

**VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2015**

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer; Board Members: Majewski, Fitzgerald, Messina and Agneshwar

Also Attending: Town Attorney David Berger, Comptroller Laura McKane, Police Chief John Butler, Fire Chief David Harrington, Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki and 5 members of the general public.

Supervisor Schaffer **convened the Work Session at 5:02 PM.**

**Review of the 2016 Preliminary Budget**

Comptroller Laura McKane previewed a draft of the presentation that she plans to give at the Public Hearing on the 2016 Preliminary Budget scheduled for 6:00 PM on Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. The Preliminary Budget shows a spending increase from 2015 of 1% and a tax levy increase of 1.1%. The tax levy is above the tax cap primarily due to an increase in payments of *in lieu of tax agreements* (PILOT) which resulted in a lower tax levy limit for 2016 than in 2015. The Special Districts budgets will also be discussed at the Public Hearing, but there are no proposed changes in any of the fees.

Comptroller McKane noted that as per the Supervisor’s announcement last week (after the filing of the preliminary budget), the Town will be receiving an additional \$290,000 in revenue from two state sources: \$275,000 from a State and Municipal Grant (SAM) and \$15,000 from a member item through Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo. These funds must be appropriated for specific purchases.

At the request of Supervisor Schaffer, Comptroller McKane prepared a list of potential items that can be purchased with these funds. The proposed allocation of the SAM grant and member item funds is as follows:

**Allocation of SAM Grant**

	<b>Funding Total</b>
<b>Police Cars</b>	\$ 43,000
<b>Parks Improvements</b>	\$ 55,000
<b>Highway Garage Equipment</b>	\$ 2,350
<b>Highway Truck</b>	\$ 38,000
<b>Highway Equipment</b>	\$ 19,000
<b>Highway Paving Projects</b>	\$ 55,000
<b>Library Books</b>	\$ 25,000
<b>Fire Equipment</b>	
Homaltro Cutter	\$ 7,250
Homaltro Spreader	\$ 6,200
Alpine Software (Phases 1, 2 & 3)	\$ 20,000
Lifepak 500 AED (2)	\$ 1,500
Water Rescue Dry Suits	\$ 2,300
Rapid Responder PFD	\$ 400
	<hr/> \$ 275,000

**Allocation of Member Item**

<b>Playground Equipment</b>	\$ 15,000
	<hr/> \$ 290,000

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Since most of these items have already been budgeted for 2016, this new state revenue would replace local funding which would in affect reduce the amount of the tax levy for 2016. Comptroller McKane stated that, where possible, she applied the state funds for the purchase of one-time items rather than reoccurring expenses so as to minimize the negative impact on future budgets and tax levy limits.

If these funds are allocated as shown above, the final 2016 Town Budget will have no increase in the tax levy from last year. The Board still has some time to decide on how to allocate these funds before it adopts a final Town Budget. However, an immediate decision has to be made concerning the allocation of these funds into the 2016 Fire District Budget because that budget has to be adopted on or before November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked what impact these funds would have on the Fire District tax levy. Comptroller McKane replied that applying these funds in the 2016 operating budget would lower the tax levy for that budget but may result in a higher increase in the tax levy in future years.

Fire Chief Harrington also expressed concern about the potential negative impact on next year's tax levy if we substitute one-time funds to pay for items already approved to be funded through local tax dollars. He concluded that this is a reasonable compromise in that the use of the state money will allow for the immediate purchase of some needed items that otherwise may not get funded.

By consensus, the Board authorized Comptroller McKane to adjust the 2016 Fire District Budget to reflect the proposed increase in revenue from the SAM grant and the corresponding reduction in the tax levy. The 2016 Fire District Budget, as amended, will be presented for Board approval at the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **6:00 PM - Harold of Victory Marathon**

Mathew Gawors and Jenna Jenks from Confluence Running of Binghamton introduced themselves as the organizers of the Harold of Victory Marathon, scheduled for May 29, 2016. They are here to seek support for the event because part of the race will be staged on roads in the Town of Vestal. The main purpose of staging this event is to promote this area by bringing in tourism. They anticipate between 1 to 2 thousand participants in the marathon. The hope is to make this marathon into a reoccurring event that eventually becomes a key attraction of this community.

Police Chief Butler stated that he has worked with these individuals to make some route changes that he now considers to be acceptable for the safe staging of this event. If the proposed route changes and the compensation for the additional police manpower are agreed to, he sees no problem with allowing a portion of this marathon to be staged in Vestal.

Town Attorney Berger questioned the relationship of the local organizers to US Track & Field, the national sponsor of the event, particularly concerning the insurance coverage. We need to have the Town of Vestal named as an additionally insured party with satisfactory liability coverage.

The consensus of the Board was that if the organizers agreed to the conditions as presented by the Police Chief and the Town Attorney, the authorization to stage part of the marathon in Vestal would be granted.

Town Attorney Berger offered the following resolution for the Board's consideration at the next Regular Meeting:

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*Resolution to approve the request from Confluence Running/USA Track & Field, Inc. to stage the 'Herald of Victory' Marathon partially within the Town of Vestal as set forth in the course map provided and revised on 10/21/15 and further provided that 1) Conference Running will pay for, in advance, all of the costs of police protection, including salaries and overtime for the Vestal Police Department, 2) Satisfactory liability coverage is provided naming the Town of Vestal as an additional insured.*

### **COMMITTEES**

**7.1 PUBLIC WORKS (MAJEWSKI/Fitzgerald)**-no topics were addressed by this Committee

**7.2 FINANCE (AGNESHWAR/Messina)**

1. Warrants: 2015- 44, 2015-44E

**OK** – This item will be placed as a 'Receive and File' on the Agenda for the next Regular Meeting.

2. Request from Deputy Comptroller Pam Fitzgerald (per memo and attachment dated 10/27/15) to close the completed Capital Project effective November 2, 2015 and direct the transfer of the unexpended fund balance to General Fund Cash. In addition, request approval of the Budget Transfers necessary to transfer unexpended funds into the Interfund Expense line.

**OK**-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

**7.3 PERSONNEL (FITZGERALD/Majewski)**

1. Request from Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead to authorize Park Superintendent Jim Bukowski to hire Harold Farr as a seasonal employee in the Parks Department at the house rate of \$30 per hour effective 11/5/2015. The funds to cover this hiring (not to exceed \$5000) will be transferred from a capital project revenue line A2831-2831 to budget line A7140-1034.

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked if the hourly wage was the going rate for this type of work. Supervisor Schaffer and Human Resource Officer Olmstead responded that this rate of pay is higher because this person is an experienced bricklayer. He is being brought in to do stonework on several parks projects and is also training park employees how to do this type of work.

**OK**-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

**7.4 PLANNING & ZONING(MESSINA/Fitzgerald)**-no topics were addressed by this Committee

**7.5 PUBLIC SAFETY (MAJEWSKI/Agneshwar)** -no topics were addressed by this Committee

**7.6 ADMINISTRATION (MESSINA/Agneshwar)** -no topics were addressed by this Committee

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Highway Foreman Ron Birdsall asked the Board to consider authorizing the purchase of an *Asphalt Hot Box Reclaimer* for the Highway Department. This piece of equipment would allow patch to be kept warm for pothole repairs during cold weather. The machine would pay for itself in improved road maintenance productivity. The funds for this purchase are available from the sale of surplus equipment.

No one on the Board expressed opposition to this request. Supervisor Schaffer stated that this item

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will be placed on the agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Councilwomen Agneshwar and Messina informed the Board that they have met with the Vestal Library Board and representatives from County Government to discuss the steps that need to be taken to convert the Vestal Library to a School District Public Library. The goal is to go to referendum on the proposal to create the new library district in the spring of 2016. There are many complex issues that need to be worked out between the Town and this newly created entity, including an agreement concerning the rental and maintenance of the building.

After a brief discussion of the issues surrounding this proposal, it was decided that the Board should first review the list of questions that arose from the Library Board meeting and then determine what course of action to take. Councilwoman Messina stated that she would send the questions to the Board via e-mail.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. Wash Bay at the Highway Department** (in response to the EPA field audit)

The proposal is still under review and the Board is waiting for additional information from the Town Engineer about how other municipalities are handling this situation and about a revised cost estimate.

**Update 11/2/15:** There is no change to the status of this item.

**2. Community Use of Municipal Facility Policy**

Supervisor Schaffer noted in addition to the issues at the Library location, the Board will also need to look at outside user issues at some of the other Town Facilities. He expects the Board to resume the discussion of this topic after the completion of the work on the 2016 budget.

**3. Gas Card System for the Purchase of Fuel for Town Vehicles**

As per the discussion with the representatives from the Mirabito Fuel Group, the Town will prepare the bid specifications for a contract to purchase fuel from an outside vendor through the use of a gas card system. **Update 11/2/15:** Supervisor Schaffer will check with the Comptroller on the progress.

**4. Sale of Town Property at 310 Rayelene Drive**

Request was made by James Warneck to purchase this parcel of Town owned property for \$500.00. The Town Attorney sent letters to all owners of the abutting properties to give them an opportunity to bid on this parcel. **Update on 11/2/15:** No other property owners have responded to date.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion of Councilwoman Messina, seconded by Councilwoman Agneshwar, the following was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5           Majewski, Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Messina, Schaffer  
Nays 0

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session to conduct interviews with applicants for the Town Engineer position. The time was 7:02 PM.

On a motion of Councilwoman Messina, seconded by Councilwoman Agneshwar, the following was

**ADOPTED** Ayes 5           Majewski, Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Messina, Schaffer  
Nays 0

Resolved the Board leave the Executive Session and **adjourn the meeting. The time was 7:40 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk