

A budget workshop was held by the Town Board of the Town of Moreau on October 20, 2022, in the Town of Moreau Municipal building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York.

The Supervisor opened the budget workshop at 5:07 p.m.

Town Board Members Present

Mark Stewart	Councilmember
Kyle Noonan	Councilmember
Alan VanTassel	Councilmember
Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr.	Supervisor

Town Board Members Absent

John Donohue, Jr.	Councilmember
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Also present: Leeann McCabe, Town Clerk; Jeffrey Cruz, Principal Account Clerk; Leah Cronin, Assessor; Matt Dreimiller, Building Inspector; John Hogan and Jeffrey McCabe, Town Justices; Mike Mooney, Water Superintendent

The first budget item for discussion was the Recreation Department. The Supervisor noted that the Recreation Leader gave notice that he wouldn't be able to attend, however he did submit some recommendations for discussion.

A7140 – Playgrounds and Recreation – The tentative budget reflected a change to requested salaries. The equipment account had a request for a tire change machine, which was removed from the tentative budget. All other equipment items remained as requested. The line item for Other Contractual had been reduced from the requested amount of \$77,500.00 to \$75,000.00. All other Contractual line items remained as requested. Councilmember Stewart stated that he was hoping to have a discussion with the Recreation Leader this evening regarding the budgeted bleachers. He stated that the bleachers being taken down are much larger than what he has budgeted to replace them with. The Supervisor stated, that whatever they're replacing, they shouldn't be reducing the number. He also stated that the purchase would have to be brought before the Town Board for authorization. He stated that it can be brought up at that time.

A7310 – Youth Programs – Equipment and Contractual line items remained as requested. Salaries were adjusted due to a minimum wage increase.

A8810 – Cemeteries – The Supervisor stated that Personal Services for mowing was increased from the requested amount to accommodate the hourly rates to get everyone up to where they should be. A mower/bagger/trimmer was requested but removed. The Supervisor stated that there was money budgeted for this year. He didn't know whether or not the purchase had been made yet. The Contractual line item remained as requested.

The Supervisor read through some of the suggestions the Recreation Leader had made in his memo. The first being that he didn't think they should operate the beach any longer. He suggested that the Town would be better served by using the money to make improvements at the Rec Park instead. The Supervisor disagreed with the suggestion. He stated that it benefits those who don't have a way to go somewhere else. He stated that it's in walking distance for everyone in the Village. Councilmember VanTassel agreed with the Supervisor.

The Recreation Leader also suggested that instead of a new building in the Rec Park, the money would be better spent to construct a new pavilion. The Supervisor asked if he was referring to the cold storage building. Councilmember VanTassel stated that he believed he meant the pole barn. He stated that the thought would be to generate revenue from the new pavilion during the summer and then use it for storage in the winter. The Supervisor disagreed. He stated that the money has been budgeted and wasn't sure why there has been no action on it. He stated by having a barn, it protects the equipment from the elements and it keeps them away from the public so that kids aren't climbing on them. He stated that it's a public safety issue. The Supervisor did say that he's totally supportive of additional pavilions. The

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Supervisor stated that he's leaving the funding for the cold storage building in the budget for 2023. Councilmember Stewart agreed with the Supervisor's comments.

HT7180 – Town-Wide Recreational Capital Project – Councilmember Stewart asked if there was money budgeted for the roof at the beach. The Supervisor went over the Contractual line items. There was nothing budgeted for a new roof. He asked Councilmember Stewart how much he thought a new roof might cost. Councilmember Stewart replied that it would be close to \$10,000.00. \$10,000.00 was added to the 2023 tentative budget for a new bath house roof at the beach. This increased the total request to \$115,000.00.

A1355 – Assessor – Leah Cronin was present to answer or ask any questions. The Supervisor gave an overview of the budget and the new compensation schedule. Ms. Cronin thanked the Town Board for taking care of her Senior Assessment Clerk. She stated that Riley is a huge asset to the Town and has nothing but good things to say about him. Ms. Cronin spoke about the tablet she had in this year's budget. She stated that the State was working on a new program through Tyler Technologies, but it stopped. She stated that the State will be working on the program in-house. Instead of spending the money this year, she pulled it. She stated that once the State has their program in place, she'll budget for a tablet that's paired well with the State's program. All Contractual line items remained as requested. The Assessor stated that the legislation has put forward a new law, which has been passed by the Assembly and the Senate but has not been delivered to the Governor yet. The new law states, that the Town shall notify all residents in the Town (i.e., one mailing per home or residential use property), to be notified twice annually, with the first being the back side of the Town & County tax bills. The second mailing is required to be sent 30 days prior to taxable status day, which means that it would have to be to the residents by February 1st. She stated that this is another unfunded mandate given to us by New York State. She stated that a second mailing would cost approximately \$3,000.00. She stated that she has spoken with her colleagues looking for the most cost-effective way to send the notices. She stated that the notice is intended to educate homeowners on the low-income senior citizen exemption. She stated, that in order to benefit from the exemption, you must be at least 65 years old and make under \$32,400.00. She stated, as it stands right now, that equated to 143 of the Town's senior citizens. She stated that the Town has to mail this notice to every resident regardless of age and income. Mr. Cruz stated that they could move some money from contingent to cover this expense. The Supervisor stated that they'll just leave the money in contingent and use it when the time comes. Ms. Cronin stated that she'll be getting some quotes and will get the numbers to the Town Board. The Supervisor stated that the County passed legislation that increased the income level for senior exemptions. Ms. Cronin stated that 1995 was the last time the County passed any legislation to up the low-income senior exemption. She stated it was similar to what the Town did last year. She stated that every taxing jurisdiction is allowed to adopt their own sliding scale for their own seniors. She stated, that with COLA and inflation, she knows that this will affect the seniors. She stated that she had spoken with Attorney Buettner, so that the Town is proactive for the future. She stated, that by local law, the Town would be able to adopt something that will reflect these COLA increases. She suggested that they leave everything as is for this year, but for the 2024 assessment roll, they should up the scale by \$2,000.00. This would allow the seniors to receive the same benefit they'll receive this year. She stated that she would present this at another time. She just wanted them to be aware.

CW8310 – Water Administration – Mike Mooney was present to ask or answer any questions. The Contractual line items had been adjusted up for insurance and for Other Contractual. The Other Contractual line item includes \$106,000.00 for water capacity increases; \$125,000.00 for the VanBuren Street water main ext.; and, \$30,000.00 for the Ft. Edward/Sisson Rd. extension.

CW8330 – Water Purification – The Contractual line item remained as requested.

CW8340 – Water Transmission and Distribution – The Contractual line item remained as requested.

CW9730 – Water Debt Service – Contractual remained as requested. The Supervisor commented that there was a little bit of an increase for the October payment, due to the way the financials were set up.

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Mike Mooney stated that the Town Board is going to have to adopt a sewer rate. The Supervisor stated that he had spoken with the engineer for the Town. Mr. Mooney stated that the important thing they have to think about, is if they want to treat District 1 and District 1 Ext. 5 differently. He stated that District 1 right now is paying \$5.00/1,000 gallons and the property owners in District 1 Ext. 5 will be paying \$3.36/1,000 gallons. The Supervisor stated that he had some numbers that he would get to the Board members for review. Mr. Mooney stated that he's on track to get water and sewer billed quarterly from this point on.

A1110 – Court – Judge Hogan and Judge McCabe were present to ask or answer any questions. The Supervisor gave an overview of the budget and the new compensation schedule. There was a short discussion regarding the salary schedule. Judge McCabe asked if longevity is taken into consideration. The Supervisor stated that it is. He also stated that there were those who received a sizeable increase and capped those at 5%. Judge McCabe stated that his Clerk that's been here for 5-years is making the same as a newly hired Clerk. Mr. Cruz explained that it was because of the 5% cap. Councilmember Stewart stated that his Clerk would receive a 5% raise again next year, where everyone else wouldn't. He stated that they can't fix everything all in one year. Councilmember Hogan stated that this Town Board is saying what they're going to do going forward, but a new Board may not do the same. The Supervisor stated that the budget he releases next year will have the same compensation structure. He stated that if the compensation should exceed 5%, they'll receive 5%. He stated that it would be in his tentative budget, however, it would need to be adopted by the entire Town Board. Councilmember Stewart stated that it would have his support. Judge McCabe and Judge Hogan gave an overview of the case numbers. He stated that revenues are down because they have many cases that aren't closed. He stated that the Town has \$555,000.00 that's unpaid. He stated that if there's a vehicle and traffic ticket that's unpaid, there's no suspension anymore, due to the new laws. If they don't pay the ticket nothing happens. The Supervisor went over the line items in the Court budget. Contractual stayed as requested. The Supervisor reviewed the revenues for the Court. He stated that the estimate for 2023 is a conservative number at \$100,000.00.

B1990 – Town Outside Village Contingent – Matt Dreimiller was present to ask or answer any questions. The Supervisor gave an overview of the budget and the new compensation schedule. It was noted that the figures for the salaries of the Building Inspector and the Clerk were incorrect in the tentative budget. The correct amounts were what was requested. Salary for the Building Inspector was corrected to \$61,470.00 and salary for the Clerk was corrected to \$40,425.00. The salary for the PT Code Enforcement Officer was correct at \$19,600.00. The Supervisor reported that he had received correspondence from Peter Bachem after the tentative budget was released. Mr. Bachem asked that the Town Board discuss the possibility of changing his position from part-time to full-time. The Supervisor stated that he didn't support the request at this time. He didn't think the Town was at the point where they need an exclusive full-time Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Dreimiller stated that BioChar had a lot to do with the request. He stated that there's a lot more activity in the Town that requires code enforcement. When Mr. Bachem isn't here, because he's part-time, it falls back onto him. He stated that he agreed they don't need to address the request this year, but possibly next year. The Supervisor stated that the Town needs to retool the department from the ground up. He suggested that the part-time Code Enforcement position can be part of the conversation. He stated that they also need to look at the fee schedule. The Supervisor stated that the taxpayers are carrying a lot of the burden. Mr. Dreimiller stated that they should get the ball rolling before February. The Supervisor stated that he would like it done before the year's out. There was a brief discussion relating to the Contractual line item. Mr. Dreimiller had a request for a Laserfiche scanner. He was told that the Town Board had approved his purchase request at the last regular meeting, along with the purchase of Laserfiche user license agreements. The Supervisor stated that they would leave his request items as is. Mr. Cruz asked if Mr. Dreimiller could speak on behalf of Planning and Zoning. The Supervisor stated that they put the numbers in that the Zoning Administrator requested. The Supervisor reported that he had received notice from the Secretary of the Planning & Zoning Boards, that this would be her last week to take the minutes of the meetings. He stated that he has someone from his office who will fill in for at least one meeting until they can get the position advertised. The Supervisor stated that the Contractual line items remained as requested.

A1330 – Tax Collection – The Contractual line items remained as requested.

A1410 – Town Clerk – The Contractual line items remained as requested.

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A6989 – Records Management – The Contractual line items remained as requested.

There was discussion relating to elected official's salaries. The Supervisor asked the Board members what they would like to do. Councilmember VanTassel stated that the salary increase shouldn't exceed what the employees were given. Mr. Cruz stated that no one received less than 2% and that the average was at the higher end between 2% and 5%. It was agreed that they would give a 3% increase to all elected officials. The Supervisor asked to have a discussion relating to the Highway Superintendent's salary. He stated that the current salary is \$62,600.00. He stated that he looked at this salary when working with the County's HR Director. He looked at the salaries of other towns and the amount of road mileage the towns have. He gave a rundown of salaries that other towns pay that position. Councilmember Stewart stated that the Town of Moreau is behind the times with elected official's salaries. The Supervisor stated that the Town of Moreau is the 6th largest town in Saratoga County. Town Board members agreed on a salary of \$80,000.00 for the Highway Superintendent position. The Supervisor asked if they wanted to look at the Town Clerk position as well. He stated that he could look into it more before he adopts the budget. The Town Clerk reminded the Supervisor that she needed the numbers tonight, so that she could advertise for the public hearing. He read down through the salaries of other Clerks in the County. It was agreed that the numbers weren't that far off, and they left the salary for the Town Clerk at 3%.

The budget workshop ended at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leeann McCabe
Town Clerk