

The Town of Moriah Town Board held a Budget Workshop on the 2025 Tentative Budget on Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 6:00pm at the Town of Moriah Court House, 42 Park Place, Port Henry, NY.

Present: Matthew Brassard Supervisor
 Paul Salerno Councilman
 Tom Anderson Councilman

Absent: Nathan Gilbo Councilman

Others Present: James Curran, Becky Gilbo, LeeAnn Sprague and Rose French-Town Clerk

The Supervisor opened the meeting at 6:00pm by saluting the flag.

He then read the legal notice calling for the Budget Workshop.

The Supervisor welcomed James Curran, only one from the public to attend.

The Supervisor went over the highlights. 13% across increase across the Board; tax cap is 4%. General and Highway are decent. Water District #1 and Water District #2 need some work.

Becky Gilbo stated the fund balance in Water District # 1 and Water District #2 is dwindling. She referred to the handout with the increases for 2025. Water Department has asked for a mini excavator. The Supervisor stated that the payment would come out of both districts. Becky stated that Water District #3 is good. The Supervisor stated that Port Henry is good; mainly because it is gravity fed, cost less to operate. Becky stated that these districts have had some purchases and to do the lead survey, it cost the Town money. The Supervisor stated they also bought an air compressor; Becky said a camera also; which should have only come out of sewer; that will have to be switched. Becky suggested an increase in water rates; everything else is going up.

Councilman Anderson stated we need to protect the fund balance.

Councilman Salerno stated the fund balance in Water District #1 is \$179,980; Becky explained the rate sheet. Becky explained that these districts will need equipment going forward. The Supervisor stated it will cost roughly \$90,000 for the mini excavator. Councilman Salerno stated \$340.00 a year for water is a great rate. Becky stated the previous Supervisor wanted to consolidate districts and we really need to look in to doing this. The Board agreed to go up \$30.00 in each district per unit; per year. Becky went over the projected fund balance for sewer. The Supervisor stated we will have a small payment next year on the draw down for the sewer project. He feels we should raise rates now. Becky stated sewer usage is \$246.00 and sewer debt is \$184.00. Councilman Anderson stated it is less than \$1,000 for water and sewer a year. Becky stated the water and sewer districts should be consolidated. Becky stated how the comptroller came up with the 65/35% based on users in each district. Becky stated she had to use \$105,000 in Water District #1 to make it even and \$55,000 in Water District #2 to keep the fund balance at \$100,000. Becky stated that Water & Sewer Department and Water/Wastewater Treatment Plant salaries all come out equally; maybe that should be changed.

Councilman Salerno asked if more would be taken out of Water District #1 and Becky said yes, this is how it is justified.

The Supervisor stated he feels we need to raise sewer a little bit.

James Curran asked how long it would take to consolidate districts and the Supervisor stated probably a year; sewer is easy; debt is the same.

Becky stated to raise sewer rates there needs to be a public hearing; the Town Clerk will look in to the process on Tuesday.

The Supervisor stated Highway fund balance increased. Becky stated they have a couple of positions open that they haven't hired for yet. The Supervisor stated there are 6 employees plus Jamie Wilson and he has 2 openings. Becky stated Cliff Woodard will be retiring in April. James

Curran asked if the money for these 2 positions was being carried over and the Supervisor said yes; helping fund balance.

The Supervisor stated money has been obligated for Golf Course Way; should have it in 2-4 weeks. Councilman Salerno asked what happens to the money left over from this project and the Supervisor stated it goes back in to Sewer District #1; Becky asked if we will need to still increase Sewer District #1? Councilman Salerno stated not knowing how much the sewer project will cost we should still raise the rates.

The Supervisor stated Highway will go out to mini bid for a pickup; Becky asked how much that was for and the Supervisor stated @ \$75,000; will be a 3500-ton pickup with plow and sander; to be used in Port Henry. Becky asked if this will come out of this year's budget and the Supervisor said yes, they have them on the lot.

Becky stated to reach the tax cap we are allowed to go up \$80,000; Councilman Anderson asked if this was included in the increases and Becky said no. The Supervisor asked how much highway fund balance we would need to use to keep it the same and Becky stated \$62,406; the Board agreed to use it.

The Supervisor stated we had a decrease in taxable value in Water District 1 and that is because the state sold a lot of land to Northeast Wilderness Trust and they are tax exempt.

The Supervisor stated Highway will increase 2.84%.

The Supervisor stated the NYS DEC brings a garbage truck load full to the Transfer Station and are only charged a max of \$200; should be \$1,000; he sent them a letter. Becky stated we are losing money on trash at the campsites also. The Supervisor stated we sold 3,000 less stickers but the tonnage is the same; we are down \$40,000. Becky stated we could increase sticker price to \$3.50 or \$4.00. The Supervisor stated we should go to \$3.50 and Councilman Anderson stated if we went to \$4.00 we would get a lot of grief. The Supervisor stated as far as the campsites go we could have a seasonal trash rate and Councilman Anderson stated enforce the sticker issue. The Board agreed to raise sticker price to \$3.50 for 2025 and Becky stated we need to look at the fee schedule at the Transfer Station; items are not equal.

The Supervisor asked what the Board wanted to do with campsite rates and Becky stated they need to go up. Councilman Salerno stated we should make the decision on Tuesday when all Board members are here for the next budget workshop. Councilman Anderson asked if the 13% increase includes the campsites and Becky said yes. The Supervisor stated the campsites went up 4% last year. Becky stated yes and there is a waiting list.

The Supervisor stated Tuesday we will go over Campsites and General. James Curran asked if Town vehicles were inventoried and the Supervisor stated we just did a fleet inventory. Mr. Curran stated there should be a 5-year plan on all Town vehicles.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14pm.

Town Clerk