

**TOWN OF BRUNSWICK  
PUBLIC HEARING  
NOVEMBER 4, 2021, 6:15 P.M.  
TOWN HALL**

**Board Members Present:** Supervisor Herrington, Councilman Christian, Councilman Sullivan, Councilman Balistreri and Councilman Cipperly.

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Town Attorney, Thomas Cioffi and Town Clerk, William J. Lewis.

Supervisor Herrington called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. The hearing was for the purpose of accepting public comment on the Preliminary 2022 Town of Brunswick Budget.

Town Clerk Lewis read the Notice of Public Hearing. The notice had been published in The Record Newspaper and posted on the Town Hall bulletin board and website.

Supervisor Herrington spoke briefly about the proposed budget. For the 22<sup>nd</sup> time in 28 years there will be no tax increase. The 2021 budget was \$8,918,202.00 and the proposed budget for 2022 is \$9,181,108.00, a \$262,906.00 increase. There are increases in personal and contractual services and CHIP funding. Many fee collections were down substantially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Justice Court is down \$80,000.00, the Building Department \$20,000.00 and bank interest rates are lower. Hopefully these revenues will increase in 2022. All employees will receive a 2% raise. Minimum wage continues to increase. Minimum wage increases impact our summer program as the town employed approximately 125 people for councilor, lifeguard and maintenance positions last year. The Town's high deductible health plan, which helps hold down costs, is increasing by 7% in 2022. The Town continues to support the Brunswick Library and is increasing their funding by 3%. There is \$230,000.00 dedicated to Highway Department purchases, which he noted would only cover the cost of one large truck if needed. CHIP money will be \$410,000.00, which includes "Pave NY" money from the state and winter recovery funds. Sales tax Revenues increased some in 2021 and are expected to increase next year. We are increasing the Length of Service Award for Volunteer Firefighters in line with State guidelines. The only debts are a bond for Water District #11, which will be paid off this year, and one for the Town Hall. There is \$400,000.00 in the Sewer fund for storm water and sewer separation projects. The State increased the allowable contribution to Fire Company Length of Service Award programs, and the Town followed its guidelines, increasing it to \$1,200.00 per year per firefighter who qualifies. The feeling is that this incentive will help retain volunteer firefighters and be attractive to potential new recruits.

Supervisor Herrington opened the meeting for public comment.

**VISITORS WHO WISH TO SPEAK:**

Kathy Betzinger, 1 Valley View Drive. Ms. Betzinger asked if we had received the Federal economic stimulus money, how much was included and how it was being used. Becky Legacy, Bookkeeper, said roughly \$653,000.00 was received from the relief fund. Patrick Poleto, Assistant to the Supervisor, advised that the shortfall in revenue last year was approximately \$400,000.00 between the General, Highway, Water and Sewer Funds. Monies

have been apportioned to each of these funds to make up for the losses. There are different restrictions as to how the money is used at the town level, as opposed to the County's, with a large portion required for capital projects. There have been discussions regarding potential projects, mostly concerning water and sewer infrastructure. Also, there is new legislation in front of Congress with changes to how funds may be used. Ms. Betzinger asked about the Van Derheyden Dam project status and if grant money was applied for or if a loan could be taken out for the project. Mr. Poleto answered that we had applied, along with the County but both were denied. Part of this project involves the culvert under North Lake which is the County's responsibility. As to procuring loans, Councilman Sullivan noted that while it sounds good with current interest rates where they are, it still needs to be paid back, and the Town is averse to borrowing if at all possible. Supervisor Herrington also pointed out several other major projects that need to be addressed. The Town's water tower need renovation/replacement which could cost upwards of one million dollars; the Highway Department needs a building to protect equipment from the elements; paving, which is expensive, - for instance, \$85,000.00 for 1/3 of Sweet Milk Creek Rd. - needs to continue throughout town. So where do we apply the monies? We cannot pile on loans putting the Town in debt for the foreseeable future.

Jim Tkacik, 387 Brunswick Road, agreed that borrowing is not a good idea unless necessary. He urges the Town to stay aware of available grant money. They don't just get dropped in our lap, but have to be actively sought out by the town. Some, like the NYSERTA Clean Community grants, may require some spending up front, but can be well worth the return on investment.

Kathy Betzinger spoke again pointing to borrowing money for infrastructure as a wise investment, and in line with the Town's Comprehensive Plan for development of our commercial corridors; that the seemingly piecemeal approach to the development of the Route 7 corridor shouldn't be happening; that Route 7 itself needs to be improved. Mr. Poleto reminded people that Route 7 is a state road, and related an experience with the NYS DOT where the Town tried to help out. We convinced Nigro Development to transfer a piece of property to the state for free, which would allow the widening of a bottleneck area on Route 7 in front of Taco Bell and Pioneer Bank. It took the State 2½ years to even accept the land and to date they have not improved that area. They don't seem to think Route 7 is a problem.

Supervisor Herrington asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing. Motion was made by Councilman Christian and seconded by Councilman Sullivan. Unanimously approved. The Public Hearing closed at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Lewis  
Town Clerk