

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
ON TOWN OF NEW LEBANON PROPOSED 2022 PRELIMINARY BUDGET
HELD ON NOVEMBER 4, 2021**

Present: Tistrya Houghtling, Supervisor
Norman Rasmussen, Councilmember (Online)
John Trainor, Councilmember (Online)
Jesse Newton, Councilmember

Absent: Deborah Gordon, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Marsha (Marcie) Robertson, Town Clerk

Others Present: Ed Godfroy, LVPA
Eugenia Browning, LVPA
Several Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER:

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:15 PM by Supervisor Houghtling. The meeting was held in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22 North, New Lebanon, NY 12125 with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the following link: https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:

Supervisor Houghtling waived the reading of the Public Hearing Notice but directed that it be included in its entirety in the minutes.

**TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE LVPA 2022 PRELIMINARY BUDGET AND
THE TOWN OF NEW LEBANON
2022 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the PRELIMINARY BUDGET of the TOWN OF NEW LEBANON for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2022, including general town funds, highway funds, and fire protection district funds, has been completed and filed in the office of the Town Clerk at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York, where it is available for inspection by any interested persons during regular Town Clerk office hours. The Preliminary Budget for 2022 has also been posted on the town website (www.townofnewlebanon.com) and can be viewed or downloaded from the website.

FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon shall hold a public hearing on the Lebanon Valley Protective Association's 2022 Preliminary

Budget on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22 for the purpose of receiving public input on said budget.

FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon shall hold a public hearing on the Town of New Lebanon's 2022 Preliminary Budget on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 7:15 p.m. at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22 for the purpose of receiving public input on said budget.

The following are the proposed 2022 salaries of the Elected Town Officers of the Town of New Lebanon:

Supervisor	\$23,200
Councilmembers (4)	\$4,000 each
Town Clerk	\$36,400
Highway Superintendent	\$67,433
Town Justices (2)	\$11,259 each
Tax Collector	\$10,812

The following is the proposed amount for 2022 for the Lebanon Valley Fire Protective Association:

SF-1	\$142,302
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Participation by the public will be in person at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 NYS Route 22, New Lebanon, New York with members of the public also being able to view the meeting at the following link: https://townhallstreams.com/towns/new_lebanon_ny

You may also still submit comments regarding the LVPA 2022 Preliminary Budget and the Town of New Lebanon 2022 Preliminary Budget to: supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com and they will be included in the record.

By order of the Town Board of the Town of New Lebanon
Marcie Robertson
Town Clerk
10/25/2021

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Supervisor Houghtling opened the floor to public comment and asked if there was anyone that wished to speak either in support of or against the Proposed 2022 Preliminary Town of New Lebanon Budget or has any comments that they would like to put on the record.

Michael Deegan:

Mr. Deegan commented that he was there the last time they voted on the budget, two or three years ago when it was obvious that Tistrya was going to win. The Board, which was composed of Mark Baumli, Jesse Newton and Smitty and a few others, all purposely voted on keeping the pay for the Town Supervisor low because they knew she was going to win. He stated that he felt that was outrageous that this town would

do such a thing. The Supervisor here in the budget gets \$2,300 and \$200 and the Highway Superintendent gets \$67,000. That is just outrageous. We've been asking the Highway Superintendent for the last five years to remove the railings up in the Springs that he threw down over the hill. He says at meeting that he is questioned about this, that he is going to do it and he hasn't done it. The thing is our current Town Supervisor has done so many wonderful things in this town and to deny her a fair pay is just outrageous. It is ludicrous.

Supervisor Houghtling thanked Mr. Deegan and stated that a Public Hearing is for the board to hear from the public, but she wanted to clarify a couple of things. She stated that the outgoing Town Board when she won the election did not actually change the Supervisor's salary. What they did was they broke it out into two separate parts. The Supervisor salary and the Assistant to that position with the understanding that the winner of the election could, as she did, take both jobs and both positions.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that what this board currently has proposed is an increase to that Supervisor salary, it is \$23,200 not \$2,300, and there is still the \$8,000 broken out. In this budget that is being proposed right now, the total pay that the Supervisor would receive if they continue to do both jobs, which is her intention, is \$31,200. Just to clarify. She appreciates his kind words, she just wanted to clarify those couple of items.

Mark Baumli:

Mr. Baumli stated that this is a Public Hearing for the budget but his name was just recently mentioned in a conversation. He thanked Supervisor Houghtling for clarifying. Mr. Baumli addressed Mr. Deegan and stated that upon Supervisor Houghtling's clarification he thinks Mr. Deegan owes him an apology and Councilmember Newton.

Supervisor Houghtling stated that a Public Hearing is not for audience members to speak to each other.

Mr. Baumli repeated that he is addressing the board and Mr. Deegan owes him and Jesse an apology, they did not cut her salary. Mr. Baumli stated that he has no problem with Supervisor Houghtling's increase she is getting this year. He stated that he couldn't be paid enough to take the job of supervisor. He stated that he knows Supervisor Houghtling gets additional pay through the County, health insurance through the County. People need to understand the whole picture before they start casting stones at individuals. He thanked Supervisor Houghtling for clarifying that earlier from someone sitting there trying to make he and Jesse look bad. He is just asking that that person apologize to Jesse and himself.

Judy Zimmer:

Ms. Zimmer said she wanted to put it out that they all know that the allotted hours

for our Town Supervisor is very low. She as Tistrya's mother knows how much time she puts in and she believes that considering that she's probably getting paid lower than minimum wage, way lower. She stated that she just wanted to make sure that was on the record.

Supervisor Houghtling stated to clarify for anyone that might not know, the salary as proposed in this budget is for twenty-four hours a week at a rate of \$25.00 an hour, which is a decent hourly rate for the salary to be based on. It is understood that she works a lot more than that but when they looked at what her statutory responsibilities were, it was about twenty-four hours a week that she was putting in, which is one of the reasons that this board voted to increase it from seventeen hours to twenty-four hours, because the seventeen wasn't allowing her to do the statutory responsibilities. She stated if she wants to do things like the food distribution or other things that are beneficial to the community, she can certainly go above those twenty-four hours but the salary that is being presented here is really what they felt was required to get what the state says is required of her office.

Public Comment Emails:

Supervisor Houghtling read the following nine emails into the record in favor of the increase in the Supervisor's hours.

- (1) Dear Councilmember Rasumssen and others:

I understand that the number of hours that the Supervisor for the town of New Lebanon has been 17 and that a motion has passed the council to increase the paid hours to 24. I also understand that there was considerable discussion about even agreeing to this number. I know Tistrya and Supervisors before her have logged many more than 17 hours a week and indeed, more than the 24 currently being considered. I would strongly recommend that the Board uphold its decision to increase the Supervisor's paid time to 24. The town should be proud of the work it does and the Supervisor plays a critical role in it. It seems like the least we could do is pay our supervisor something closer to the time she puts in on the town's behalf. Thanks very much.

Betsy Feathers, New Lebanon Resident

- (2) Hi Tistrya,

Unfortunately, I will not be able to come to the budget public hearing because I'm out of town. I do agree with Councilmember Rasmussen that your position should have an increase in the number of hours it is paid for.

I'm ok with the 24 hour per week but truthfully, I would have preferred an increase to 32 hours because I do know personally that you work a lot more than even the 32 hours.

I do agree that the Supervisor's salary should be based at least on the number of hours required to complete the statutory responsibilities of the job.

Thanks,

Erminia Rasmussen

TOWN BOARD MINUTES

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- (3) Increase the New Lebanon Town Supervisor's paid hours to 24 hrs a week
Thank you, Eloise Trainor
Sent from Eloise Trainor

- (4) Nov. 4th, 2021
To Whom it May Concern:
I feel strongly that the role of Town Supervisor should be compensated at forty hours a week. Our Town Supervisor works at least forty hours a week, and should be compensated accordingly.
Sincerely,
Julie Fraad

- (5) Dear Tistrya Houghtling and all members of the Town Council,
I fully support the hours paid increase to 24 hours for the Town Supervisor.
Sincerely,
Marianna Anthonisen

- (6) I agree to raising the number of hours the supervisor is paid to at least 32 hours a week.
Ed Higgins
75 Ann Lee Rd.

- (7) We would like to enter our strongest support for the increase in hours of compensated work by our town supervisor. It is plain to all that the job requires much more than 17 hours a week. Tistrya Houghtling works hard for all of us. Plain fairness should lead town council members to vote to support the increase. In the nearly twenty years we have been here we have seen that all of our supervisors have worked nearly full time at the job—but none more devotedly and effectively than Supervisor Houghtling. She deserves more hours.
Tom Gerety and Adelia Moore, Canaan Road

- (8) To Tristya Houghtling and Town Council Members,
I fully support the increase of the Town Supervisor to 24 hours and the pay increase that coincides with those hours.
Joel Priest

- (9) To the Town Board,
My wife Rae and I support raising Tistrya's salary so that it is more commensurate with the hours that she works, as well as the salary requirements per statute.
Thank you for your consideration.
Bob & Rae Gilson
Robert Gilson

CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING:

All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, a motion was made by Supervisor Houghtling to close the Public Hearing at 7:27PM. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Newton.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Marcie Robertson
New Lebanon Town Clerk

Draft