

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA
MINUTES –BUDGET MEETING – October 17, 2024
6:00 am Constantia Town Hall

Present: Frank Tomaino - Supervisor
Ronald Chapman, Michael Donegan, Thomas Moran, Daniel Poné– Council Members
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk
Wayne Woolridge – Highway Superintendent
Nancy Butler – Bookkeeper
Erin Zehr – Chair, Park and Recreation Commission

CALL TO ORDER:

At 6:00 pm Mr. Tomaino called the third budget meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance.

HIGHWAY:

Mr. Woolridge came in to speak to the board about the 2025 proposed budget, there are a few changes that need to be made to the budget as presented.

Revenues:

DBB3501 CHIPS this needs to be increased to \$300,777, this is because chips revenue increased by \$118,285.

Changing revenues means an increase to chips appropriations:

DB5112.2 Improvements CO from \$282,492 to \$400,777 and increase of \$118,285

DB9950.9 Transfer to Capital Reserve from \$153,096 to \$237,096 increase of \$84,000

Mr. Woolridge would like to discuss the 5% increase to the highway payroll discussed at the meeting that he could not attend. The highway budget does not have the extra money to support this increase. The last few years when the board increased payroll Mr. Woolridge always found room in the budget to cover the increase, usually at the expense of paving. Mr. Woolridge told the board that the employees are paid within lines of other communities, Oswego County pays \$25.00, Hastings is \$25.67 and West Monroe is \$30.00, these Towns all have unions, so they must pay dues. By giving the employees 5% increase they will be on the upper end of the pay scale. Mr. Woolridge would advocate for a 3% increase, that is what they got last year. Mr. Woolridge agrees they work hard, but someone should be thinking of the taxpayers of the Town. The discussion got heated with Mr. Chapman stating that he was not willing to discuss the raises again, they had already been decided upon. Mr. Donegan asked where the money would come from to offset the increase, Mrs. Butler replied the unreserved fund balance. The board wanted to move forward with the 5% raise, Mr. Woolridge wanted it noted that he disagrees with the process, he advocates for as much as he can.

Discussion turned to the wood processor that was authorized at the last meeting, Mr. Woolridge asked Mrs. Butler to hold the check until discussion at tonight's meeting. The cost of the wood processor could offset the increases, after discussion, Mr. Tomaino stated that he was not in favor of the processor either, but the board already signed the voucher. All board members agreed to send the check.

PARK AND RECREATION:

Mrs. Zehr, Park and Recreation Commission Chair wanted to come in to talk about the 2025 budget and the over budget items from 2024. And to answer questions board members might have about the program.

Mr. Donegan asked how it is determined how many counselors are needed for the program to run. Mrs. Zehr answered that it is a ratio of 12:1, if the ratio is kept the program can run. This year as well as in the past there were about 100-150 kids attending daily. The difference is 250 kids signed up so additional counselors were hired.

The discussion turned to out of town children that raised the numbers, the Town only charges \$50 per child. This is a concern because that does not come close to how much the program costs per child. Mr. Moran is concerned that our program is supporting out of town residents. After discussion it was decided that no out of town children can attend the program, with the exception of West Monroe because they signed an agreement with the Town to send their children to our program.

Mr. Tomaino did state that the amount of increase in A7110.1 Parks PS will be for five less counselors in 2025. With that in mind, and the fact that the minimum wage is increasing it was decided to keep the Park PS the same \$85,000. Mrs. Zehr also questioned paying minimum wage for some of the counselors, the lifeguards yes, but the arts and craft counselors are young kids, most this is their first job. As a municipality the Town does not have to follow minimum wage standards, no discussion was made on this topic.

GENERAL FUND:

As Ms. Butler was not at the last meeting, there were a few questions at to what was done on the budget.

A140.4 Engineering CE - This was originally for sidewalks and bridges, Ms. Butler took where she could for new town hall project.

A5010.4 Highway & St. Admin CE – This is for highway superintendent's classes, with a possible new highway superintendent Ms. Butler thought they might need to go to school.

A3005 Mortgage Tax – this was decreased because Ms. Butler saw this trending downward, worth it to be conservative.

A2610 Fines & Forfeited Bail – increased as last few years more was taken in; this is concerning because of the new Traffic Diversion program the County instituted. This will be decreased back to \$5,000.

Ms. Butler did tell the board that OCWA sent in their final estimate for the 2025 External Customer Charge Estimate, the first one received was a total of \$12,513.71. This updated one has an increase of 118%, this will have a significant change to the budget.

The new numbers are:

North Shore Water District:	\$17,937.74
Bernhards Bay Water District:	<u>\$ 7,770.35</u>
Total	\$25,708.09

The board is ready to move to the Preliminary Town Budget for 2025, Ms. Butler will take any monies needed to offset the budget from the new town hall line to stay under the tax cap.

The next meeting to review all the changes will be October 23, 2024 @ 6pm.

ADJOURN:

At 7:23 pm the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Clare Haynes
Town Clerk