

Minutes of the Regular Monthly Workshop Meeting of the Durham Town Board held November 7, 2017 at the Town Hall commencing at 7:30 p.m.

Present: William Carr, Supervisor
Shawn Marriott, Deputy Supervisor
Nick Nahas, Councilmember
Jerry Cunningham, Councilmember
Joan Breslin, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Janet Partridge, Town Clerk

Others Present: Cindy Moore, Bookkeeper
Joe van Holsteyn, Highway Superintendent
Thomas Sutton, Police Sgt.
David Cunningham, Building Inspector
Tal Rappleyea, Town Attorney
Chris Kohrs, Court Clerk
Karen Tirpak, Town Justice
Aidan O'Connor, Greene County Legislator
25 community members

Supervisor Carr called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm followed by the pledge to the flag.

Supervisor Carr read letters from Tom Kalin and Craig Paull voicing concern over the possibility of a shooting range constructed on a property on Pratt Road.

Supervisor Carr read the letter from NYMIR relating to a visitor to the town of Durham who was injured. They are assigning this case to the Law Offices of Murphy Burns.

The thank you note from the Greene County Council on the Arts Sprouts Program was read also.

Camp Govoah recently submitted a building permit along with a site plan review relating to a structure to be put in place on the back of their property. Alex Herrmann from Delaware Engineering was also present to explain the project plan. Part one of the Short Form was read and reviewed. The board will have to fill out Part two. Discussion followed with questions on the project.

Dollar General has NYSDOT approval on the Route 145 entrance. On Thursday Building Inspector Cunningham and Code Enforcement Officer Overbaugh will do a final walk through with the engineers and Jason Preisner before issuing a Certificate of Occupancy.

The 2018 Contract with the Columbia-Greene Humane Society was presented to the board for them to review.

A motion was made by Councilmember Breslin to open the public hearing on the 2018 Preliminary Budget, seconded by Councilmember Cunningham, all in favor, motion carried. (5 Yeas, Carr, Breslin, Cunningham, Nahas, Marriott)

Supervisor Carr explained it has been a difficult year balancing the budget. The Ambulance Squad has requested a significant increase driven by a change in minimum wage which drives other changes.

Councilmember Nahas reminded the board at our last meeting it was noted the Preliminary Budget is a little less than 2% over the tax cap and he had asked for a review of the last five years reserve fund balance at the close of the year to see how much variation there is year to year. Some fund balance could be added to the budget to keep it under the tax cap. Supervisor Carr believes the fund balance is like a savings account and shouldn't be used except in an emergency. Carr and Bookkeeper Moore will sit down and figure out those numbers and have them for the next meeting. Nahas doesn't feel the board should vote on the final budget until they can review those numbers.

Councilmember Cunningham and Councilmember Nahas have set up a meeting with GSK for Monday, November 13, to discuss getting some financial support from them for our Ambulance Squad. Cunningham also hopes to have Reay Mahler join the meeting. Attorney Rappleyea reminded the board if more than two board members were at the meeting with GSK, it would violate the open meetings law.

The board agreed on having a special meeting to finalize the budget on Thursday, November 16th, at 7:30pm.

Justin Lounsbury expressed his concern with having a minimal budget increase this year with costs for emergency services significantly going up each year. He is worried next year or the year after there will be a large increase that would hurt too many tax payers. He would like the town to continue with a gradual increase.

Legislator O'Connor asked if the Ambulance Squad has provided a three year budget projection to the town. Supervisor Carr said he has not seen one but is sure they have one they can give to the board. O'Connor reminded everyone Emergency Services cost more and more each year and added to that is the fact that we are a rural environment. He also expressed his concern once again that EMS employees should be paid a

professional wage not minimum wage considering all the training they must go through. O'Connor encouraged the board to strategize as they move forward.

A community member expressed his support to look over the five year trend of costs and fund balance and then try to project what the next three years would look like and see where it stays the same and where it deviates.

Wes Moore said in 2013 the town dumped \$135,000 from surplus to the budget. This year \$105,000 has been put in the budget from surplus, general and highway. He feels if you take more out it will never be gained back. For the last 5 years the amount taken from the reserves has been increasing.

A motion was made by Councilmember Nahas to close the public hearing, seconded by Councilmember Cunningham, all in favor, motion carried. (5-Yeas-Carr, Breslin, Cunningham, Nahas, Marriott)

A motion was made by Deputy Supervisor Marriott to enter Executive Session at 8:35pm to discuss matters related to the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or relating to appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline or removal, seconded by Councilmember Breslin, all in favor, motion carried. (5-Yeas-Carr, Breslin, Cunningham, Nahas, Marriott)

A motion was made by Deputy Supervisor Marriott to return from Executive Session at 8:57pm, seconded by Councilmember Nahas, all in favor, motion carried. (5-Yeas-Carr, Breslin, Cunningham, Nahas, Marriott)

No action was taken.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cunningham to adjourn at 8:58 pm, seconded by Councilmember Nahas, all in favor, motion carried. (5 Yeas, Carr, Breslin, Cunningham, Nahas, Marriott)

Respectfully Submitted,

**Janet Partridge,
Clerk/Collector**