

Budget Workshop
October 22, 2014

The Budget Workshop of the Town of Cambridge, was duly called and held the 22nd day of October at 7:30 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

Supervisor Catherine Fedler

Councilman Douglas Ford

Councilman Gerald Skiff

Councilman Robin McMurray

Councilwoman Susan Herrington

Others present: Heather Greenawalt Town Clerk, Margaret Shaw Clerk to the Supervisor, Alan Davis Highway Superintendent

Supervisor Fedler called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and immediately led in the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Councilman McMurray and Skiff requested that they go through the budget line by line. When they reached the Town Clerk Deputy A1410.13 they thought that maybe some of the money that they removed from the prior Budget Worksop should be changed. Councilman Skiff said that he is concerned if Deputy Melissa Stannard resigns where will the money come from to train a new deputy. It was decided that \$500 would be added back into the Deputy Town Clerk A1410.13, this would make the amount \$2152.

There was discussion about the Court System for the Town of Cambridge and how the revenues for the court have gone down compared to the previous years.

It was discussed by the Town Board that the revenues are not there like they used to be. Councilman Ford mentioned that if the highway department was not there the first snow storm everyone would notice. If some of the other department were not there it would not be as noticeable.

When they came to the budget line DA962 Equipment Reserve Councilman McMurray said that they had some tough choices to make and he was in favor of taking the \$12,000 from this line. Supervisor Fedler said they either need to find the money or raise the tax cap. She explained if they do take the money from the Highway reserve, there is no money this year how will they be able to build this line back up next year. Councilman McMurray said that it is forecasted to be a brand new truck for the next purchase and most likely it won't.

He is saying that if you are not buying a brand new truck then you can take half of that money off right there, this should bring it from \$200,000 to \$100,000 needed for a used truck. The replacement plan is just a blueprint don't have to necessary purchase when it says that you do. Supervisor Fedler took quick figures and went down and put 2% raise in for anyone that did not get one this year. She also put in the Social Security, retirement and medical insurance numbers that they would have been comfortable with. Doing this made an increase of \$22,428 that the budget will increase next year. If the figure \$624,000 remains the same that will be a 4%

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increase next year. The Supervisor Fedler said that she is just trying to be a devil's advocate and look down the road to the future . Supervisor Fedler says this number is only if the unexpended balances are similar to the amounts that we have this year. Councilman McMurray says that there is money in the accounts because they are only figuring on one-third. Supervisor Fedler asked what happens when there is a disaster. Margaret Shaw the Clerk to the Supervisor explained again that she is only going by what Audit & Control tell her (they say that this is the recommended amount if we want to keep afloat). She suggested that they call Audit & Control if they have any questions.

Councilman Ford said that his biggest concern is that if they keep cutting closer and closer they are going to end up like some towns that have to borrow money. Then they have to pay the interest on the loan.

Councilman McMurray said that he is not comfortable putting a 6% increase in front of the public. Councilman Ford asked if the Board decided to go with the 6%, do the town portion of the taxes actually go up the 6%. Supervisor Fedler said no, 30% of the land tax bill is the town's portion. So if your bill was \$1000 and you take 6% of that, then it would be approximately \$18.00.

Supervisor Fedler mentioned that in the past \$50,000 was budgeted for the Equipment Reserve Fund and it was cut in the past to \$35,000. If it is cut by \$12,000 again this year when will it be increased? Once again she mentioned that next year one thing for example the raises would increase the budget by 4%. To add one more thing if the Town loses the contract for County Rt. 60 then that would be a really big loss of revenue.

Resolution #61

Councilman McMurray motioned, Seconded by Councilman Skiff to take \$12,000 from the Equipment Reserve DA962 to help balance the budget.

Roll Call Vote:

Supervisor Fedler – Noe

Councilman Ford – Noe

Councilman McMurray – Aye

Councilman Skiff – Aye

Councilwoman Herrington – Aye

Vote: Ayes – 3 Noes – 2

Supervisor Fedler mentioned to the Town Board if this is what they are going to do then they need to take a good look at the budget and decide where the money will come from next year. The 6% increase has just been kicked down the road to next year and they still have another \$1300 to take out of the budget to make it under the 2 % cap. Councilman McMurray said to take it from the Highway DA to DB.

Margaret Shaw Clerk to the Supervisor mentioned that the budget should be going up a little each year and if it had in the past they would not be in this situation.

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Supervisor Fedler mentioned that she had talked with the highwaymen about the budget and what they thought of the budget. The highwaymen were under the impression that if you received a raise last year, that you did not get a raise this year. They also said that you can't cut money from the repair account just because the pay loader is new; there is other machinery that may need repairs. They did not compensate for the increase in the salt. Working in different towns came up just because they are sitting on main street working is not fair, because when they are out here working in the town they are on a back road and no one sees them. They also mentioned the little things that they do that are not in their job description. They mentioned that the money for county rt. 60 should have been put into a highway reserve, in case the road was lost.

Councilman Skiff asked Supervisor Fedler what she was suggesting that they do to fix the budget. She said the when she found out that on a \$1000 tax bill after you take 30% of that and then the 6% increase would be 18.00. She said then the 6% increase did not sound so bad.

Councilman McMurray asked what they wanted to do then, do they want to override the cap. Supervisor Fedler says in her opinion the only logical way to keep the town safe, be fiscally responsible and move forward is to override the cap.

Supervisor Fedler mentioned that if the Town Board has to go over the tax cap they would have to do a tax cap override. This means that if a tax cap override is needed then a town law must be passed. The Supervisor said that she has contacted the Town Attorney and she can have a Local Law for the tax cap override to her by Friday the 24th of October. This will be emailed to the Town Board so that everyone has a chance to review the law. If the Local Law is needed will have to be a public hearing and then the paperwork must be submitted to the state on line during the meeting. Then the Town Board must have another Public Hearing for the 2015 budget. She has contacted the Comptroller Office and this is the order that it must be done in and this will be recorded in the minutes by the time that the public hearings occur. It was decided to set a tentative date for November 5th for the Local Law of the Tax Cap Override Public Hearing and the Public Hearing for the 2015 budget. The public hearing that is set for the 29th of October will still be held to receive input from the public.

The State said when Supervisor Fedler spoke with them that at some point the town would have to fix this situation and it will take a couple of years to get this straighten out. Councilman Skiff asked if it would be a couple of years of tax cap overrides. Supervisor Fedler said yes it maybe, she is not sure.

The Town Board was trying to decide if they wanted to stay at the 6% with the equipment reserve at \$35,000 or to go with the \$12,000 taken out of the equipment reserve and only have a 4% and stay at the cap. Supervisor Fedler wanted to know if they wanted to say yes for a possible override. Councilman Skiff said yes that he wanted to go for the 6% the possible override of the tax cap.

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Supervisor Fedler said that they should restore the equipment reserve to the original amount and bring this budget to the public and see what they suggest. She thought that personally as a tax payer she would want to go with the worst case and that would be the 6%.

Resolution#62

Councilman Skiff motioned, Seconded by Councilman Ford to restore the equipment reserve line DA962 to the original amount \$35,000 which was originally budgeted.

Councilman Skiff – Aye

Councilman Ford – Aye

Supervisor Fedler – Aye

Councilman McMurray – Noe

Councilwoman Herrington – Noe

Vote: Ayes – 3 Noes – 2

There being no further business before the Town Board, the meeting was moved and carried for adjournment at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk/Town of Cambridge

<http://www.townofcambridgeny.org>