

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
HELD ON OCTOBER 19, 2021**

Present: Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor
Jesse Newton, Councilmember
Norman Rasmussen, Councilmember
Deborah Gordon, Councilmember
John Trainor, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Marsha “Marcie” Robertson, Town Clerk

Others Present: Ed Godfroy, LVPA
Eugenia Browning, LVPA
Joe Ogilvie, Recreation Commission
Other members of the public

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:01p.m. by Supervisor Houghtling.

LVPA:

Supervisor Houghtling stated the LVPA’s budget request for 2022 operating budget is \$152,302. On the summary page of the budget, it is \$10,000 less, it is \$142,302. The board has already discussed this but as a reminder to everyone, the town collected \$10,000 in taxes in a prior year based on how the contract was written that the town did not give to the LVPA and they could not give to the LVPA because the contract was written as such that they couldn’t. The town collected taxes for fire services which can only be used for fire services, so according to the town accountant, the town attorney and the state comptroller, the way to move forward is to take the LVPA operating budget amount (\$152,302) put that in the contract as the amount the town is going to give them and then only raise taxes in the amount of \$142,302 and then when the town pays the LVPA via voucher, the town will be paying them the entire \$152,302 utilizing the \$10,000 that is sitting in a fire protection account along with the money that the town raises via this 2022 budget.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that this is important for the public to know that next year that amount will likely go back up, but it is not actually that the LVPA cost is going up. It is simply that the town has \$10,000 that the town needs to utilize for fire services.

Supervisor Houghtling stated the board has the proposed 2022 budget from the LVPA. She stated that she has reviewed it and doesn't have any questions and opened it up to the rest of the board if they have questions. Ed Godfroy, LVPA was present for any questions or comments. There were no questions from the rest of the board.

Supervisor Houghtling reported that the total budget request is about a \$4,000 increase and she asked if he could explain what that increase is for.

Ed Godfroy, LVPA stated that the main increase is for building maintenance and repairs. There are some windows to replace, floors to paint and siding to replace and repair. He reported that the insurance stayed the same at \$21,000 because the second insurance line, funded by an outside source, they can pay for that out of a different insurance fund that they get reimbursed for. So that savings is passed onto the town.

Supervisor Houghtling pointed out that there are a few line items such as turnout gear, rehab supplies, refreshments for training and the second insurance line item that Ed just spoke about that they are able to get funding from an outside source, whether it is grant funding or from the state or the county, therefore they are not putting it in the town budget.

Ed Godfroy, LVPA reported that the turnout gear was granted last year, so they didn't put anything in for turnout gear last year either. This year all of the refreshments and the insurance was explained better by the state, so a lot of companies are funding that second insurance policy out of the fund. Ed Godfroy stated that the second insurance is a disability insurance policy separate from the business insurance.

The board agreed to hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 4th, 2021 at 7:00pm for the LVPA's proposed 2022 budget and at 7:15pm for the Town's 2022 Preliminary budget.

CC CHARGEBACK AGREEMENT:

Supervisor Houghtling received the town's chargeback agreement with Columbia County for Chatham Rescue Squad after the October meeting. It has to be signed and returned by October 30th, 2021; it cannot wait until the November meeting. The town's ambulance services are collected through county taxes and the town signs a chargeback agreement with the county.

A motion was made by Councilmember Newton to authorize Supervisor Houghtling to enter into a chargeback agreement for rescue squad services in New Lebanon for the fiscal year 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Trainer.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen -	Aye
Councilmember Gordon -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye

Councilmember Trainor - Aye
Councilmember Newton- Aye

HIGHWAY FURNANCE:

Supervisor Houghtling reported that the board approved a quote from Galusha HVAC for a heater for the highway garage. The cost of the heater itself is \$5,137.53. Galusha is requesting that they be paid for the cost of the heater, which they have paid out of pocket, on an interim voucher. They will charge for labor costs on a separate voucher after install is complete.

A motion was made by Councilmember Newton to authorize Supervisor Houghtling to pay via interim abstract the price of \$5,137.53 for the cost of the highway garage furnace. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Trainor.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen - Aye
Councilmember Gordon - Aye
Supervisor Houghtling - Aye
Councilmember Trainor - Aye
Councilmember Newton- Aye

AMENDMENT OF RESOLUTION #25 OF 2021:

Supervisor Houghtling stated that the conversation was very clear that the starting rates that the board agreed to in the compensation plan were to be effective as of January 1st, 2022. When she was entering all of the rates into the budget, she realized that the date was not stated on the resolution.

TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
RESOLUTION 25, 2021
COMPENSATION POLICY
OCTOBER 19, 2021

At the regular monthly meeting of the New Lebanon Town Board, held at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, duly called and held on the 19th day of October, 2021, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded:

Resolution by Supervisor Houghtling
Seconded by Councilmember Trainor

COMPENSATION POLICY [Adopted 11-13-2018; Revised 8-11-2020; Revised 10-12-2021; Revised 10-19-2021]

Purpose; applicability.

To establish a comprehensive compensation plan for the employees of the Town of New Lebanon based on the duties and responsibilities of each position.

Grade Levels & Starting Rates as of 1/1/2022:

1. Appointed Positions: Grade levels and Starting rates:

Position	Grade Level	Starting Rate	Notes
Assessor	1	\$25,000	In-house reval: annual stipend \$1,600
Highway MEOs	2	TBD	All wages set via union contract
Code Enforcement Officer (CEO)	2	\$23- 25/hr	\$25/hr when certified
Deputy CEO	2	\$18- 20/hr	\$20/hr when certified
Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO)	3	\$20/hr	
Deputy ZEO	3	\$17/hr	
Land Use Administrator	3	\$18/hr	
Deputy Town Clerk	3	\$16/hr	
Court Clerk	3	\$16/hr	
SYP Camp Director (seasonal)	3	\$10,000	Per season – 50 hrs/wk for 8 week summer camp program plus 100 extra hours prep & follow up @ \$20/hr – could be 2 positions or 1 –if 2 positions s/b \$8k for on site, 50 hrs/wk for 8 week program & \$2k for 100 hours prep & follow up
Dog Control Officer (DCO)	3	\$3,500	
Park & Buildings	4	\$16/hr	

Superintendent			
Deputy Court Clerk	4	\$15/hr	
Assistant Camp Director (seasonal)	4	\$16/hr	
Aquatics Director (Camp-seasonal)	4	\$20/hr	
Building/Planning/Zoning Clerk	5	\$14.50/hr	
Assessor Clerk	5	\$14.50/hr	
Position	Grade Level	Starting Rate	Notes
Park & Buildings Maintenance Staff	5	\$12/hr	
SYP Staff**(seasonal)			
Counselors	5	\$11	SYP Director sets rates up to \$15/hr cap .50¢ for each approved certification; .50¢ for each year worked @ program
Lifeguard	5	\$20/hr	
Water Safety Aide	5	\$11	SYP Director sets rates up to \$15/hr cap
Counselors-in-Training (CITs)	X	\$8/hr	

2. Elected Officials: Grade levels and Starting rates:

Position	Grade Level	Starting Rate	Notes
Supervisor	1	TBD	20 hrs/wk @ \$25/hr; includes bookkeeper & HR duties (also receives \$14k & Health Ins.

			from County) –
Town Board – As a whole	1	\$16,000	\$4,000 each
Highway Superintendent	1	\$50,000	
Town Clerk	2	\$35,000	
Judges	2	TBD	Evaluate changes in court as State Police Barracks moves to Chatham.
Tax Collector	3	TBD	
Town Board Individually	5	\$4,000 ea	

Adjustments to rates:

- Starting rates will be evaluated at least every three (3) years and adjusted as needed.
- Adjustments to only one position will be made only when appropriate based on changes in duties for the position.
- All positions should be adjusted as needed and re-evaluations of the long-term program will be done to preserve the plan.
- If cost-of-living adjustments (Cola) are applied, the compensation base rates and established ranges will be adjusted accordingly (base rates and cap rates will be adjusted at the same rate as the cola).

Performance Evaluation Process:

- There will be an annual training of all employees who will evaluate other employees and all employees who will be evaluated regarding the evaluation process, job descriptions, etc. At the training employees should provide any suggestions or input regarding possible updates and/or edits to any of the forms or processes. The training shall occur before April 1st.
- Evaluations of all employees are to be performed by their direct supervisor (according to the “chart for performing employee evaluations” – see addendum C) two times a year by April 15th & October 15th.
- Job descriptions (see addendum A) and the performance evaluation form (see addendum B) are an integral part of this policy and should be utilized for all employee evaluations and updated and/or reviewed as needed.
- At a town board meeting after the October 15th evaluations & before the next year’s budget

is adopted, the town board will discuss merit raises which will be based off the October 15th evaluations and at the discretion of the town board each budget season as to how much of a merit raise is applied to which levels of scoring on the evaluations. Although these merit raises are at the discretion of the town board, the evaluations should be used to determine these merit raises and a level of consistency should be followed across positions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Lebanon Town Board that this Compensation Policy is adopted by the Town. Upon the question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Town Board Members voted “Aye” or “Nay” for said Resolution:

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Norman Rasmussen	Aye
Councilmember Deborah Gordon	Aye
Supervisor Tistrya Houghtling	Aye
Councilmember Jesse Newton	Recuse
Councilmember John Trainor	Aye

The Resolution, having been approved by a majority vote of the Town Board, was declared duly adopted by the Supervisor of the Town of New Lebanon.

Dated: October 19, 2021
Marcie Robertson
New Lebanon Town Clerk

MISCELLANEOUS BUDGET ITEMS:

Supervisor Houghtling stated that the board has a copy of the first draft of the preliminary budget which is the same as the tentative budget with the changes that they already agreed to. Supervisor Houghtling stated that she still has the \$40,000 in holding because they haven’t finished .1 discussions.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that Councilmember Newton had questioned why **A-1620.4** had gone down in the 2022 budget request.

Councilmember Newton reported that in the 2021 budget all of the NYSEG expenses were figured into the buildings budget amount. In doing the 2022 budget, it was caught that NYSEG expenses are split among buildings, parks and street lighting. So, a more accurate amount was budgeted for. He stated that the rest of the difference in the proposed 2022 budget for A-1620.4 was shuffling around maintenance projects.

Supervisor Houghtling and Town Clerk Robertson looked over **A-1670.4**, Central Printing & Mailing to see why we are short this year and to make sure that it is properly budgeted for 2022. There has been an increase in publications to the paper and in printing expenses due to the increased activity in the town. Supervisor Houghtling suggested increasing **A-**

1670.4 to \$8,000 for the 2022 budget. The board agreed.

Councilmember Rasmussen had questioned why on pg.5, **A-1990.4**, Contingent was \$20,000 and the previous year's show nothing for this line item. Supervisor Houghtling reported that the reason it wasn't on the tentative budget as actual numbers was because the accountant doesn't see it as an actual budget account, nothing is purchased from it. It is a holding account to bring more money into the budget into different lines as needed. It has now been entered in the preliminary budget.

SPLASHPAD DISCUSSION:

Supervisor Houghtling stated that at the last meeting it was questioned if \$75,000 would get the town the cheapest splashpad. Supervisor Houghtling had a discussion with Barton & Loguidice and they told her that \$75,000 would get the town a decent smaller splashpad. They recommend whoever the town hires to engineer the splashpad to have them do a three-phase engineered plan. For example, phase one could be \$50K to \$70K to get started, but if it is engineered in a three-phase plan that over the next couple of years if the town wants to expand it, the plans are already there and engineered in a way that it can easily be added onto. The engineering costs would be around \$5,000 and could come out of the initial \$75,000.

Supervisor Houghtling reported that she has made all of the changes to the preliminary budget that were made at the last budget workshop.

MISCELLANEOUS BUDGET ITEMS:

PAYROLL (.1's):

When the board adopted the Compensation Plan, the recommendation was that anyone who got a raise on the Compensation Plan would not also get an evaluation raise. Any position that did not get a raise in the compensation line that was an evaluated position, the board would discuss what that would look like. Supervisor Houghtling reported that she lined out what positions had an evaluation but did not get a raise in the Compensation Plan.

The positions with evaluations that did not have a Compensation Plan increase are: Assessor; CEO; ZEO/Building Department Administrator; and DCO. The DCO did change from hourly to salary but the amount she made stayed the same. Supervisor Houghtling recommended to the rest of the board that they decide the evaluation scoring before she actually does the scoring.

The board held discussion on how to base the raises given based on the evaluation scoring. The board decided on giving a percentage for raises.

The board discussed the scoring of evaluations and the percentage of raise to be given. Councilmember Rasmussen asked if they will be giving COLA raises this year? Supervisor Houghtling responded that the Compensation Committee is recommending that the town

does not give a COLA because they are increasing the compensation policy and doing the evaluations. This leaves out elected officials and seasonal park maintenance employees because they are not evaluated.

Councilmember Newton stated that of all years a COLA would be beneficial, this is it, with the rising costs of everything. He does agree though that they shouldn't do a COLA and merit-based raise.

The board held Payroll (.1) account discussion.

The rate for evaluation based raises the town board has set is as follows: evaluation score 3-3.5 = 2%; 3.5-4 = 3%; 4-4.5 = 4% and 4.5-5 = 5%.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that she will total the evaluation scores and calculate the pay increases for the next meeting.

There will be a budget workshop this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. It will start with a discussion with the highway superintendent regarding the highway budget and then it will turn to a conversation on salaries for any employee who would like to come and be heard before the town board makes a final determination.

Councilmember Rasmussen commented that he has had the pleasure of working with two supervisors, both worked way past the seventeen hours that is budgeted for them. He commented that they have all taken advantage of these supervisor's efforts in doing what is required of their jobs. He stated that he thinks it is improper for the board to continue to expect the services from our supervisors that require them working way beyond the hours that they are paid for.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated that he thinks they should recognize the actual hours that it takes to perform the supervisor's duties and continue the good services that they have been getting in the past four years that he has been involved. He stated that he would like to increase the number of hours, not the pay rate, that they recognize that the supervisor needs to work in order to get the job done.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated that he asked Supervisor Houghtling to provide a list of what she is legally required to do and whether or not those requirements can get done in the seventeen hours that she is currently paid for. Then there are the other things that she does that are not required but are a benefit to the town and the numbers of hours needed to complete these things outside of the seventeen hours.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated that now the question is how many hours should they pay for a supervisor? It was opened up to the remainder of the board for discussion. Councilmember Trainor commented that he agreed with Councilmember Rasmussen.

Councilmember Newton commented that he thinks there will a lot of public comment on this. He can see the reason behind coming up in hours for the supervisor position. He is not necessarily comfortable with it but understands it. He stated that he understands the demands of all of the offices that occur here in the town have ramped up from fifteen or twenty years ago. There is more involvement, filings with the state, county work that has to be done, additional things and because we are on the outskirts of Columbia County a supervisor has to really work to get us recognized down at the county.

Councilmember Gordon agrees that if they can arrive at a number of hours that more accurately reflects what the job requires then they should be compensating the supervisor for that number of hours.

Councilmember Rasmussen stated to be clear they are talking solely about a different number of hours; they are not talking about changing the pay rate. He stated that he feels that its the right thing to do to increase the expectation of the hours so that future supervisors will also be aware of what the town's expectations are when they run for and come into the job. Councilmember Rasmussen stated that he feels they should increase the number of required hours to thirty-two hours a week.

Councilmember Trainor agreed with Councilmember Rasmussen on his recommendation.

Councilmember Newton stated that he thinks they discussed how many hours it takes to complete the task of supervisor and it fell somewhere in the twenty-four-hour range. He does understand the reason of coming up to that threshold but still not comfortable with it. He stated that they are discussing the current and past supervisors, but the one prior to that didn't spend much time at the town hall. He thinks it can be a position that gets abused. He stated that if he were to agree to any increase in this elected position, he thinks they need to look at the other elected positions in town as well.

The board held discussion.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rasmussen that the supervisor's position should be thirty-two (32) hours a week from the town and the next town board should do a review to be sure that there aren't any other elected officials in town who are likewise being expected to do more work than the town has agreed to pay them for. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Trainor.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen -	Aye
Councilmember Gordon -	Nay
Supervisor Houghtling -	Recuse
Councilmember Trainor -	Aye
Councilmember Newton-	Nay

The motion did not pass.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rasmussen that the supervisor's position should be twenty-four (24) hours a week from the town and the next town board should do a review to be sure that there aren't any other elected officials in town who are likewise being expected to do more work than the town has agreed to pay them for. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Trainor.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen -	Aye
Councilmember Gordon -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Recuse
Councilmember Trainor -	Aye
Councilmember Newton-	Nay

Councilmember Newton stated that since this increase in hours passed, he thinks that they should look at all of the other elected .1's. There are very few and he thinks that they can discuss that when departments come in.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that would be Town Board, Justices, Tax Collector, Highway Superintendent and Town Clerk.

Discussion was held by the board regarding the Justices and the Tax Collector positions. It was requested that the board waits until after the election to discuss these positions and pay rate.

REVENUE REVIEW:

The board finished reviewing all of the revenue lines in the tentative budget.

HIGHWAY REVIEW:

Supervisor Houghtling stated that everything that is in the highway budget with the exception of equipment is how it was requested by Highway Superintendent Winestock with one caveat on his .1. He asked for a salary increase for himself, no increase was given in the tentative budget and he asked for his .1 budget for his staff to be for four guys at \$25 an hour. Supervisor Houghtling reported that hopefully they will have union negotiations done before the final budget and she can enter actual numbers in. Supervisor Houghtling stated that she worked with the labor attorney and on her best guess used those numbers for highway payroll in the tentative budget.

Supervisor Houghtling included money in the budget for highway employee benefits in the event Highway Superintendent Winestock decides to have four full time employees.

Highway Superintendent Winestock submitted a budget request for \$150,000 for a new loader, \$130,000 for a new backhoe and \$260,000 for two new trucks for a total of \$540,000.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that she couldn't do that in a budget, that would significantly increase taxes.

Supervisor Houghtling reported that the board has not received the replacement plan with mileage and hours of vehicles and equipment. The board has stated that before they will authorize future equipment purchases, they are requiring the information from the Highway Superintendent. However, Supervisor Houghtling stated that she did include in the budget as they always do, three loans. Two loans were paid off in 2021 and one loan is still being paid on. She left all of the loan payment amounts in the budget to leave room in the budget for future purchases if the Highway Superintendent provides the Town Board to make sound fiscal decisions regarding equipment.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE:

Supervisor Houghtling stated that the Comprehensive Plan Committee has made a recommendation to the town board. Ted Salem sent a timeline to Supervisor Houghtling, the goal is to have it adopted before the end of the year. The plan has to be submitted to the County Planning Board for their November 16th meeting; it has to be referred to them by November 5th. The town board needs to review it prior to November 5th.

The board agreed to use the already scheduled October 27th Budget Workshop to go over the Comprehensive Plan Update. Town Clerk Robertson will send an email blast and website post notifying the public that this meeting will include the Comprehensive Plan Update review and discussion and any other budget items.

A Public Hearing for the Comprehensive Plan Update was set for November 9th, 2021 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall. Town Clerk Robertson will notice the Public Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling and seconded by Councilmember Newton to adjourn the meeting at 7:44pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Rasmussen -	Aye
Councilmember Gordon -	Aye
Supervisor Houghtling -	Aye
Councilmember Trainor -	Aye
Councilmember Newton-	Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Marcie Robertson
New Lebanon Town Clerk