

MINUTES BOOKTOWN OF COEYMANS
November 4, 2015 – Public Hearing – 6:00pm**

A Public Hearing was held Monday, November 4, 2015, at 6:00pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: Stephen D. Flach, Supervisor
Thomas E. Dolan, Councilman
Kenneth A. Burns, Councilman
George E. Langdon, IV, Councilman

ABSENT: Peter E. Masti, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk
PJ McKenna, Chief of Police
Matthew Weidman, Clerk to the Supervisor

Supervisor Flach opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING COMMENT

Supervisor Flach stated that the record should reflect the presence of a full Town Board with the exception of Councilman Masti who is away.

Supervisor Flach asked that the Notice of Public Hearing be read.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman read the Notice of Public Hearing due to Town Clerk Millious' laryngitis.

**NOTICE
OF
PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans will meet and hold a Public Hearing at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, NY, at 6:00pm on Wednesday, the 4th day of November 2015 for the purpose of hearing comments on the Budget.

Pursuant to Section 108 of Town Law, listed below are the proposed salaries of Elected Officials.

Supervisor	(1)	\$45,000.00
Councilman	(4)	\$12,000.00 each
Justice	(2)	\$20,000.00 each
Highway Superintendent	(1)	\$54,833.00
Town Clerk	(1)	\$46,378.00

A copy of the 2016 Preliminary Budget will be available at the Town Clerk's Office, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York, where it may be viewed and a copy can be obtained during regular business hours.

**By Order of the Town Board
of the Town of Coeymans
Diane L. Millious
Town Clerk**

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BUDGET MESSAGE

For 2015, our Police are on track to be within budget for the first time in many years. A big thanks to the Chief who has worked closely with Matt and me to monitor the budget and meet regularly. He has cut unnecessary spending and raised a large amount of Police Forfeiture that he is able to use for certain purchases, which relieves the contractual amounts in his budget. The Highway Department was more than 25% under budget, thanks to Highway Superintendent Searles and my staff monitoring their expenses closely and continuing to save money with four day work weeks, utilizing part-time seasonal staff for mowing, as well as some other wise decisions mutually made.

Along with savings from our Department Heads in 2015, we also saw an increase in assessment of 6.1 million. Combined with the community development income from the Lafarge Pilot Program, it has allowed us to erase all debt accrued in 2014.

We have committed to increasing our services provided to the Town, and this means acquiring several new vehicles for both the Highway and Police. We are purchasing two brand new vehicles for the Police Department in 2016, as well as two brand new plow trucks, which have desperately needed to be replaced.

The current Sewer Budget also allows for a new vehicle, which has been needed for several years. We accomplished this while still having the ability to decrease the Sewer Rate. We have reduced the debt substantially that sewer had obtained in the past 10 years. We have a two-year Budgetary Plan in place to eliminate the past debt completely that Sewer was in when I was elected four years ago.

My Budget for 2016 not only reduces taxes to each and every taxpayer by 2.5%, but also allows for the Town to have a good amount of money put into contingency, which will allow surplus money to build up each fund balance moving forward. We look forward to building reserves over the next several years, as well as setting up a plan to steadily decrease taxes. Our 4-year plan is to be able to decrease taxes by 10%, if that is even feasible, as well as establishing a healthy fund balance for each of our funds.

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Supervisor Flach stated that a couple of changes were made to the Supervisor's Tentative to Preliminary Budget and read the following:

- \$22,750.00 in Communications for the two clerks was moved to the Police where it belongs.
- \$12,000.00 increase in Police for overtime.
- \$15,000.00 increase in Parks for bathroom at Joralemon Park.
- \$16,000.00 increase in Central Communication for HR.
- \$ 4,000.00 increase in for online tax payment system for Town Clerk.
- \$11,000.00 increase for adding Justice Clerk back in.
- \$ 2,000.00 increase in Justice, \$1,000.00 raise for each Judge.

Supervisor Flach stated that he would like to take some money out of Contingency to put in for storm water in the amount of \$20,000.00 to do Einie Drive and some of the other places that they didn't have a chance to get to. He continued by saying that they will review the changes and plan on adopting the Budget by November 20th, which he will set at the next Town Board Meeting and then asked if there were any questions.

Councilman Dolan stated to be clear, he wanted to know if Contingency A1990.4 would be proposed as \$149,283.00 instead of \$169,283.00.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that the \$20,000.00 would be taken from B Fund Contingency.

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Councilman Dolan asked if there would be zero in B Fund Contingency and \$20,000.00 added to Storm Water.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that was correct.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Flach invited the public to comment at this time, hearing none he added that they would keep the Public Hearing open for a bit while they continue discussing the Budget.

OVERVIEW OF BUDGET CHANGES

Councilman Dolan asked how much storm water sewer work \$20,000.00 buys.

Supervisor Flach stated that when he talked to Highway Superintendent Searles, he felt it would go from Einie Drive up to Civill; they have to cross some private property and have already spoken to the owners about doing it. He continued by saying that it will be up to where they updated last year and sewer work is in there as well and some of the cost will be combined. He then highlighted the following changes in the Budget.

Page 1 – \$11,375.00 Justice Clerk added back in based on \$12.50 an hour, which will come from Contingency.

Page 3 – Part-time Data Collector was mistakenly left out of Tentative Budget and put in Preliminary Budget.

Page 3 – Assessor Contractual increased \$3,000.00 for the Assessor who does the commercial property assessments.

Page 5 – Central Communications Contractual is up \$20,480.00, \$4,480.00 is for the online tax services and \$16,000.00 is for the IFM accounting and payroll software, which is the second and final payment for that. It was in HR but is now in Central Communications.

Councilman Dolan asked if the \$4,480.00 is for the software for online taxes.

Town Clerk Millious stated that it is and next year it will be approximately \$500.00 for support and added that a lot of people have requested that the taxes go online, which would be 24/7. She added that the school currently does it and she can actually help people now who call for school taxes because of it.

Councilman Dolan asked if BAS will take the existing information that they have and put it online or if it is something that Town Clerk Millious has to do.

Town Clerk Millious stated that BAS would take care of that.

Councilman Dolan asked if the \$500.00 is to update it each year.

Town Clerk Millious stated that the \$4,480.00 was for the initial program and then approximately \$500.00 to update it each year.

Page 7 – the two part-time Clerks for \$11,375.00 each that were in Communications went back to the Police Department because they are the Chief's employees.

Page 8 – the two part-time clerks were added to the Police and A3120.1 increased \$12,000.00 for overtime pay.

Supervisor Flach stated that the increase in overtime was advised by the Chief.

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Councilman Dolan asked if there has been any movement on the request for the Village to pay for the Court Officer.

Supervisor Flach stated that he spoke with the Mayor and he wants him to bring it to the Village Board and added that he thought it was going to be a hard sell because of when the Village gave up their Police Department. He added that he thinks it will help when they have it all written out to understand why because if they are making money, it does not affect or help the Town at all.

Chief McKenna interjected that he spoke with Mayor Misuraca, the Clerk and the Judge on separate occasions and they all asked why they would pay for services that they are supposed to have and he explained to them that there are the same number of Police Officer's out there, it is simply the manpower stress of having an Officer dedicated to the Court when there is a call that has to be answered. He added that he doesn't think the Village has a problem with it; it is a matter of comprehending why they are paying for something that they should be getting already but he explained that the Officer will now be dedicated and separate from the patrol and it will be an Officer dedicated to the Village.

Councilman Dolan asked if they charge the Town's Justice line for the Police Officer during court.

Supervisor Flach stated that they don't but it has been discussed and they both come out of A Fund.

Chief McKenna stated that most days he is at court on Thursdays to see the normal flow of business and if something were to occur, the Officer assigned to the Court would be pulled from it because he is a road officer, which is no different than what they currently do with the Village.

Councilman Dolan asked if it would be an easier sell if they say they are charging both courts.

Supervisor Flach stated that it would be moving from one A Fund line to another and then asked Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman if it would affect payroll.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that they had talked about doing it and he doesn't think it is a bad idea and it would help the Police budget more than anything because he is paying an Officer now anyway.

Supervisor Flach stated that they would basically just move money from his budget at this time.

Councilman Langdon stated that it would depend on how the Chief will be scheduling it, if he is going to charge the Justice, and it would probably be an extra man.

Chief McKenna stated that there is a line item in scheduling for Town or Village Court rather than scheduling it in as patrol and dedicate it to Town or Village Court and you could show at the end of the day what the hours were for.

Supervisor Flach asked Chief McKenna if he would like an extra Officer for the Village for those hours.

Chief McKenna stated that it is by contract anytime they subscribe to it and it is supposed to be a 3 hour detail, however if they do subscribe it to the Village Court or Town Court, if court ends early and only takes 30 minutes, the next 2 ½ hours would be to patrol so you would still be getting a dedicated resource during that timeframe. He added that in terms of what he would like to see, with all due respect, he would never say no to something like that.

Supervisor Flach stated that they can put that into the adopted budget.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that they could do it by keeping track of exactly how long they were there and charged the court for it because when they are done they will go back in service for the Town and as far as the Village, they are paying for three hours at a time because they are getting them for three hours and if the Town Court only takes 1/2 hour, they can pay for that.

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Supervisor suggested that Chief McKenna figure out for them roughly how much a year that it's going to be and they talked about \$4,500.00 for the Village and maybe they can put in the Justice Budget an Officer to the Court.

Chief McKenna stated that he would do that.

Mr. Polyak from the audience asked if there was going to be any discussion about combining both courts under one umbrella.

Councilman Dolan stated that it won't be in this budget.

Mr. Polyak stated that he is not saying for this budget but if they are charging the Village for the Officer's time, it might be advantageous to have it in the same building for both courts.

Supervisor Flach stated that it certainly is something that they talked about but it really doesn't reflect in the budget.

Councilman Langdon interjected that the process would have to be undertaken by the Village in order to do it that way.

Supervisor Flach stated that the Village would have to come to the Town, which would not be impossible and at a point they would do what they had to with the Police Budget when that time came.

Supervisor Flach continued by going over the budget as follows:

Page 9 – Civil Defense Contractual increased from 2015 it was \$100.00 and is now \$1,500.00.

Councilman Dolan asked if it will be a recurring item.

Supervisor Flach stated that it will not be and it is just to help them purchase some equipment they need.

Councilman Dolan asked if it would be the Town's equipment.

Supervisor Flach stated that it was a good question but he wasn't sure of the answer right now.

Councilman Burns asked why it wouldn't be.

Supervisor Flach stated that he didn't know if it was a room to hold people there if they needed to.

Chief McKenna asked what room they were referring to.

Supervisor Flach stated that Coeymans Hollow Fire District has a room for them.

Chief McKenna stated that the area that has been provided for them up there will not in any way be a detention type facility, it will strictly be an meeting room or interview room. He continued by saying that anyone being interrogated or is a suspect, that facility is not a secure facility and not his recommendation that they ever bring them to a neutral site and he would not interview anyone outside a police building if they were suspect in a crime.

Supervisor Flach stated that he thought of it as more for emergencies.

Chief McKenna stated that it will be if someone can't make it down or they have a catastrophic event and can use it as a Command Post and if there is a failure in one of the vehicles they can go there to access the CAD or the Records Management System and it will be like a satellite office.

Supervisor Flach stated that he now guesses that it would be the Town's equipment.

Councilman Langdon stated that they had also discussed using the old Coeymans Fire House.

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Supervisor Flach stated that there is enough money in Contingency but the problem is the FIOS cable that needs to go down there and with the County and Police CAD systems they have to have it.

Chief McKenna stated that the preliminary indication is that the cost estimates from the County to run fiber-optic down there is excessive and they were talking \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00 and the second issue was when they were running fiber-optic in Clarksville, they ran into an extended delay because they were crossing over train tracks with different Federal guidelines. He added that they would be going either under or over the tracks, which is Federal jurisdiction and a six-month log-jam to get over the tracks in Clarksville.

Supervisor Flach stated that the time-frame wouldn't necessarily be an issue, but that kind of money is a bit of an issue.

Chief McKenna stated that it is an estimate and he's not sure about it, they haven't really looked very deeply into it but he is certainly willing to because he thinks the idea is a great one and he would like to look into it and it is a matter of bringing someone down there and figuring the cost per mile.

Councilman Burns asked where the mileage would have to run from to there.

Chief McKenna stated that right now it runs into their station and would pretty much be as the crow flies, down Main Street to the old firehouse.

Councilman Burns stated that he finds it surprising that there already isn't a line running there.

Chief McKenna stated that there is a Mid-Hudson fiber-optic but they're on Verizon and he doesn't know what the compatibility is and if they can connect to Mid-Hudson. He added that their phone system downstairs, because they have lines from the Sheriff's Office that are Verizon, he knows the fiber-optic that comes up from New Baltimore is Mid-Hudson Cable. He concluded by saying that he is speaking out of his area of expertise because he doesn't know about the compatibility or ownership or who can use whose fiber-optics.

Councilman Langdon interjected that with running a line, there is a railroad bridge right here and you could run it right under the bridge.

Chief McKenna stated that he doesn't know if you can go over or under it but when they first talked about it, the train tracks were an issue, the initial number was \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 and they then said it was too low and would be closer to \$50,000.00 and he believes it is approximately \$20,000.00 per mile and it is more than a mile away.

Supervisor Flach continued by going over the Budget as follows:

Page 10 – Deputy Highway Superintendent was reduced because there was an error in the raise.

Page 11 – Parks was increased by \$15,000.00 to put bathrooms in at Joralemon Park, the septic system is ready.

Page 12 – Other Culture and Recreation was increased by \$500.00 because he received a request from the Little Red Schoolhouse, also a Historical Society, requesting monetary assistance.

Supervisor Flach stated that they were the changes made from the Tentative Budget.

Councilman Dolan asked if the Sales Tax Revenue was going directly to the B Fund.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it will be distributed to the Funds broken down by percentage each quarter when it comes in instead of it all coming to B and B distributing it out as they have in the past because the Comptroller said that wasn't the way it should be done, it was showing as double revenue.

Councilman Dolan stated that it is hard to compare it this way and then asked what this year's projected sales tax is vs. last years.

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Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that total sales tax he believes they ended up with 1.686 and it was predicted at 1.692.

Supervisor Flach stated that the last quarter was a little light.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it is probably going to be 1.685 and within a couple thousand either way.

Councilman Dolan asked if next year is basically the same as this year.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it should definitely not go down and taking a little out was a safe move but he didn't foresee it going down this year but it did. He added that the last two quarters were far better than the first two so he is assuming these are the better 2 quarters.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is where it has been trending but it's their best guess.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman interjected that according to the County's website, it is supposed to go up 5-10% over the next two to three years and added from last year to this year it was down \$58,000.00.

Mr. Polyak from the audience stated that gas and fuel prices affect it.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman agreed that it does and he actually found on the County's website the amount of fuel sold in the County and the amount it dropped affected that total sales tax gain by 1%.

Mr. Polyak stated that when you go from \$4.00 to \$2.00 a gallon in fuel it makes a difference and then asked if the sales tax is set up differently for natural gas.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it actually went down too. He added that this year was identical to what it was two years ago and he does not see it going below that point.

Mr. Polyak stated that the Police and Fire vehicles will still be doing the same amount no matter what year it is or what the price is.

Councilman Langdon stated that on page 13 under Employee Benefits some of the numbers were switched to another location.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that Social Security is broken down now per account code.

Councilman Langdon asked where Health Insurance got moved to.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that Health Insurance is also broken down per line item and the number that he sees there is retirees as well as a bid drop in retirement, which was due to past Chief Darlington and they received almost a \$50,000.00 credit because he wasn't working this year, which dropped it down quite a bit.

Mr. Polyak asked if the Chief's retiring made it go up or down.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it went down and they got credited back because they were paying him as if he was working but then he retired.

Supervisor Flach stated that they need to get the figures back from the Chief about the Court Revenue and see if they want to take some Contingency and put it into the Justice Court for the Police Department because they don't want to not have Officers on the road.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman interjected that Town Clerk Millious pointed out that Coeymans Fire Company made one little change to their Budget and it went up approximately \$1,900.00 so it is \$361,000.00 and it will be in the Adopted Budget.

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Supervisor Flach stated that if they have any more changes for the Adopted Budget, they will make sure that they point them out and will go from there.

Councilman Burns asked about the Bridge Construction Fund and the fact that the bridge is all done.

Supervisor Flach stated that the bridge has been done for a long time and for 4 years they have been contacting them and they said there will be another payment due, which has never come. He added that they keep it in there for if and when it finally does come, they can pay it.

Councilman Burns asked if it is from a private company.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is the State and they have to send the Town a bill.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it collects interest every year.

Councilman Langdon asked if they charge interest while they don't bill it.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman interjected that the Town is making interest on it.

Mr. Polyak asked if they owe the State this money and they have not collected it yet.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that they have no desire to.

Supervisor Flach stated that they keep asking about it and at some point they will have to pay it. He then asked if there were any other questions.

Councilman Dolan asked with the change to the Coeymans Fire District was and what the rate is.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it ended up being a decrease change to .35 percent but he doesn't have the actual figure and added that originally they went down by 1.03 but now it is .34 in decrease.

Mr. Laszlo Polyak asked if the Town is still using Paychex for payroll.

Clerk to the Supervisor Flach stated that they are not and now they have a new system and then asked that Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman explain it.

Mr. Polyak stated that a Town Clerk went to work for the Village, and then asked why there was a Payroll Clerk when Paychex was doing it. He added that they are now saying they are not using Paychex and have a new system and then asked what it is.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that it's part of the \$16,000.00 for the second payment this year and added that they now have an Accounting Payroll System for governments only through BAS that links up all the account codes, does all the accounting and makes adjustments so everyone is coded right to their line items.

Mr. Polyak stated that he said it's available for municipalities only and then asked if it is because of the social security being transmitted.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that only a few people have access.

Mr. Polyak asked if the system detail replaces a human being or Paychex.

Clerk to the Supervisor Weidman stated that essentially it does the same thing that Paychex did for a lot less money.

Supervisor Flach interjected that they were paying a Payroll Clerk 17 hours a week.

Mr. Polyak asked how much that would be.

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Supervisor Flach stated that it was approximately \$11.00 an hour as well as paying Paychex \$15,000.00 to do it.

Mr. Polyak asked for how many years.

Supervisor Flach stated that he didn't know but it was before he came into office.

Mr. Polyak stated that the new program is \$32,000.00 and they are not using Paychex so they are saving that.

Supervisor Flach interjected that they are saving 17 hours' worth of wages a week as well and payroll now only takes a few hours.

Councilman Langdon stated that it is not an on-line system, it runs in-house and Mr. Polyak was asking about social security numbers, which is not an issue.

Mr. Polyak stated that he understands that it wouldn't be and the reason why and then asked if it generates the actual check.

Supervisor Flach stated that it is done in-house and it's working great.

Mr. Polyak stated that the program is now paid for so it is a \$32,000.00 to \$40,000.00 savings continuously for the next several years and they won't need a Payroll Clerk.

Councilman Langdon interjected that they will still have to have a person to input the information but it is a much simpler process.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any additional comments, hearing none he added that the day prior was the election and he wanted to congratulate the two Board Members coming on next year, Councilman Dolan and Councilman Elect Youmans as well as Mr. Touchette who was elected as the County Legislature. He added that the Supervisor's seat is up in air still, absentee ballot counting has to be done but he wanted to congratulate those elected so far.

Councilman Dolan stated that he wanted to convey congratulations to everyone that ran because it is not something that they do for fun or profit, it's grueling and nerve wracking and while it is good when you are elected and can serve, you still catch a lot of flak from people regardless of what you choose to do and added that to step up to the plate is good and they should be congratulated.

Supervisor Flach asked if there were any other comments, hearing none he offered a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing.

MOTION

On motion of Supervisor Flach, seconded by Councilman Langdon, the Public Hearing was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – ABSENT 1 (Masti) – SO MOVED

Time – 6:47

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED – As Read November 23, 2015


Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk