

NOVEMBER 18, 2011 SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Norman Teed Supervisor
 Carl Beechler Councilman
 Doris Day Councilwoman
 John Dole Councilman
 Dennis King Councilman
 Terry Featherly Highway Superintendent
 Linda Nieskes Town Clerk

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jeffrey Graff Town Attorney
 Paul Wagner Town Auditor
 Barbara Middlebrook Town Bookkeeper

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE: See listing in book.

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Teed called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Supervisor Teed led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING 2012 BUDGET: Supervisor Teed called the Public Hearing on the 2012 Town of Phelps Budget to order at 7:03 PM. He asked the Town Clerk to read the Public Notice that appeared in the Finger Lakes Times, the Town's official newspaper. He asked if anyone wished to address the Board in favor of or against the 2012 Budget.

RICH MCNEAR, 2040 RT 488, CLIFTON SPRINGS: Mr. McNear said he strongly urged the Board to vote against this budget. He said you need some tightening on the income side and on the expense side you need more realism and there are serious cuts that need to be made. He said in today's economy and in the political situation everyone is cutting salaries, jobs and benefits. He said we were faced with a 60% tax increase last year and that should be turned back. He said we should be looking at a tax decrease. He said there needs to be more transparency in the budget process and it needs to be on line and available to the public. He repeated he urged the Board to vote against this budget.

KARA SIMMONS, 2258 TOLL RD., PHELPS: Mrs. Simmons said she urged the Board to make some of the cuts in this budget that she e-mailed earlier in the week. She said there is room for cuts in there. She said you can make changes to this budget and still vote on it today. She stated that there is a line in there that should be in the DB line that has signage and striping on it. She said she does not know why that is in there. Both Supervisor Teed and Superintendent Featherly told Ms. Simmons that it has to be there because it relates to Traffic Control. It is the law that it has to be in that fund. She stated the \$150,000 that was put in that A line for the Highway Building needs to be taken out because tripling the Village tax in

one year is ridiculous. Supervisor Teed said for a number of years the Village has had a break because of this. Mrs. Simmons said we can minimize that.

JOHN OAKS, 2094 CO. RD. 6, PHELPS: Mr. Oaks said he thought the wages are way out of line. He stated that the Council gets benefits. He was told they do not get any benefits. He said if the Council was on the ball they would have found this mistake. Supervisor Teed said the way this came about was because in 2006 we had a deficit in the general fund. He said according to our Town Auditor at the time, we were told to take the sales tax and put it into the A Fund also because we had a \$118,000 deficit. He said that is the way we set it up on his recommendation. He said it came to our attention this year that it was not correct and we are addressing it now. Mr. Oaks asked who the Auditor was. Supervisor Teed told him it was John Canale, who is now deceased. Supervisor Teed said our present auditor is here tonight. Mr. Paul Wagner said to go back to when this change was made, part of the money was put into the general fund townwide. He said Mr. Canale recommended doing that and he has since passed. Mr. Oaks said he understands that everyone gets a 3, 4, 5% increase. Supervisor Teed said no it is 2%.

KARA SIMMONS, 2258 TOLL RD., PHELPS: Mrs. Simmons said when she asked about the budget before it was even out, she asked what the salary increases and the budget were. She said she was told 2%, we held the line and it is a tight budget. She said the raises were all over the place and not at 2%. She said she knew they had been adjusted since then to 2%, all except the Town Justices. Bookkeeper Middlebrook said she would look into that.

DAVE SHARMAN, 40 PACKWOOD RD., GENEVA: Mr. Sharman said he lives and runs a business on Packwood Road. He said he is opposed to the budget. He stated he was saying that without a lot of specifics because he was just found out about it yesterday. Again he said he does not know a lot of the specifics but he does not understand how you can go from here to here in a year, it makes no sense. He said it is not fair to the residents of the Town and businesses that are trying to build. He stated you are "biting the hand that feeds you". He said he respects what you do and it is a lot of hard work but it does not compute. Supervisor Teed asked Mr. Sharman if he had seen the budget. He said he had grazed over it. He said you are trying to make up a deficit of under-taxing. Supervisor Teed said we are definitely not doing that. He said we found out that we cannot take part of the sales tax and put it into the A Line, which is what we were advised to do years ago to repay the A Fund for a \$118,000 deficit. He said the budget is basically the same; but we had to move things. Mr. Sharman said it is not a prudent budget.

TERRY FEATHERLY, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT: Mr. Featherly said he would like to make a comment. He said he knows we need to build the Highway Department in the very near future, maybe within 5 years or so; but taking \$311,000 out of my budget and moving it to the General Fund is not the way to do it. He said he would much rather we took our time and planned for it. Supervisor Teed said we have planned for this for the last 6 years; it should have been planned for the last 30 years. He asked Superintendent Featherly if he wanted to stay in that building. Superintendent Featherly said he is not arguing that. Supervisor Teed asked Superintendent Featherly what he needed this year. Superintendent Featherly said he needed trucks. He said he does not know what kind of shape the present ones are in. He said after the fire we just do not know. He said you are taking money from my fund and moving it to the General Fund. Bookkeeper Middlebrook said we are not taking money from your budget. She said we eliminated \$185,000 from your budget; but we did not increase the General Fund at all by \$185,000. She said again we did not take any money from your account and put it into the General Fund. Superintendent Featherly you just did not put it in there; so that is going to put us a year behind on the truck rotation. Councilman Beechler said we had a good game plan to refurbish one truck for a modest amount of money and it will not make it as good as new; but it will definitely make it serviceable. Superintendent Featherly said he has to worry about the school buses and the traveling public and that weighs on his shoulders.

DAVID SHARMAN, 40 PACKWOOD ROAD, GENEVA: Mr. Sharman said we have had a 64% increase in the last 2 years and you do not think that is a problem.

COUNCILMAN DENNIS KING: Councilman King said we are looking toward the future like this building we want to put up for the Highway Department. He stated the longer we wait, the more the materials are going to go up. He said we have to have money of our own to put into this building, instead of borrowing everything and paying interest. He said that is how our State and Federal government has gotten into so much trouble; they borrow, borrow, borrow and someone else has got to pay the bill. He said the Town does not want to do that. He said as far as wages go, we pay wages that we feel are competitive with the employees' abilities, their exposure to the elements and we do not feel we are giving our employees too much money.

KARA SIMMONS, 2258 TOLL ROAD, PHELPS: Mrs. Simmons said Councilman King made the comment about planning and we need to build a building now. She said we spent \$667,000 of our reserve balance. She said if we had not done that, we would have had enough money for the building right now. She said so there has not been proper planning so if you want to build a building get a plan, come up with some numbers and then go

ahead and fund it or find another way to fund it. Supervisor Teed asked if there were any further comments. There were no more comments. The Public Hearing was closed at 4:40 PM.

RESOLUTION: Approve 2012 Budget (see attached).

Supervisor Teed said if this budget is not adopted tonight, it reverts back to the Preliminary Budget and that is not acceptable because of the sales tax revenue. Attorney Jeff Graff said if the budget does not get adopted tonight it reverts back to the Preliminary Budget which we have been told is incorrect.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilwoman Day offered the following Resolution. RESOLVED that, the Town Board Meeting be adjourned. The Resolution was seconded by Councilman King who moved its adoption. 5 AYES. Motion carried.

TIME: 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Nieskes
Town Clerk

