

TOWN BOARD

The Town Board, Town of Highlands, held a workshop on Monday, January 11, 2010 at Town Hall, 254 Main St, Highland Falls, NY 10928 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT:	Edward Magryta	----	Supervisor
	Holly Gokey	----	Council Member
	Laurie R. Tautel	----	Council Member
	William Edsall	----	Council Member
	Mervin R. Livsey, Jr.	----	Council Member
	Justin Rider	----	Counsel
	June Patterson	----	Town Clerk

Supervisor Magryta opened the workshop at 7:30pm.

Supervisor Magryta received a letter from Greg Maher requesting permission for the Fort Montgomery Fire Department to sponsor an ice skating party on Garrison's Pond this winter. The Fire Department will provide a Certificate of Insurance to the Town before the party.

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Livsey to allow the Fort Montgomery Fire Department to sponsor an ice skating party on Garrison's Pond.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

Supervisor Magryta informed the Board that he and Council Member Gokey attended the Newly Elected Officials School in Albany from January 5-7. The total cost of the trip was \$1,150 and he would like the Board to approve the expenditure.

Council Member Tautel said that in the future, approval should be obtained before the expenditure occurs.

Council Member Livsey made a motion seconded by Council Member Edsall to approve the \$1,150 expenditure.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

TOWN BOARD

JANUARY 11, 2010

Supervisor Magryta said that, for the Association of Towns in NYC, the rooms at the Sheraton and Hilton are \$209/night. The president of the Association of Towns proposed that, in order to save money, the Town can pay for 2 nights if the attendees double up or if they choose to stay in a single, the Town will only pay for 1 night and the attendee can either pay for the 2nd night or choose to commute which will be reimbursed by the Town. The meal reimbursement would stay at \$50 per day. The Supervisor would also ask that the departments justify their need to go.

Council Member Tautel said that some attendees stayed at the Flathotel last year which was cheaper than the other hotels.

Supervisor Magryta will look into the cost of the Flathotel. The Supervisor tabled this matter until further information can be obtained.

Supervisor Magryta received a copy of the current time sheet submitted by the employees. The Supervisor said that the form seems very busy and would like some input from the Board on their feelings.

Council Member Tautel thinks the form is fine.

Council Member Livsey still believes that a time clock is the best solution.

Supervisor Magryta tabled this matter until further information can be obtained.

Supervisor Magryta brought up the matter of the parking plan again. The plan would be as follows: In the front of the building, the front spot would be for citizens with a 15 minute limit and the back space will be for handicapped. The middle space will be eliminated. In the back, one spot would be for the Dial-A-Bus, one spot for a Town Board member, one spot for an elected official (ex. Town Clerk, Receiver of Taxes) and one spot for the Building/Assessor vehicle.

Supervisor Magryta said that in today's Poughkeepsie Journal they have tax rates for surrounding communities and the majority had decreases in their budgets. The Supervisor would like to see the Town get costs down.

Council Member Edsall said that everyone is in agreement that taxes are too high, but he would like to stop talking about it and start doing something about it.

Supervisor Magryta said that in the budget, the Treasurer will receive \$7,023 in 2010. The Supervisor was informed that the Treasurer should not be anyone but the Supervisor. He will take on the responsibility of the Treasurer and would like to strike the salary from the budget.

TOWN BOARD

JANUARY 11, 2010

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Gokey to eliminate the \$7,023 for the Treasurer's salary from the 2010 Budget, but keep the \$1,360 in the other expenses line.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays**

Supervisor Magryta asked why there was such a jump in the Town Clerk's budget.

Council Member Tautel explained that the Town Clerk now encumbers all the postage expense.

Supervisor Magryta asked about a \$70,000 transfer from Part-time highway to a new line item.

Council Member Tautel spoke to Mr. Squicciarini and he said he does not know what this is. Ms. Tautel will speak to the Comptroller about this matter.

Supervisor Magryta questioned the Star Program money being a separate line item instead of part of the Assessor's salary.

Council Member Tautel said it was easier to transfer money received if it was a separate line item.

Supervisor Magryta will look into the Star Program money.

Supervisor Magryta was told that in some Towns, the Police Chief does the job of the Disaster Preparedness Coordinator. The Supervisor would like to know what the Coordinator does for \$12,000 per year and asked Council Member Tautel to investigate.

Supervisor Magryta asked about the significant raise in the Police personnel services budget line.

Council Member Tautel said there was an error while inputting the numbers giving that line an additional \$32,000.

Supervisor Magryta said it will be pulled from the budget after confirming with the Comptroller.

Supervisor Magryta questioned the raise in the Police Contractual line.

Council Member Tautel believes that it is for the purchase of new bullet proof vests.

Chris Byrnes does not believe it is for the vests and recommended that the Board check with the Comptroller.

TOWN BOARD

JANUARY 11, 2010

Supervisor Magryta is concerned about the money in the budget for unused vacation time. The Supervisor would like to pay close attention to this and maybe change to a use or lose policy.

Justin Rider said the current provision is in the handbook and a resolution will be needed to amend it.

Supervisor Magryta spoke to 2 different entities and found out that their audit expense was \$10,000. The Supervisor asked one of them to send him information.

Council Member Tautel was told that the NYS Comptroller's Office will do an audit for free. The only drawback is that it might take a little while for them to get to it.

Council Member Gokey said that the NYS Comptroller's Office might come quicker if it is an emergency.

Supervisor Magryta questioned the Election expenses. The budgeted amount is more than the bill received from the County. The Supervisor is in hopes that some of that money can be put back.

Supervisor Magryta brought the subject of the Town Hall work hours and the 2% raise proposed for the employees.

Council Member Tautel said that 2% across the board is pennies.

Supervisor Magryta said that if you take the entire budget and add 2% it is not pennies.

Council Member Livsey wants to give the employees a 2% raise, but is not sure about what to do about the hours. Mr. Livsey asked if it would really be more efficient if the Town Hall stayed open until 5pm.

Council Member Gokey asked if it was fair to charge the taxpayers for 8 hours when employees are only working 7 hours.

Council Member Livsey said that the Board needs to concentrate on the overtime. Mr. Livsey suggested giving the employees only ½ hour for lunch.

Council Member Edsall agreed with giving the employees a half hour for lunch.

Supervisor Magryta would like to discuss the 2% raise again.

Supervisor Magryta said that at the re-organization meeting the Town Hall hours will be left the same, but lunch will be changed from 1 hour to ½ hour. The handbook will be amended.

TOWN BOARD

JANUARY 11, 2010

Supervisor Magryta asked Greg Miller to come and explain his request for a zone change and proposed project on 9W.

Greg Miller explained that there is definitely a need for residential and he doesn't believe his project would hurt the Town.

Supervisor Magryta said that before a change like this is made, it will have to be determined that it won't be considered spot zoning. Also, when changing zoning from commercial to residential there are a lot of factors to consider.

Justin Rider said that the Planning Board didn't seem to have a problem with it.

Supervisor Magryta would like the Planning Board's comments before this decision is made.

Council Member Tautel said the next Planning Board meeting is on January 21 and the one after that is on February 18. Ms. Tautel would like to believe that by February 22 there would have been enough time to get the answers needed.

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Edsall to set the Public Hearings on February 22, 2010 at 7:00pm for Local Law #5, 7:10pm for Local Law #6 and 7:20pm for Local Law #7.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
1-nays (Magryta)**

Mr. Rider said that a separate motion will be needed for the mailings.

Council Member Edsall made a motion seconded by Council Member Tautel to mail the Public Hearing notices to properties within 500 feet of the proposed zoning changes.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays**

Mr. Rider explained that the Building Department will prepare the mailing list.

Supervisor Magryta told Mr. Miller that he will review the previous documents and contact him with any questions he may have.

Victor Crapanzano is very concerned with the new product being that is being used for ice and snow.

Supervisor Magryta said that appointments will be discussed at the next workshop, but specific appointments/employees will need to be discussed in executive session.

TOWN BOARD

JANUARY 11, 2010

Supervisor Magryta said the next workshop will be on January 14, 2010 at 7:30pm.

Mayor D'Onofrio told the Board that he appreciates them re-visiting the budget. He also said that he has a joint grant application he would like the Board to look at. The deadline for submission of this grant is February 24.

Supervisor Magryta asked Council Member Tautel to be the point person on this project.

Andy Schmarr from Hudson Highlands Land Trust introduced himself to the Board. He would like to sit down with the Board to discuss some things.

Council Member Livsey would like to table any discussion on the new material that the Highway Department is using until he can obtain more information on it.

Council Member Edsall believes it is an aesthetic issue not a safety issue.

Supervisor Magryta tabled this discussion until Thursday's workshop.

Council Member Livsey made a motion seconded by Council Member Tautel to go into Executive Session to discuss possible litigation. Board went into executive session at 10:40pm.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Livsey to close the executive session. Executive session closed at 11:13pm.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Livsey to pay AFR \$11,158 to settle outstanding invoices in full.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

Council Member Tautel made a motion seconded by Council Member Edsall to adjourn the workshop. Workshop adjourned at 11:15pm.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Magryta, Edsall, Livsey, Gokey, Tautel)
0-nays

Attest,