

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA  
**MINUTES – BUDGET MEETING – October 8 2020**  
4:00 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present: Kenneth Mosley - Supervisor  
Richard Colesante, John Metzger, Thomas Moran, Frank Tomaino – Council Members  
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk  
Wayne Woolridge – Highway Superintendent  
Nancy Butler- Bookkeeper

Others Present: Lyle Robbins and Avery Denny – North Shore Ambulance  
Michael Davis – Asst. Chief Cleveland Vol Fire Department and Vienna Town Councilman

**CALL TO ORDER:**

At 4:10 pm Mr. Mosley called the town board meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance. As per recommended procedures during COVID-19 all persons in attendance were seated 6ft apart.

**NORTH SHORE AMBULANCE:**

Mr. Robbins and Mr. Denny were invited to tonight's meeting to discuss the 2021 budget for North Shore Ambulance as submitted. The submitted budget has a 3% increase from \$269,189 to \$277,264.67 which is \$8,075.67 increase from 2020. When discussing the budget Mr. Denny explained that some of the budget lines show a major increase, this is a result of new computer software and how items are categorized. Medicare has mandated the new bookkeeping policy, if North Shore did not update their system to meet their requirements, Medicare would hold back 10% of payments. Another unfunded mandate.

Other items that are an issue for the budget:

- New sick leave law
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is now at a premium cost and they are required to have a 90 day supply.
- New COVID training
- Call volume has dropped which makes income lower. People are afraid to go to the hospital, once the ambulance came they would not want to be transported.

Mr. Colesante asked about the \$120,000 increase in the payroll account, the increase is due to the new computer system and chart of accounts that Medicare requires. The actual increase is \$50,000 most of that is due to the new sick leave law.

Mr. Moran asked when the budget is submitted that has a net loss of \$14,000, how can you make up the difference? Mr. Robbins responded that eventually they will not be able to. For the coming year they will put off expenses, for example, they will be holding off purchasing an ambulance. On the positive side, North Shore Ambulance does not have any debt, they have been able to purchase equipment with cash, hopefully that will be able to continue.

At 4:30 pm the board thanked Mr. Robbins and Mr. Denny for attending the meeting to help with budget questions.

**CLEVELAND VFD:**

At 4:30 pm Mr. Michael Davis from the Cleveland Vol Fire Department, was in to speak on the budget that was submitted on behalf of the Cleveland VFD. For the 2021 budget Cleveland VFD is looking for a 2% increase in funding, which is a \$1,880. increase. This increase is primarily for new PPE costs that have significantly increased, and the cost to replace portable radios. Mr. Davis understands that in the past both protection districts received the same funding, Mr. Davis is unsure what Constantia VFD will be asking for, he is here to speak on the budget for Cleveland VFD. In his opinion both budgets do not need to be the same, each department should submit a budget for what they need and not consider what the other VFD is asking for. After discussion Mr. Davis left the meeting at 4:45 pm.

**HIGHWAY:**

Mr. Woolridge was in to speak on his proposed budget for the highway fund. When asked about raise increases, Mr. Woolridge responded that he is not putting in for increases, the last 3 years they received 1%, 3% and 3% in 2020, all these increases are more than what the County approved. Mr. Moran told Mr. Woolridge at the last meeting it was discussed that if health insurance increased, then the employees would get what the increase in the health insurance was, so the employee would not be losing money. Of course health insurance is a concern, but the payroll in the highway department is in line with the County and surrounding towns. For comparison the unions' last three year raises were 1.5%, 1.5% and then 3%. This discussion will be put on hold as the State has not released what the health insurance increase will be for 2021.

Discussion turned to the idea of offering medical insurance for longtime employees once they retire. This program is still in the planning stage and not even sure if it is something the Town can afford. Ms. Butler has not had the time to put together a cost analysis. This is not something that will be in the 2021 Budget, members of the town board would like to dedicate time at the Supervisor's meetings to discuss this option.

Board members went thru highway budget and what changes were made, without the increase to DB9010.8 State Retirement, to \$46,000 the highway budget has a 2.8% increase. This increase is due to DB9950.9 Transfer to Capital Reserve \$34,113 towards the purchase of a new cab and chassis which will cost approximately \$100,000. As the town has already invested in stainless steel boxes for the plow trucks only the cap and chassis will be needed. C-11 is the truck Mr. Woolridge has on the list to replace, it has the new emissions, they just don't last as long.

Mr. Woolridge told the board that the County is thinking about selling their sewer jet, this a truck that the highway men use to clean out culverts, it might be a smart purchase for the Town.

When reviewing the highway budget, Mr. Woolridge did not put any funds in from Pave NY or Winter Recovery. These programs are not guaranteed so best not to include them in the budget.

Discussion turned to the sprinkler system at the highway garage, this is something that should be looked into. The Town employees will do the install, but the Town will need to pay for the engineering of the system. Mr. Mosley was asked to contact the Town's insurance company to see if installing a sprinkler system will save on the annual premium.

**LIBRARY:**

At a previous meeting the board members approved of razing the library, an asbestos study will need to be done at a cost of \$1,500 to \$3,000. Mr. Mosley thinks it would be worth it to accept sealed bids, overall the building is in good shape. Mr. Mosley has seen a disclaimer on Auctions International that the Town can use when putting the building up for bid. The board members do not want to use the auction service, would like to keep it local if possible.

**SCRIBA PARK:**

Mr. Moran told Mr. Tomaino that he has heard from Ms. MacDowell - Tannery Rd, she is very pleased with all the work that was done at the park.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next budget meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm.

**ADJOURN:**

At 6:00 pm the meeting adjourned.