiding to hear comments on the 2023 Preliminary Budget.

Present: Supervisor Barrett
Councilman Morelli
Councilwoman Walowit
Town Clerk Brobston

Also Present: Town Attorney McCarthy
Mark Heggen, Comptroller

Town Clerk Brobston read the public hearing notice as advertised in the Gazette on October 25, 2022.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Supervisor Barrett stated nothing has changed since the tentative budget.

Highlights include:

The Town will remain under the tax cap and without a Town tax.

EMS tax-flat

Highway tax-flat

\$925,000 remaining ARPA funds were added to the budget to begin working on initiatives, including safe access to the 41 acres off Riverview Road, splash park, replacing the Clifton Common playground (along with a grant), pickleball courts and additional paving.

\$75,000 Veteran's walkway/wall on the Clifton Common (Brick Sales in addition)

\$100,000 various improvements on the Clifton Common

3% salary increase for the two units and non-union personnel

\$100,000 Town Hall improvements

\$36,000 Parks & Recreation software

\$200,000 stormwater project

\$37,000 Household Hazardous Waste collection (77,000 lbs. of recycled paint has been collected at the Transfer Station)

Supervisor Barrett explained, the Town has two union units, Highway and Town Hall. A clause was found in the union contracts that states: COLA for calendar year and each year throughout the life of this agreement, the percentage increase in the hourly wage rates may be increased if the Consumer Price Index, as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, for all Urban Consumers New Series exceeds 7% for the time period from October 1st-September 30th of the previous calendar year. If the percentage of increase is 7% or greater, the hourly wage rates for the succeeding calendar year shall be determined as follows: PERCENT INCREASE IN CPI, 8% or over, but under 9%, PERCENT OF INCREASE OVER THE HOURLY WAGE RATE shall be 5.5%.

Supervisor Barrett explained, in the last few decades inflation has been low, unfortunately due to other forces, the country finds itself in a very high inflation peaking and kicking in when this clause kicks in. Daily expenses are difficult to navigate for individuals with the huge increase in costs. So instead of the 3% salary increase for the two CSEA units that was negotiated, it will now be a 5.5% increase. He suggested the non-union employees receive the increase as well.

Comptroller Heggen stated, the increase to the budget for Union employees for the General Fund will be \$69,500, Sewer will be \$3,585 and Highway fund is \$41,000. If the Town were to include the non-union employees, full and part-time, in the increase, the budget would reflect, just under \$59,403, Sewer fund \$2,700, Highway fund \$35,000. A combined total of \$13,000 for FICA taxes would need to be accounted for. Elected Officials are not included in the increased calculation.

Supervisor Barrett stated, with the Union, the clause is in the contract and must be adjusted to hold up the Town's end of the contract. The question is do we apply the same raises for the non-union employees.

Councilman Morelli stated, the budget impacts cover different ages in the population. He feels it is important for the new software for the Parks & Recreation Department. He stated the inflation is affecting everyone throughout the country and he feels it is important to increase the non-union employees as well.

Councilwoman Walowit stated the software in the Parks & Recreation will not only help the Department but would also be used at the Senior Center and help residents to sign up for the many programs. She feels all the employees, union and non-union, are important and would like to see all get the increase. Thankfully the Town has the funds to support the budget.

Supervisor Barrett made a **MOTION** to add the increase totaling 5.5% for non-union employees, seconded by Councilman Morelli and Councilwoman Walowit.

Ayes: Supervisor Barrett, Councilman Morelli, Councilwoman Walowit

Noes: None

MOTION APPROVED

Supervisor Barrett explained, a bid opening was held for the Yard Waste Contract. The Town has enjoyed for the past approximately 12 years free yard waste pick-up service that was contracted and the Town did not encumber any expense through this contract, and it has always been with County Waste. Over the years the bid was advertised. With the current economy, that has now changed. The lowest bid was Twin Bridges at \$175,000. He suggested taking more time and assessing the options before committing to any of the bids that came in. Suggested to continue the discussion and not adjust the 2023 budget currently, until review is complete.

Supervisor Barrett suggested to increase the stipend for the Chairmen of the Planning Board, Environmental Conservation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. The Chairmen of these Boards have more demands and time with their position.

Comptroller Heggen stated the current stipend amount in the budget as follows:
ECC \$3,300, ZBA \$3,600, Planning Board \$4,650.

Supervisor Barrett suggested the following increase amounts as follows:
ECC \$4,500, ZBA \$5,000, Planning Board \$7,500.

Councilwoman Walowit agreed with the Supervisor's suggested increases.

Councilman Morelli supports the suggested increases.

Councilman Morelli made a **MOTION** to increase the Planning Board, ZBA and ECC Chair stipends in the budget as suggested, seconded by Councilwoman Walowit.

Ayes: Councilman Morelli, Councilwoman Walowit, Supervisor Barrett

Noes: None

MOTION APPROVED

No one was present from the public.

Supervisor Barrett suggested, with the consensus tonight, adding the adoption of the budget to the next Town Board meeting.

MOTION BY Councilwoman Walowit, seconded by Councilman Morelli to adjourn the Public Hearing to the next regular meeting or any other meeting necessary for the conduct of town business.

Ayes: Councilman Morelli, Councilwoman Walowit, Supervisor Barrett

Noes: None

Motion carried at 7:51 PM

Teresa Brobston, Town Clerk