

Town Board/Budget Workshop
October 17, 2011

At the Special Budget Workshop Meeting on the 2012 Budget the Town Board of the Town of Cambridge, duly called and held the 17th day of October, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall, the following were present:

Supervisor William Watkins
Councilwoman Catherine Fedler
Councilman Alan Davis
Councilman Ted Berndt
Councilman Frank Ziehm

Others Present: Heather Greenawalt Town Clerk, Town Justice Janet DeCarlo, Rani Bass, Astrid Davis, Bruce Rolleston, Elizabeth Dillard, Eric Wilkins, Dan Thomas, Rob McMurray, Holly McMurray, Gerald Skiff

Supervisor Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and immediately led in the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

The Supervisor started by telling the public that this was a workshop for the Town Board, questions and answers will be considered.

Before the Budget Workshop began he made the public aware that two properties in the town were condemned. The property on County Rt. 74 Northeast Automotive, the Garage and Motor home were condemned and also the barn on County Rt. 59, both properties were discussed at the previous Town Board meeting. The landowner has until November 1st to act on this and then they will move forward on it.

2012 Tentative Budget

The Supervisor explained how he put this budget together. He explained that he had taken out of the budget \$1,400 for the Supervisor, \$2,500 Rescue Squad, \$5,000 Superintendent of Highways. He raised the following 3% raises for the 3 people left in the Highway Department, \$2,500 for the Town Clerk, 3% raise for the Secretary. Supervisor Watkins did state that if he was going to change something else that the Highway should get more money for the Equipment program.

Councilman Davis had made a flip chart because he felt that the impression was that the board is looking to spend money, especially on equipment. He went back through the minutes and put together this flip chart concerning the loader. In October of 2008 Eric Shaw said that the Highway needed a new loader, \$92,000 and the trade would be \$40,000 and the net cost to the Town would be \$52,000. This was shot down because were going to save \$52,000, he said this was the boards choice. However, since then with this loader 3 years later we have paid \$24,000 in repairs. The price of a new loader now, state contract is \$107,000, trade in value is \$30,000. If the loader was bought 3 years ago would not have the expense of the repairs and would have saved on the trade. Councilman Davis said that he was trying to look at the smarter way to do this. Councilman Davis mentioned that Eric Shaw was Highway Superintendent of the year for some magazine and he had mentioned in this article that Eric has mentioned keeping the machinery up to date is one of his top priorities and he has implemented Cambridge's

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first 20 year Equipment Plan. This plan was to keep the Town Board aware of his needs and the Board knew what to expect come budget time. Councilman Davis states that he feels that it is important to keep up with this plan because if they don't they are setting themselves up for failure. Supervisor Watkins stated that he felt that this was the one area that he would like to put more in for the budget.

Right now the budget is 1.92 % lower than what it was last year, for every \$5,000 you spend on budget line it is 1% increase or decrease. There is a 2% levy tax that must be followed according to the state. They discussed if put the \$10,000 back in the Highway equipment fund than that brings them flat at a zero loss. Councilwoman Fedler stated that they had roughly \$23,000 to work with tonight when following the tax cap.

The Board went over the budget line by line. It was decided to restore the Supervisor/Personal Service line A1220.1 from 0 to 2,800. Under Special Items Contingent A1990.4 was dropped back from 8,900 to 7,500, this \$1,400 was put back into Supervisor's Salary.

For the Budget Officer under Personal Services A1340.1 this was raised from \$100 to \$700. Councilwoman Fedler said that this was only the Preliminary Budget in the end the Board discusses it anyway, she felt that \$100 was plenty. Councilman Berndt proposed that they go back to 2009 level. Councilman Berndt stated that there was a considerable amount of preparation with Margaret to prepare this budget. Councilwoman Fedler stated that if anything than more should go to Margaret and not to the Budget Officer. Councilman Davis questioned whether or not they compared to any other Towns there is a substantial amount of difference here.

The Town Clerk's Salary was questioned in the amount of the raise from \$17,000 to \$19,500. The question was if you give the Highway a 3% raise than it should be a straight across the board 3% for everyone. It was decided to increase to \$17,510 the 3% raise.

On the Attorney the Contractual (A1420.4) this was changed from \$2,500 to \$2,000. Councilman Berndt proposed to lower to the \$2,000 because they thought that the Brownell Road Litigation would come to an end eventually.

For Rescue Squad line item (A4540.4) it was decided to change from \$2,500 to the same amount as last year which was \$5,000. Councilwoman Fedler questioned if the board had talked to people about this, they have paid employees and benefits. Councilwoman Fedler stated that there is another opinion out there if you talk to the public. Councilman Berndt stated that this is the best thing that you will be paying for on your tax bill, which comes out to be only \$2.38 per person.

Personal Services Total under Highway Garage should be 35,600 because it was dropped in the amount of \$5,000 for the Supt. of Highways Personal Services.

Under Highway Appropriations (DA5142.4) the Snow removal Contractual it was decided to increase this from \$67,000 to \$69,500 because the Highway will be taking on

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County Route 60. Councilman Davis had questioned if this is where the expenses come from for salt and sand. The Supervisor stated this is for materials. Councilman questioned if there is enough money figured in to cover to maintain county route 60. The Supervisor said that he had talked to Eric Shaw and he figured \$960 a mile. The concern was that this is materials only this does not cover labor. Councilman Berndt had suggested adding \$2,500 more to cover the extra expenses.

It was also decided to raise the Highway Equipment Reserve from \$25,000 to \$38,000 which would be Budgetary Provisions (for other uses) DA962. Councilwoman Fedler questioned the Supervisor if this is where he wanted to put in the \$10,000. Councilman Davis said that would be a start.

Councilwoman Fedler said there is one thing that needs to be added is the money to maintain the Town Website which would be about \$100.00 a year. Town Clerk Heather Greenawalt received a call from Catherine Littell that she would no longer maintain the website at no cost. This \$100.00 would need to be added to the Town Board Contractual (A1010.4) which changed it from \$500 to \$600.

There was more discussion whether or not to put more money in the Reserve for Equipment purchases. Councilman Davis still thought that they were cutting themselves short on the amount they were adding this year. Councilwoman Fedler stated that according to the purchase schedule they were due for a pickup truck and a loader. The pickup would probably cost \$30,000 and a new loader approximately a little over \$100,000. There was more discussion on the loader and the money that has been spent and what to do about the situation. Councilman Ziehm suggested to put \$3,000 more in the Equipment Reserve, which will take (DA962) to \$38,000.

The total amount to be raised by taxes after all the changes to the budget was \$586,893, which is still under the 2% tax cap that is required by the state. The board stated that they had accomplished a lot tonight and they were happy with this.

There being no further business before the board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully Yours,

Heather Greenawalt
Town Clerk