

**Danby Town Board  
Minutes of Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting  
November 9, 2015  
DRAFT**

**Present:**

Supervisor: Ric Dietrich  
Councilpersons: Rebecca Brenner, Leslie Connors, Jim Holahan, Jack Miller

**Others Present:**

Town Clerk Pamela Goddard  
Bookkeeper Laura Shawley  
Code Officer Paul Hansen  
Public Ted Crane, Ronda Roaring, Garry Huddle, Jim Rundle, Jessica Withers, Danny Disidoro

**Public Hearing was opened at 7:04pm**

**Questions and Comments**

Supervisor Dietrich asked Bookkeeper Shawley to provide an overview of the budget planning process and the proposed 2016 budget. Shawley described the parameters of the NYS tax cap in relation to infrastructure damage and the need for improvements to highway equipment in order to better maintain Town roads. She also noted that the recent town-wide increase in property assessments, has reduced the impact of any potential increase in the levy. The 2016 budget will be the first one to override the tax cap in four years.

There was a general discussion regarding the impact of the Fire District budget on property tax bills. Disidoro asked questions regarding the Fire District portion of the proposed 2016 Town of Danby budget; whether it was anticipated that this rate of increase will continue in future years and whether this rate of increase is negotiable. Dietrich and Shawley reported on discussions that have taken place between the Town Board and the Fire Commissioners. Shawley provided information regarding a major purchase of a water tanker truck that needs replacement by the Fire District. It was noted that the Fire District is an independent agency and that the Town Board has no control of its budget. A budget hearing for the Fire District budget was held in mid-October and was its budget passed at that time. Brenner stated the intent to continue communication with the Fire Commissioners.

**Public Hearing Closed at 7:20**

**Regular Meeting Opened at 7:20**

**Additions to Agenda - Gunderman Road PDZ #10 Update**

Miller asked for an update on the status of consideration regarding proposed changes to PDZ #10 on Gunderman Road. Dietrich outlined his understanding of the processes at this time. It is anticipated that the Board will pass a resolution declaring its intent to be "Lead Agency" for SEQR review during its first December meeting. Notification will be sent to other interested agencies.

Information from the Planning Board, in the form of minutes from the Oct. 22 special meeting, is still pending. Once that information is available, further steps will be made more clear.

It was noted that CJ Randall will have additional information at the next TB meeting.

## **Privilege of the Floor**

Jim Rundle spoke regarding Planning Board consideration of proposed changes to PDZ #10 on Gunderman Road. He presented a written statement, as an individual resident of Danby. His comments centered on the Planning Board process and his concerns related to impacts related to traffic, water use, and noise. He expressed concern that there is still ambiguity in the preliminary Planning Board recommendation, as there is disagreement between PB members. In his personal view, "I don't think that the Town should sign off on the notion that the public wants the kind of economic development this proposal would allow. On the contrary, they clearly do not, and in my view the location is wrong from a planning point of view." Rundle further stated, "To me, whether PDZ #10 should be modified depends entirely on exactly what is allowed, and I believe it requires much more restriction to be acceptable."

Ted Crane spoke in support of Rundle's comments regarding consideration of proposed changes to PDZ10 on Gunderman Road. He added that there is a big difference between PDZ #10 as it exists and what is being proposed. Most of these differences are related to public access, sales rooms, and the potential of a large traffic impact. He expressed concern as to whether any proposed mitigation would be adequate, let alone the ones the Planning Board discussed

## **RESP Presentation**

Emilie Cuppernell presented information about a Rural Energy Score Project being developed through the Tompkins County Council of Governments. Participating municipalities include Danby, Ulysses, Caroline, and the Town and City of Ithaca. General information about the program is available at the Town of Ithaca web site: [town.ithaca.ny.us/resp]. There is additional support from Tompkins County Planning and Cornell Cooperative Extension. The project is based on models being used by approximately a dozen states across the US.

Cuppernell emphasized the importance of improvements to existing residential buildings for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. 20% of energy used is for the heating of residential buildings. RESP will develop a home energy rating and disclosure process. This would rate the relative energy efficiency of a home. The proposed RESP rating disclosure would be used at point of sale, with the hope that this raise awareness of home energy performance and will motivate insulation and energy efficiency improvements. At this time the disclosure will be voluntary for homeowners.

There were several questions regarding the structure of the rating system and how this system might affect property resale values. Cuppernell stated that there is research to show that more efficient homes are worth more. However, there is no research to show how energy rating programs affect resale of less efficient older homes.

Dietrich expressed support, in principle, for this project. He expressed concern about insulation materials and potential fire hazards, particularly in rural areas. Dietrich expressed concern that highly insulated houses burn faster than older structures. Cuppernell stated that improvements have been made in flame retardant insulating materials. Hansen noted that design has an impact on fire speed, as well as building materials. Cuppernell noted that consideration of all these aspects is a "learning curve."

Holahan asked whether the comparison system would be comparable nationally or regionally. There will be two levels of rating, one of which will be comparable nationwide while the local label will specific to this area. Testing will be based on "whole house testing" through on-site inspection rather than utility bills.

Drafts of this project will be distributed to municipalities over the next few months. The RESP team will be seeking feedback and input during this process. The RESP team is seeking feedback and an eventual resolution of endorsement for the plan. It is hoped that a final draft of the project will be ready by the spring of 2016.

## **Approve 2016 Budget**

Shawley provided information regarding a \$12,000 loss to Danby's total assessed value, based on a recalculation of exemptions through the Tompkins County Department of Assessment. This change did not have a substantial impact on the proposed budget.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 89 OF 2015 - ADOPT TOWN BUDGET**

**Resolved**, that the Town Board of Town of Danby adopts the Preliminary 2016 Budget as presented.

**Moved by Connors, Second by Miller. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **Warrants**

### **ABSTRACT #11 OF 2015:**

#### **GENERAL FUND**

#440-479 for a total of \$35,955.71

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Connors. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

#### **HIGHWAY FUND**

#242-271 for a total \$267,204.47

**Moved by Connors, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

#### **WEST DANBY WATER DISTRICT**

#49-54 for a total of \$1,028.56

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **Approve Minutes**

### **RESOLUTION NO. 90 OF 2015 - APPROVE MINUTES**

**Resolved**, that the Town Board of Town of Danby approves the minutes of October 5, 7, and 12, 2015.

**Moved by Connors, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

Connors requested the addition of the sentence, "Connors requested that publicity for the presentation should take precedence over other activities and be the sole listing on one side of the sign in front of the fire station." in the section "Short Reports," of the October 19 minutes. Clerk Goddard agreed to this addition.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 91 OF 2015 - APPROVE MINUTES**

**Resolved**, that the Town Board of Town of Danby approves the amended minutes of October 19, 2015.

**Moved by Connors, Second by Brenner. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **Extend EMC Appointment**

Clerk Goddard provided information that the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council appointment is a three-year term. The Secretary of the County EMC has requested formal notification of whether Bill Evans is appointed through 2017. Evans is willing to serve in this capacity.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 92 OF 2015 - ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

**Resolved**, that the Town Board of Town of Danby continue the appointment of Bill Evans as the Danby Representative to the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council through 2017.

**Moved by Brenner, Second by Holahan. The motion passed.**

**In Favor: Brenner, Connors, Holahan, Miller, Dietrich**

## **CSEA Union Negotiations Update**

Dietrich gave a brief update on the status of CSEA Union negotiations. The final draft of the negotiated contract has gone to the Town Attorney for review and will also go to the CSEA Union for review. Key elements were what percentage of salary increase there will be and over how many years, and details regarding accrued sick time, etc. There is language regarding ways for the workforce to move forward in a positive way. The option for a second shift is not being pursued at this time. Laura Shawley offered to draft a quick summary and forwarded this to the Board.

## **Highway Barn Roof Repair**

Paul Hansen reported that roof repair at the Town Highway barns is essentially complete.

## **Code Enforcement Report**

Paul Hansen reported on activities of the Code and Planning office. He provided information regarding solar and wind energy installation projects which may be pending. There was a general discussion regarding which locations may be suitable for large installations.

There was a discussion of recent, large scale, burning of lumber, and whether the Town needs a municipal law related to permitted burning. Hansen provided information that there is concrete and specific enforcement through the NYS DEC and that a local law should not be necessary. Dietrich added that education for residents is important and that a set of articles will be published in the Danby Area News.

Ronda Roaring asked about Code Office monthly reports which are not yet posted on the Town web site. This level of record keeping will be brought up to date. Roaring again questioned the wording on building permits and stated her view that permits should be viewable from the road. Hansen and others stated support for the current practice of posting permits at the site of work, and gave several reasons for this practice. Brenner ask a question, on behalf of a resident, regarding how long a building permit needs to be displayed. Hansen answered that permits are generally posted for the duration of work.

## **Short Reports/Correspondence**

Copies of the Justice's reports were distributed to the Town Board.

## **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

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Pamela Goddard, Town Clerk