

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA
MINUTES –BUDGET MEETING – October 9, 2025
6:00 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present: Frank Tomaino - Supervisor
Ronald Chapman, Michael Donegan, Thomas Moran, Daniel Poné – Council Members
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk
E. John Whitney – Deputy Highway Superintendent
Nancy Butler - Bookkeeper
Erin Zehr – 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.

2026 HIGHWAY BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Mr. Whitney was here to present his first budget for the highway department. Mr. Whitney has spoken to Mrs. Butler and increased all the highway personal services lines by 7% and two of the contractual lines by 5% to help with inflation. The 7% increase on the personal service lines are for all hourly highway employees, heavy equipment operators from \$28.15 to \$30.05 an hour, medium equipment operators from \$25.20 to \$26.50 and seasonal help from \$20.00 to \$23.00.

There are currently two trucks sitting at Viking Cives Inc. waiting for the snowplow equipment to be installed. The 2023 truck has been paid in full; the expected delivery date is July 2026. The 2024 truck has not been paid for, payment due in 2026. For next dump truck Mr. Whitney would like to purchase the truck and equipment separately, the Town will install all equipment so there will be no waiting time.

Another CHIPs request will be sent for re-imbursement in November; balance will be rolled over to 2026.

DB9060.8 Medical Insurance has not yet been increased this year as there is one less worker to be covered. Mrs. Butler will check this number again to make any changes necessary.

DB5112.2 Improvement CO – CHIPs account. After discussion it was decided to reduce this to \$182,492, the amount of revenue the Town expects to receive. Mr. Chapman requested Mrs. Butler to create another line with the \$100,000 additional road improvement funds from the taxpayers.

DB9950.9 Transfer to Capital Reserve, Mrs. Butler put \$75,000 into this line, as there was extra money in the unreserved fund balance to be able to do this. Mr. Donegan asked what piece of equipment will need to be replaced next, the loader is the next most used piece of equipment. Mr. Donegan encouraged Mr. Whitney to consider leasing, with the extended warranty, to cover any issues that arise. Mr. Whitney agrees leasing might work for the benefit of the Town.

A5010.1 Highway & St. Admin PS was increased from \$61,250. To \$80,000, Mr. Whitney indicated he will be a working highway superintendent working overtime as he always has done, this salary will bring him closer to his current pay.

Mr. Donegan would like to discuss the pay increases, with the proposed increase for the highway employees this year of 7% and last year 5%, a 12% increase for the last two years is difficult to accept. Mr. Donegan agrees they do a good job, but the board also must be concerned about where this will end. Mr. Whitney believes \$30 an hour for heavy equipment operators is more in line with what other Towns are paying, we are also the last Town that does not have a union. Mr. Whitney does not intend to hire another person when he gets elected to the Highway Superintendent position. When Mr. Moery decides to retire, they will have to hire at that time. Another concern Mr. Donegan has is with - A5010.1 Highway & St. Admin PS was increased from \$61,250. To \$80,000 a 30% increase. Mr. Whitney indicated he will be a working highway superintendent working overtime as he always has done, this salary will bring him closer to his current pay. After discussion, Mr. Tomaino asked each board member where they stood for both the highway employees' increase and the highway superintendent increase. Mr. Chapman, Mr. Poné and Mr. Moran were all in agreement with the noted increases, Mr. Donegan is not in favor.

PARK AND RECREATION:

Mrs. Zehr, Chair of the Park and Recreation Commission, was in tonight to touch base with the board on the letter the Town received from West Monroe on the requested increase for the summer program that West Monroe children attend. West Monroe agreed two years ago to reimburse the Town \$15,000, as costs have increased and there has been no requested increase in two years, the board originally asked West Monroe to contribute an additional \$2,500. West Monroe responded they are keeping their budget requests at 2% consistent with the state tax cap, they are offering an additional \$300. Mr. Tomaino is not happy with the \$300 offered, he believes the program is more than just offsetting the cost of the counselors. Mrs. Zehr spoke to the Commission; they all agree that pushing for additional funds is not worth the possibility of West Monroe backing out. After discussion, Mr. Tomaino asked each of the council members where they stand; Mr. Chapman, Mr. Moran, Mr. Poné and Mr. Donegan agreed to accept the additional \$300. Mr. Tomaino is not in agreement.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

A3120.4 Court Security CE – As Mr. Gibbs does not receive a paycheck he gets reimbursed from this account. After discussion the board increased the hourly rate by 5% \$23.18 to \$24.40.

Mr. Tomaino had Mrs. Butler decrease - A1620.2 Building EQ (Cap Improvement) to \$900,000. This is for the new town hall; by lowering this amount the Town will not have to go over the tax cap. Mr. Tomaino does not want to put too much stress on the taxpayers when there is not even a bid estimate yet. All agreed.

Mrs. Butler will make the adjustments for the new Onondaga County Water Authority estimate received today, this will be for both the water districts.

The board requested Mrs. Butler make the changes from all the meetings and switch to preliminary budget.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, October 16th at 6pm is the next meeting scheduled.

ADJOURN:

At 7:32 pm the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Clare Haynes
Town Clerk