

A continuation of the Public Hearing on the 2014 Preliminary Town Budget was held on November 19, 2013 in the Town of Moreau Office Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York.

Supervisor Jenkins re-opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m.

The Town Clerk called the roll.

**Town Board Members Present**

Robert J. Vittengl, Jr.	Councilman
Todd Kusnierz	Councilman
Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
Preston L. Jenkins, Jr.	Supervisor

**Town Board Members Absent**

Bob Prendergast	Councilman
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**Also Present:** Jeanne Fleury, Town Clerk; Fran Thibodeau, Principal Account Clerk; Reed Antis, Town Resident & Planning Board Member; Harry G. Gutheil, Jr., Village Resident; Jason Denno from the EFC (Environmental Facilities Corp.)

Supervisor Jenkins welcomed everyone to the continuation of the Public Hearing on the 2014 Preliminary Town Budget that was commenced on November 6, 2013.

Supervisor Jenkins asked everyone to turn off or silence all electronic devices.

Fran Thibodeau, Principal Account Clerk, distributed to the Town Board a sheet of changes that were made to the Preliminary Budget since the November 6<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing and Supervisor Jenkins recited from this information as follows:

A7520.4 – Historical Property Contractual Account – Changed back to \$16,000 that was in the Tentative Budget. In the Preliminary Budget it showed \$6,000 and that was a typo.

B3620.1 – Safety Inspection Personal Services Account – Changed the Building Inspector’s salary increase to 4% from 6% and kept the Building Inspector’s Clerk’s increase at 6%.

DB5130.2 – Machinery Equipment Account – Reduced the amount budgeted for a new skid steer by \$15,000 the trade-in allowance and deleted the wood chipper.

Water District 1 – Added a debt payment estimate of \$165,000.

A1620.2 and A1620.4 – Request to separate Town Hall line items as follows:

- .401 – Municipal Center
- .402 – Annex Building
- .403 – Sheriff Station
- .404 – Town Hall – 61 Hudson Street

Supervisor Jenkins stated that he hasn’t received any phone calls or had any contact with the South Glens Falls Fire Company. There is a 6% increase in the Preliminary Budget for the Fire Company. He mentioned an article in the newspaper about how the Fire Company is looking to finance \$264,000 for 40 air packs and a cascade system for refilling the air tanks and how they would use \$50,000 in money raised through fundraising as a down payment and finance the rest at \$2,000 a month for a five year period. He said the numbers don’t make sense.

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Supervisor Jenkins stated that he heard the Fire Company purchased a van for \$40,000 and this was concerning to him and it wasn't even mentioned at the time they appeared before the Town Board to discuss their budget.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that the \$40,000 could have covered their air packs and Supervisor Jenkins said they could have covered probably ten of them.

Supervisor Jenkins said it was disheartening and perhaps the Town Board should consider reducing the increase to 2%.

Councilwoman LeClair agreed in light of the fact that the Fire Company hasn't come back to the Board with more information and in light of the fact that they bought a van to be used to drive members to conventions.

Councilman Kusnierz thought the Fire Company was supposed to bring more detail back to the Town Board and answer questions the Town Board had.

Councilman Vittengl stated that the sprint van they purchased was "swanky" and not the basic model.

Councilwoman LeClair said she heard it was a Mercedes Benz Sprint Van and questioned if the purchase was really necessary. She thought it would be cheaper to pay mileage to reimburse the members.

Supervisor Jenkins said the Fire Company hasn't complied with their request for more information and he suggested their proposed increase go back to the 2%.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that the Town Board has asked very pointed questions of other emergency services, like the Moreau Emergency Squad, and by not giving answers to the Town Board they lost out on \$30,000 as of the last contract. He thought the Fire Company made a very good argument as to why they needed the increase and under that pretense he was in support of the 6% increase, but in light of the new information that was not disclosed to the Board by the Fire Company, he was very concerned about the \$40,000 expenditure when there are other things that they absolutely need to meet state mandates and save lives. That tells him their priorities may be a little out of whack.

Supervisor Jenkins said their numbers are out of whack too and that is a problem. What they told the Post Star and what they told the Town Board was totally the opposite and the numbers don't make sense. He personally thinks they should go back to the 2% and a one year contract.

Councilwoman LeClair and Councilman Vittengl said they agreed with this.

Councilman Kusnierz asked Supervisor Jenkins if they were leaving the Building Inspector's Clerk at a 6% increase.

Supervisor Jenkins recalled this being discussed last year and how over a four year period the Town raised the other clerical staff at a much faster rate than the Building Inspector's Clerk. At that point they discussed increasing it this year.

Councilman Kusnierz asked what the salary would be with a 4% increase.

Councilwoman LeClair recalled, she thought it was Councilman Prendergast, saying at one time that it wasn't that they were punishing Kathy or overlooking her, but the prior Board Members realized that the clerks in the Town Clerk's Office were underpaid and way under standard and they were brought up to a more equitable wage. She asked Harry Gutheil if he recalled this.

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Harry Gutheil stated that he thought it was because the clerks in the Town Clerk's Office were making just under \$20,000 full-time and they had a lot of responsibility and stayed late at night at times during tax collection time.

Fran Thibodeau also recalled that the clerks in the Town Clerk's Office started so low and this was another reason.

Supervisor Jenkins replied to Councilman Kusnierz's question by saying that in 2013 Kathy's wage was \$29,059 and with a 4% increase it would be \$30,221 and with a 6% increase it would be \$30,800.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that the only reason he asked is because we have been extremely fair in the system to give across the board raises for our full-time salaried individuals. It goes a long way to alleviating issues down the road. He said that when he looks back at historical increases, for example, the Deputy Receiver of Taxes who was making in 2008 \$20.00 less than the Building Inspector's Clerk and you can follow the raises all across the page that particular individual with a 4% raise for 2014 would get a salary of \$30,195 and with a 6% raise the Building Inspector's Clerk would get a salary of \$30,800, which is a lot more than what the other individual is making if you follow it through the years. He said that if you look at the Assessor's Clerk's salary it was even lower in 2008 right through 2012 when it was \$27,142 and he realizes that we had a change in staff. He doesn't see the justification for a 6% increase without doing a full evaluation of all the salaried employees and have it based on objective reasons.

Supervisor Jenkins said he didn't disagree, but at the same time they have to consider the time in service and they haven't looked at that at all.

It was agreed to put in a 4% increase for Kathy Perez, Building Inspector's Clerk for a total salary in 2014 of \$30,221.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that he wouldn't have a problem if the Personnel Committee or full Town Board met during 2014 and put together an evaluation, because it would minimize issues down the road.

Councilwoman LeClair said she was going to ask for money to be budgeted for flag poles, but she spoke with Supervisor Jenkins today and there is money in the 2013 Budget to purchase flag poles.

Supervisor Jenkins asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Councilman Kusnierz asked if they were going to allow public comment first and he asked if anyone present wanted to be heard.

Harry Gutheil asked if debt service was budgeted for Water District 1.

Councilman Kusnierz and Fran Thibodeau replied yes, \$165,000 was put in the 2014 Budget.

Harry Gutheil asked if they were still looking at 4% to 6% increases in wages.

Supervisor Jenkins said 4%.

Harry Gutheil said he didn't know of anyone else who was handing out 4% increases in wages and said everybody will be asking for more money. It is an awful precedence to set.

Supervisor Jenkins said the union wages are 30% higher than the salaries of these people too.

Harry Gutheil stated that the Town Board has spent and spent and spent and has gone through millions of dollars.

A motion was made by Councilman Vittengl and seconded by Councilman Kusnierz to close the Public Hearing on the 2014 Preliminary Town Budget at 6:49 p.m.

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Roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilman Vittengl	Yes
Councilman Kusnierz	Yes
Councilwoman LeClair	Yes
Councilman Prendergast	Absent
Supervisor Jenkins	Yes

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Fleury  
Town Clerk