

**The City of Beacon Council Workshop  
Monday November 23, 2009**

The Beacon City Council Workshop was held on Monday November 23, 2009 in the Municipal Center courtroom. Even though there was five Mondays in November, the Mayor and Council felt it was necessary to have this extra meeting to continue to talk about the Budget and ways to reduce to prevent a fourteen percent tax increase to the constituents. Present were: Council members Sara Pasti, Randy Casale, Charles Kelly and Deanna Leake and Marlene Fredericks. Also in attendance: Mayor Steve Gold, City Administrator, Meredith Robson and City Attorney, Richard Wolf. Council member Eleanor Thompson was absent.

There were also in attendance, Chief of Police, City Clerk, Planning/Zoning Secretary, Highway Superintendent, and Recreation to discuss their budget. In addition Water Superintendent was also present to talk about the mandated Fluoridated Water that the County is encouraging all municipalities to comply.

The Workshop began at 7:05p.m.

**Welcome Center:** Denis White along with Norm Macleod was also in attendance to update on Welcome Center. Mr. White explained that the City of Beacon were under pressure as there was granting deadlines. Since then we have reapplied to NPS and to New York State and both of these organizations have not only accepted our application, but also extended the deadlines. City of Beacon has been approved for forty thousand plus. The two contractors who have responded originally are still willing to work with the City of Beacon. They have established new plans which are for the prefab costing \$25,863.00. Council Elect George Mansfield was able to get volunteers and materials donated. The estimated cost for the materials will be around 14,467, which brings the total anticipated budget to \$38,330, which brings this under budget by \$3,000.

Mr. White suggestion is to go out to bid again, to resubmit to NPS and New York State.

Mr. White explained that his contract as Project Manager expired in October, and will not leave Etha Grogan hanging with this particular grant. If the City would like to extend his contract, he previously was asking for 20% of the total project, Mr. White is willing to reduce his fee to 15%.

Council Member Casale and Leake stated that he will not back any decisions until the budget is reduced.

City Administrator stated, a) the City needs to wait to see where the Budget goes and b) that if this is pursued D. White should be the Project Manager, as a volunteer will not be able to back sure the the eyes are dotted and the t's are crossed.

All members took the time to thank Denis White, Norm MacLeod and George Mansfield for all their efforts and time put into this project.

### **Fluoridated Water – Jamie McCollum – Water Superintendent**

Mr. McCollum wrote to the Dutchess County Board of Health in Poughkeepsie which is as follows:

I am writing to express my concerns in regards to the proposed amendment to the Dutchess County Sanitary Code that will make it mandatory for all public water supplies serving over 10,000 consumers to add "fluoride" to their potable water beginning in January 2011.

First of all, I do not think that municipal water supplies should be playing "surgeon general" by dictating what consumers ingest into their bodies, other than what is required to maintain safe drinking water standards. As a purveyor of quality water, it is my duty to provide a safe and aesthetically pleasing product to the citizens of the community, namely the City of Beacon and the many Town of Fishkill residents that our system also serves.

Furthermore, I am not comfortable adding a chemical to the water supply that hasn't been deemed 100% safe by the entire medical and scientific community. In fact, it has been linked to cancer in teenagers. My staff and I have researched this subject in the past, and it seems to run about 50-50 world-wide in terms of for and against the benefits of fluoridation of water supplies.

Aside from the health related concerns, this proposal couldn't have surfaced at a worse time as municipalities struggle to exist economically! Operating budgets are maxed out and major tax increases, employee furloughs and/or lay-offs add to the daily dilemmas that most cities and towns now face as "survival" becomes the normal order of the day. This proposal would most certainly add major expenses to all of the targeted municipalities, as no one is prepared for the impact of the costs involved with the preparations (storage facilities, containment, chemical feed equipment, safety equipment, etc) for this process.

Again, as a civil servant of the community, who is entrusted with the supervision of the public water supply, I cannot in good conscience endorse this proposal. I feel that the citizens should be able to make their own informed decision with regards to fluoride and/or any other product that could be consumed through the water supply or any other means.

This is my personal stance on this matter. Although I am informing the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator and the rest of the community of this proposal, this letter is, thus far, my view only.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my opinions on this matter.

Sincerely,  
James McCollum  
Water Superintendent

cc:

Steve Gold, Mayor  
Meredith Robson  
Charles Kelly

Randy Casale  
Marlene Fredericks  
Eleanor Thompson

Deanna Leake  
Sara Pasti

Mr. McCollum, read the above letter, and asked if this letter can also be sent to our legislatures. Mayor Steve Gold stated that the City of Poughkeepsie is also opposed to this mandated law.

In addition, this will be an additional cost to the City for the tanks, chemicals, etc. Mr. McCollum also noted that chemicals will cost the City on annual basis

Council Member Fredericks asked if the City of Beacon water was chlorinated, which it is and this is to clean any bacteria in the water. That is mandatory.

There will be a resolution brought to the next Council Meeting stating that the City of Beacon would prefer not to fluorinate our water, as how can you make a municipality fluorinate the City Water, yet residents who have wells are not mandated?

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## **Budget**

### **A1410 - City Clerk – Iola Taylor –**

Mayor Steve Gold stated that the budget increased 7,491 last year final amount, but that is due to postage. In addition, the Tax Clerk will have a large mailing, and there are four quarterly water bills that are sent out.

Council Casale asked about the Book Binding – Which is the vital statistics that are put in protective paper and the records are sent out to an organization who binds all the records. The reason for the increase is the Clerk's office did not send out many vital statistics books in 2008, but this year as there was time to take care of this task, the office was able to forward some books to be bound, which the City is waiting for the bill to be paid.

Council Kelly asked about the training line item. The type of training that will be done this year is with our software company Munis. Due to updates that Munis sends requires a representative from Munis to come to the City of Beacon to train the staff on the new version. The amount for Munis to come for one day is \$1,000.00.

Council Kelly asked if there were other departments that use this software which they do, but for some reason they do not have the tribulations that the Accounting Department has with Water Bills, etc. It is an ongoing problem with the modules that Munis has provided to the Accounting Department. City Administrator stated that on the Billing and Collection end there are far more problems then what the Finance Department has.

In addition, the City Clerk stated without a Water Clerk, the Tax Clerk had to be trained to produce the Water Bills, which took some training.

Council Kelly thought having training year in and year out seemed a bit costly because of module upgrades.

Council Casale questioned line item of purchase of equipment. City Clerk stated that that was for the folder sealer machine that is used for the water bills.

Council Pasti questioned the Rental Equipment, which is for the Postage Meter.

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### Planning/Zoning – Etha Grogan A 8020

Mayor Steve Gold asked if the Consultant line was paid by the applicants. City Administrator stated that this is for “our” consultants for example David Stolman. With the Comprehensive Planning now in place everything else is triggered from that, caused Zoning Changes, etc.

Council Kelly questioned the Salary Line. This was explained that E. Grogan salary is divided between Administration, Zoning and Planning and Development. The overtime is generated from Ms. Grogan attending meetings for Zoning and Planning to take minutes for the Planning and Zoning.

Council Casale – Asked if the Engineer cost is reimbursed. John Russo from Lanc and Tully at times does administrative work, like with grants, etc.

Mayor Steve Gold stated that both Zoning and Planning Budget is down from last year. City Administrator did note that there could be additional expenses due to the Comprehensive Plan which could cause additional ordinances.

Council Casale asked if the Professional Services has gone out for RFP. City Administrator stated that this is on tonight’s agenda discuss

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### Recreation – Mark Price A7140

For 2009 Budget the Expenditures matched the Revenue coming in. Camp was the most problematic for the City. The City of Beacon decided not to take the Dutchess County subsidies for Recreation. In the past the City received approximate \$4,000.00 from DC for Recreation in the past. The City did have a lower enrollment in the Camps. Expense was about \$70.00 per child for camp. Council Member Casale questions the line item for Counselors. Last year we spent 17 thousand, for 2009 requesting 22 thousand for 2010. **Suggest to reduce this to 17 thousand.** Mayor Gold asked if the 22 thousand can be reduced to what it was budgeted for in 2009. It was noted that there is no background check for any of the Counselors that the City hires for Camp. City Administrator will act on this to initiate a background check on all employees who work with children. The Mayor stated that he had requested that the **funds for BBC and MLK be split in half for the budget of 2010.** Mayor Gold suggested contacting Fishkill to see what programs they offer to their seniors and the possibility of collaborating services. Rental Equipment is for the porta-potty in the parks, which if it is a paid function, this is paid for by the party that rents the park. It was noted that the proposed budget is for 6,500 and in 2009 it was 4,109. Reason is the possibility of putting in bathrooms at the parks. **Mayor Gold asked that this be put back to 2009 budget amount of \$4,109.** The Pool Expense line for 2010 is for \$3,000 which four organizations uses besides the residential swim. It was discussed before spending \$3,000 for a pool the \$3,000 should go towards keeping the firehouse open. A suggestion was to contact Southern Dutchess County Club to see if the residents can use their pool. There were many discussions regarding the pool. Mark Price will look at ways to keep the pool open at a lower cost. It is a losing proposition for

any organization to have a pool. It was noted that when a developer develops in Beacon, they put a certain amount of money in a recreation fund. It was also noted that Swings for older children need to be down at Riverfront Park. Also, fences are falling down, and it was brought to the table to use these funds to either repair or remove the unsightly fences. Another issues was brought up was handball court. This is a good recreation for our youths.

### **Police Budget – A 3120 – Chief Scofield**

The Chief stated that he meets with the City Administrator every other week to discuss the budget. Overtime for events, Chief Scofield will have a breakdown of what events causes' overtime expense. Discussions with regards the increase in Crossing Guard Salaries \$80,450. It was noted that the City should get the word out (churches, schools, firehouses) advertising for School Crossing Guards. A solution needs to be made regarding this increase from 2009 in the amount of 50,891. Detective Overtime is increased from 84,000 to 98,868. This is due to investigations at times ongoing investigations, going to trial, etc. There is a possibility that the City of Beacon can recoup some revenue for the Juvenile Detective Overtime, from the City of Beacon School District for one of the Detectives as he/she is there ninety percent of the time. There is one officer out on medical leave, one officer who could retire, and one officer who is Military Reserve could be called out next year. It was determined that overtime is a problem with the Police Department. There was a discussion regarding two new police cars in the budget. It was suggested to seek out grants for Police Cars and other grants for the Police Department. Chief Scofield noted that in 2009 the Police Department had two cars budgeted and only obtained one. There was a rotation three cars one year, two cars the following years. Computer Budget is for \$20,140 the discussion was why the Police Department needs new computers do every year. A tax increase of 14 ½ percent is unacceptable for the Police Department to get new computers. Holiday pay is contractual paid at time and one half. It was noted that the cameras are not working as of this date, as we are waiting for the vendor to show up. The Blue Dragon issue has been filed waiting on a court date. Police telephones and cell phones will be revisited by the Administrator and the Chief. Training budget is for the Accreditation for the Police Department. Certification becomes official after six months from the inception of utilizing the Policies and Procedures. Target date is going to be in 2010. The Police Department is three quarters of the way completed for the policy and procedures. It was decided to average out the Misc. & out of title for the past years which averages around five thousand a year instead of budgeting twelve thousand. All Departments will be coming back to an upcoming Workshop. The Mayor would like to revisit all the items that the Council has questions about.

### **1620 Public Buildings**

Oil for all the building is a county bid. Mase Hook and Ladder expense for electric is substantial more than the other Fire Houses. Expenses for the three fire houses are electric, gas, oil and repairs.

It was noted by the Mayor that there will be a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm at the Memorial Building to discuss the Budget. The Mayor directed the Executive Assistant to contact the Beacon Free Press, Channel 22 and the City of Beacon Website regarding the scheduling of the Town Hall Meeting.

### **5110 - Highway**

Overtime in the Highway Department was due to the paving of the roads.

The Council discussed regarding flags and flowers on Main Street. Mr. Norm MacLeod stated that the Garden Club orders the baskets for Main Street. The only problem is getting them water on a regular basis. Council Casale stated that he would be willing to help out water the flowers. He would have to use a City Truck to do this task.

Highway Superintendent, Anthony Thomaselli is concerned about the work getting done this summer, without the summer help that was cut from the budget.

An alternative plan for the recycle plant is to go three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and have the staff from the Recycle Plant to work up in the Highway Department on the other days. Discussion regarding residents and others being disgruntle if the recycle plant is not open except for three days a week. It will take time for residents and others to accept this change.

Questions were brought to the table regarding the conditions of the vehicles in the Highway Department. The basic equipment is in good shape. Mr. Thomaselli stated that he believes he should be set for a couple of years as far as buying any kind of vehicles as the mechanics do a great job.

Brush pickup – It was noted that the City is very generous for the on demand brush pickup. There should be a schedule and the constituents would have to have their brush out to the streets according to schedule, otherwise it will be up to the constituent to find other means to discard the brush.

Engineering requested 19,800 this line item was changed to 20,000 by City Administrator due to the fact of the upcoming proposed planning and zoning.

Furloughs if the Council should go that route, Mr. Thomaselli stated that if the Council has to do it, there will be many areas of service not getting done. Mr. Thomaselli stated that the Council needs to be mindful when there are rainstorms or snowstorms, he will need staff to come in and take care of any business that needs to be done in order for the City to be safe and/or prevent damage. Mr. Thomaselli is totally against layoffs, he would prefer furloughs ONLY if need be. It was further noted that this department will be losing an FTE to retirement and possibly two FTE after winter.

It was noted that when there is a snow storm, the police department needs to go out and put summons on vehicles that are not obeying the snow ordinances. The Police Department needs to be mindful when it snows they need to go out patrolling for

violators. This will be revisited again. A request to Executive Assistant to the Mayor to notify the Free Press, Channel 22 and our City web site regarding the snow ordinances and violators will be summoned. In addition, if any resident throws snow into any roadway in Beacon they also will be summoned.

Next week is another Workshop Meeting to discuss the budget and to revisit items.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00pm.

Respectfully submitted

Colleen Swift

December 7, 2009