

October 21, 2020

DRAFT

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Durham held October 21, 2020 at the Town Hall commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Present, called in: Shawn Marriott, Supervisor
Joan Breslin, Deputy Supervisor
Linda Sutton, Council member
Scott Hulbert, Council member
Walt Bennett, Council member

Recording Secretary called in: Janet Partridge, Town Clerk

Others called in: Joe van Holsteyn, Highway Superintendent
John VanTassel, Animal Control Officer
Raey Mahler, Durham Ambulance Inc.
Chris Kohrs, Court Clerk
Maryellen Brooks
15 community members

Supervisor Marriott called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. with the Pledge to the Flag.

Highway Superintendent van Holsteyn explained the Highway 2021 tentative budget. Last year his revenue from the state was \$179,000 from CHIPS, \$47,000 from Pave NY, and \$37,000 from EWR.

Animal Control Officer VanTassel explained to the board his vehicle will need a catalytic converter replacement in order to pass inspection next year. The computer he currently is using is a lot upgrade from 2008. The program he uses has a maintenance fee of \$640 per year. A new computer would be \$3,000 and a refurbished one would be \$300-500.

Raey Mahler from Ambulance Squad talked to the board about their budget. He checked into hourly pay for EMS throughout Greene and Columbia Counties. The range is from \$19/hr to \$13/hour. Durham is currently at \$13 an hour and he would like to raise that to \$14/hour to help keep the workers he currently has. Workman's Comp is up and so is building maintenance. They discussed third party billing and how many people didn't want to go to the hospital during the pandemic. They discussed fundraising and sending out a letter. Maybe the CoPIC groups can help with that. They have 3 ambulances so they have an extra for the events they have in town. Another increase cost was the hotspots used for the phones in the ambulances.

The events that Durham Ambulance helps at are a source of income but they didn't have many this year. There were different opinions on fundraisers vs. raising taxes.

The Ambulance budget is up \$109,000 from last year. Most of it is wage increases from \$13/hr to \$14/hr. Breslin stated it is hard to cut that because we need our EMS and ambulance service here in Durham.

Sgt. Sutton discussed with the board taking the money left over in the police line at the end of 2020 be put away so if they need to replace a car they will have something there. Deputy Supervisor Breslin confirmed with Sutton that they don't need a new car at this point but are looking to have money to put towards a car if needed.

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Marriott has two phone system quotes he emailed to the Board. He would like for the board look them over. They are an internet based system for businesses. He will have more details on Monday.

Questions over why there is \$1,000 budgeted in the dental appropriations line when the town doesn't pay for anyone's dental on the general side. Town Clerk Partridge stated there was \$1,700 paid out of that line last year. For years there wasn't a line in the budget there until last year.

The tax cap that NYS wants the town to stay under is 2.2% or an increase of \$49,429.

The AUD line item is a big increase. Marriott stated the accountant fees are too much and the town needs to shop for a new accountant.

The board discussed the rotation of purchasing a new truck. Marriott said maintenance on older trucks is expensive so it evens out in the end. They further discussed the pros and cons of newer vehicles. Van Holsteyn explained his two haul trucks are 2004 models. They try to purchase them in pairs and then the parts are interchangeable.

The Board agreed to drop the pay increase from 3% down to 2% across the board.

They discussed the anticipated revenue for the general budget. The Board raised anticipated revenue by \$15,000.

Sutton suggested taking out \$1,000 for a new computer for the police.

Hulbert motioned to adjourn at 9:46 p.m. seconded by Bennett.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Partridge,
Clerk/Collector