**TOWN OF WESTERLO**

**CONTINUATION OF SPECIAL TOWN BOARD**

**MEETING OF**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2020**

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held a Special Town Board meeting on Thursday, June 4, 2020 (a continuation from the May 28, 2020 Special Town Board meeting) at the Richard H. Rapp Municipal Building located at 933 County Route 401, Westerlo, NY via ZOOM # 94835690019. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential budget deficit due to COVID-19 Pandemic. Supervisor Bichteman opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Attending were: Supervisor William Bichteman Jr.

Councilwoman Amie L. Burnside

Councilman Richard Filkins

Councilman Matthew Kryzak

Councilman Joseph J. Boone

Also attending were: Town Clerk Kathleen Spinnato

ZOOM attendees: Planning Board Chairperson Verch, Highway Superintendent Jody Ostrander, Attorney Javid Afzali, Transfer Station employee John Nevins, Altamont Enterprise reporter Noah Zweifel, Library Director Debbie Scott and approximately fifteen interested residents.

Due to technical issues, the actual business of the meeting didn’t begin for 45 minutes.

**FINANCIAL PLANNING - PANDEMIC COVID-19**

**PROPOSED BUDGET DEFICIT 2020**

**PROPOSED GENERAL CUTS & HEALTH INSURANCE**

Supervisor Bichteman presented and reviewed his draft proposal of estimates his office has compiled. He indicated medical insurance contribution increases would include all current employees, retired and not on Medicare. Other topics discussed were housekeeping, celebrations, street lighting, cemeteries, CHIPS money, reassessment, town hall staffing cuts and library savings.

**PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Supervisor Bichteman provided the Town Board with proposed fee schedule changes for the transfer station and building department. These items and more will be presented for further discussion at the Town Board meeting on June 16th. (see attached)

**COUNCILWOMAN BURNSIDE’S SUGGESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS**Councilwoman Burnside suggested the following ideas and potential savings for the town:

1. Temporary cut of laundering services for highway department
2. Temporary cut of boot allowances for highway department
3. Possible buyout for employees nearing retirement
4. Offer incentive to have spouse carry health insurance for employees
5. Freeze on overtime and non-essential spending
6. Discontinue maintenance at Ambulance squad building (Supervisor Bichteman indicated the town does not maintain the building for plowing or mowing.)
7. Job descriptions (Mr. Bichteman indicated he did not have time to provide them but wondered if Councilman Filkins would be interested.)
8. Water district re-payment to the Town (Mr. Bichteman indicated the water dist. was not in a position to make a payment to the town.)

Councilman Kryzak mentioned the town still needs to remain functional with all the cuts. Discussion continued about sales tax, possibly increasing taxes and the concern for what the consequences would be with cutting employees.

**TOWN BOARD AND PUBLIC COMMENT**

A resident asked what qualifies for use of the emergency fund balance. Supervisor Bichteman responded there is no limit and would be used for budget shortfalls however, cautioned if it was used this year to fill the gap, it would cause a catastrophic tax increase next year.

A resident believed if the highway department had to give up their boot allowance and laundering services to help save a job, they would do it. She also expressed concern for potential layoffs in the Highway Department which could lead to unmaintained roadways in the town. She didn’t believe it was worth the risk to lay off any highway employees.

An interested resident asked if the employees were collecting paychecks during their time off due to the pandemic; Mr. Bichteman indicated yes. The resident wondered how the town could predict into 2021 but a few months ago couldn’t foresee furloughing the highway department during that time to save the town money. Supervisor Bichteman indicated the town would’ve still needed to pay the insurance for the furloughed employees and reimburse the unemployment insurance. Mr. Bichteman advised it wouldn’t have saved the town much in comparison.

Councilwoman Burnside indicated that if cuts are made to the Town Clerk’s office they should also be made to the Supervisor’s office. Supervisor Bichteman did not believe that was an option.

A resident indicated that although Mr. Bichteman mentioned he was not in favor of shared services, she strongly believed that continued cuts to the highway department forces the town to engage in shared services in order for the roads to be maintained. She was not in favor of this.

A resident understood that with the exception of Supervisor Bichteman, that the Town Board was not in support of any layoffs. She believed they should work to find another solution. Mr. Bichteman responded that he didn’t want to lay anyone off but has reviewed what has been provided to him and he doesn’t see any other way to accomplish the goal. The resident believed Mr. Bichteman needs to listen to what the residents want.

Residents wondered if layoffs would be based on seniority. Mr. Bichteman mentioned he had reached out to the Town Attorney about that and was advised that job descriptions, seniority, specialized uses all play into how employees get laid off. Supervisor Bichteman advised that not only does his part time clerk assist as a backup to his full-time clerk, she helps both the Code Enforcement Officer and Assessor. He also mentioned that if his full-time clerk’s hours are cut, she will leave and so will he. Discussion continued regarding proposed cuts to the highway department and the concern for what will happen when there is another hurricane or bad snow storm.

A resident expressed the need for the town to explore alternate revenue sources.

A resident wondered if the Town Board is talking about laying off two individuals from the highway department, how in good conscience can they lay them off and ask them to pay more taxes when they just lost their jobs? She understood the town is paying laundry fees and insurance premiums, but questioned how the town can ask employees to take more out of their paychecks and now they are bringing home maybe half of what they normally would and then hit them with a tax increase on top of that. She further explained that whether you lay someone off or ask them to eat more and more it boils down to the same thing, you are taking more and more away from the people who work for your town.

Councilwoman Burnside asked Supervisor Bichteman to look into a buyout for employees to go on their spouse’s insurance.

**SCHEDULE CONTINUATION OF SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING**

Councilwoman Burnside suggested meeting next week again to continue discussions regarding how to handle potential cuts and/or raising taxes. The Town Board agreed to meet Thursday, June 11th at 7pm.

**UPDATE ON GRANT FOR HIGHWAY GARAGE INSULATION**

Supervisor Bichteman advised that final approval was received for the grant for the insulation at the Highway building.

**POSTPONEMENT OF SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING**

Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to postpone the continuance of the Special Town Board meeting until June 11th at 7pm. Seconded by Councilman Kryzak, all in favor motion carried. The Town Board meeting adjourned at 10:00pm.

Respectively submitted,

Kathleen Spinnato

Town Clerk

**PROPOSED**

**TRANSFER STATION PRICES**

**EFFECTIVE: JUNE 16, 2020**

REFRIEGERATORS, FREEZERS, AIR CONDITIONERS, ETC……… $20.00 EACH

APPLIANCES (WASHERS, DRYERS, STOVES ETC)………………… $10.00 EACH

SMALL TIRES: CAR & LT TRUCK………………………………………. $3.00 EACH

LARGE TIRES: DUMP TRUCK, BUS……………………………………. $15.00 EACH

CONSTRUCTION EQUPMENT TIRES: BACKHOE, GRADER………. $60.00 EACH

FARM EQUIPMENT TIRES: TRACTOR………… $20.00 PER VERTICAL FT. EACH

SMALL PROPANE TANKS: 25LB OR SMALLER……………………….. $5.00 EACH

LARGE PROPANE TANKS………………………………………………… $10.00 EACH

**PROPOSED**

**TOWN OF WESTERLO**

**PERMIT APPLICATION FEE**

**JUNE 2020**

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

**New**

Up to1,600 sq. ft……………………. $150.00

1,601 to 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area…. $20.00 per 100 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

\*Over 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area……. $600.00 plus $25.00 per 100 sq. ft. over 3,000 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

\*Unfinished basements and attics are not included in floor area.

\*Attached garages are included.

**Additions, Alternations, Accessory Buildings & Repairs**

(By total cost of work to be done)

Up to $1,000.00……………………… $20.00

$1,001 to $15,000…………………… $20.00 plus $8.00 per additional $1,000 over $1,000 (or fraction thereof)

$15,001 to $50,000…………………. $132.00 plus $5.00 per additional $1,000 over $15,000 (or fraction thereof)

Over $50,000………………………… $307.00 plus $4.00 per additional $1,000 over $50,000 (or fraction thereof)

**AG BUILDINGS WITH AG EXEMPTION**

Up to 1,000 sq. ft…………………… $100.00

Over 1,000 sq. ft……………………. $200.00

**NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

**New and Additions** (for other than warehouse type structure)

Up to 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area……. $25.00 per 100 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

Over 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area…….. $750.00 plus $22.00 per 100 sq. ft. over 3,000 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

**New and Additions** (for warehouse type structure)

Up to 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area……. $25.00 per 100 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

Over 3,000 sq. ft. in floor area…….. $750.00 plus $17.00 per 100 sq. ft. over 3,000 sq. ft. (or fraction thereof)

**Alteration, Modifications, Accessory Buildings & Repairs**

(By total cost of work to be done)

Up to $1,000…………………………. $30.00

$1,001 to $50,000…………………… $30.00 plus $7.00 per additional $1,000 over $1,000 (or fraction thereof)

$50,001 to $100,000………………… $373.00 plus $5.00 per additional $1,000 over $50,000 (or fraction thereof)

Over $100,000……………………….. $623.00 plus $4.00 per additional $1,000 over $100,000 (or fraction thereof)

**DEMOLITION**

Any size………………………………. $30.00

**CELL TOWER**

New…………………………………… $2,500

Modification…………………………. $1,000 min +

New Ring…………………………….. $2,000

**BOARD REVIEWS**

(Fees do not include Legal/Engineer expenses as applicable)

Subdivision………………………….. $100.00

Lot Line Adjustment/Annexation….. $50.00

Lot Fee……………………………….. $200.00 per lot

Special Use Permit…………………. $100.00

Variance Request…………………… $50.00

Churches/Fire Departments………. No Fee

Cell Tower New……………….. $2,500

Modification……… $1,000

New Ring…………. $2,000

Commercial Solar…………………… $2,500

**NOTES:**

1. Attached garages shall be included in the calculated square footage
2. When a permit needs renewal, the fee schedule of renewal is as follows:

1st year full fee as per calculation applicable according to approved fee schedule

2nd year renewal will be 75% of original permit cost

3rd year renewal will be 50% of original permit cost

4th year renewal if approved by Planning Board, reverts back to original permit fee

1. If a permit is revoked, application for a new permit is required and the fees will apply
2. When any combination of the above categories are involved in a single overall project, permits and fees for each individual category are required
3. Projects started/completed without having applied for a building permit when a permit is required, will be charged twice the amount of the original fee calculation according to the approved fee schedule