

Budget Public Hearing Minutes
November 16, 2015 at the Rockland Town Hall
Called to order by Chairman Cashman at 7:30 p.m.
Closed at 7:47 p.m.

The Clerk, Treasurer, and all Town Board members were present. Also present were Tara Mager (Wrightstown Spirit), Edwin Schuh, Terry Vertz, Rick Van Vonderen, Dorothy Cashman, Ben Crocker, Wayne Carter, Glen Schwalbach and Steve Gander.

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.

A Power Point presentation and hard copies of the proposed income and expenditures for 2016 along with the actual income and expenditures through October 2015 were provided to electors. Chairman Cashman walked the electors through the presentation which demonstrated the proposed budget for 2016. The following are some of the points mentioned:

- 1) Revenue from Loan: The Town will be taking out a loan of \$325,000.00 for the Hickory Ridge Improvement project. Last year, the project was expected to cost \$425,000.00. Actual costs will be approximately \$325,000.00 in 2016.
- 2) Bridge Project Reimbursement Income: The bridge project reimbursement is for \$10,000 which was approved by the electors at the annual meeting in April of this year.
- 3) Building/Zoning Administrator Expense category is higher due to a raise in compensation for the Building Administrator.
- 4) Debt Service Expense is for the \$325,000 loan procured at 2.75% for 10 years. Principal and interest on this loan will total \$34,119 in 2016.
- 5) Highway/Roads Expense: The Town chose to contract a private vendor for snowplowing the roads in order to save the Town money and receive better service.
- 6) Fire/Protection Services: The Board is requesting the allowable levy to be increased by \$15,000 to pay for the purchase and installation of fire address signs. Chairman Cashman explained that every parcel with a building on it would be required to have a fire address sign. Estimated total cost for purchase and installation of the fire address signs is \$20,000. The Board is requesting \$15,000 from the levy with the additional amount coming from the general fund.
- 7) Total Income with the proceeds of the loan is \$480,395.00. Total Expense with the loan is \$944,833.00.
- 8) Proposed tax levy requested is \$ 464,438.00.

Chairman Cashman stated that the Town's value is \$192,041,000.00. Based upon the requested levy, the Town's mill rate would be approximately 2.4184 per \$1,000.00. A Power Point slide demonstrated how much that would be for a home valued at \$250,000. The slide also demonstrated last year's mill rate of 2.4327 per \$1,000.00. If the electors chose not to include the additional \$15,000 in the levy, the mill rate would be approximately 2.34 per \$1,000.00. Chairman Cashman explained that the fire address signs are estimated to cost \$30.26 per sign. For an owner of a \$250,000 home, it would cost the owner \$19.47 more in taxes for next year.

The Power Point presentation also included Resolutions #2015-11 and #2015-12 that the electors would consider adopting at the Special Elector meeting immediately following the public hearing.

Public Input

Ben Crocker, 2223 Lasee Road, asked whether the rebate of excess sales tax came into play when preparing the 2016 budget.

Chairman Cashman stated that the Board could not consider these funds yet because they have not been received. If the bill is approved by the Governor, he Board can use the funds for economic development, reduction of debt, or to reduce the tax levy.

Crocker asked when the Town receives this amount whether the Board will call a special meeting to discuss how the money should be used.

The Board explained that there is an opportunity to discuss this topic at the Annual Meeting in April but were not sure whether a Special Town Elector's meeting will be needed.

Supervisor Van Vonderen expressed that the loan is being borrowed at a low interest rate and the Town never has enough money to cover the costs for the repair of the Town's roads. She explained that as the Town puts these projects off, they become more costly do so. Van Vonderen expressed that it will be important for the Town to have the discussion on whether the funds go towards outstanding debt, roads or possibly both.

Chairman Cashman closed the public hearing at 7:47 p.m.

All minutes have been taken truthfully and honestly and to the best of my knowledge and ability.

Jann B. Charette,
Town Clerk

Minutes approved as written / with corrections (**strike one**) by the Town Board on Monday, December 7, 2015.

Dennis J. Cashman
Town Chairman