

**The City of Beacon Council Workshop
Monday November 30, 2009**

A motion by Council Kelly, second by Council Pasti to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel at 6:05pm.

A motion by Council Pasti, seconded by Council Casale to come out of Executive Session at 7:05pm

The Beacon City Council Workshop was held on Monday November 30, 2009 in the Municipal Center courtroom. Present were: Council members Deanna Leake, Charles Kelly, Randy Casale, Marlene Fredericks and Sara Pasti. Also in attendance: Mayor Steve Gold, City Administrator, Meredith Robson and City Attorney, Richard Wolf. Council member Eleanor Thompson was absent.

The Workshop commenced at 7:05p.m.

The Council went over the entire budget to see if there can be any other additional budget amendments from the Proposed 2010 Budget for the City of Beacon.

The Council suggested and all members agreed that they will be emailed a Council and or Workshop Package weekly, and the Council will have a full packet supplied to them the evening of the meeting. All additional mail will also be included in the binders of each Council Member. This will be a big savings on paper and postage.

A1010 - Council

467000 - Council Association Dues – Historic River Towns – All Council Members agreed to eliminate this line from the budget **(\$3,000)**.

453300 – Economic Development Zone \$19,500 (Maybe) – Mayor Gold asked if City Administrator Meredith Robson to contact John McEnroe of the Dutchess County Economic Development (IDA) to find out which business in Beacon benefit from this. Most business on Main Street is too small to take advantage of this, as a business would need a certain number of FTE in order to qualify. In addition, City Administrator will find out if we do not participate this year, can we get back in next year. This item will be revisited upon receiving information from the City Administrator. Will discuss at the next workshop meeting on December 14th.

452010 – Grant Writing Consultant \$15,000 (Maybe) – This was discussed in length and decided to contact the gentleman who emailed the Mayor and Council Members offering to volunteer his time to do Grant Writing in the City. The Mayor and other members of the Council will interview the volunteer this line item will be revisited at the next workshop. It was stressed that our present grant writer is phenomenal and articulate when she writes grants. It was noted that for \$15,000 for the Grant Writer consultant fee the City of Beacon obtained grant money totaling \$322,027. In addition, our present Grant Writer has many contacts which are very important writing grants. Mayor Gold

stated that he has emailed our Grant Writer to get some feedback on the individual who would like to volunteer his time, and to date no response. A report from our Grant Writer is as follows:

STATUS OF CITY OF BEACON 2009 GRANT APPLICATIONS
(As of November 15, 2009)

Grants Awarded - \$322,027:

\$233,100 Green Innovation grant from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation to purchase and install a water leak detection system.

\$22,322 Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund grant from New York State Archives to renovate and reorganize the records storage room in the basement of the Municipal Building.

\$66,605 U. S. Department of Energy grant to install a solar electric power system on the roof of the Municipal Building.

Applications Pending - 43250:

Smart Growth Grant Program - Two applications were submitted on September 14, 2009 to the New York State Department of State, one for a \$25,875 grant to create a City Center Redevelopment Plan and the other for a \$17,375 grant to develop a Shuttle System Operating Plan. (The City also submitted an application for Beacon Station TOD Design Guidelines on behalf of Metro-North Railroad.)

Application Denied:

COPS Hiring Recovery Program - A \$922,362 grant application was submitted to U.S. Department of Justice to hire three community policing officers for three years. Only 12 grants were awarded in NYS out of more than 225 applications. Beacon's application ranked 32nd in the state, but the City's crime index was too low to be competitive for this grant program.

Council Salaries: The Council is willing to take a cut in salary if need be. City Administrator Meredith Robson stated that this will be revisited at the next workshop.

Channel 22 – It was unanimous that the Council agreed to buy the equipment to operate Channel 22 for a total of \$10,000 with the City of Beacon School Board to pay for half of the equipment.

1210 – Mayor

22000 – Purchase Office Equipment – Budget amount is **\$500 this will be reduced to \$100**. It was noted that purchase of a good recording device to be used at meetings to take minutes is needed. The funds can be pulled from either Council or Mayor Budget

It was noted that the Mayor cut out the Cell Phone Bill and Phone Line Item as he as Mayor will take full responsibility for his own Cell Phone.

462000 – Travel - \$500 – Mayor Gold stated that again he has paid for all traveling expenses and will continue to do so. **This line item was budgeted for \$500 which will be reduced to \$100.**

423000 – Telephones Due to the fact that the contract with ITC (City of Beacon Telephone Service) is going to expire, City Administrator will contact other phone companies to get quotes on phones and services. As of now City Administrator will only sign a month to month agreement with ITC until other quotes are available to compare. **To be revisited at the next Workshop.**

1220 – Technology

452003 – IT Consultant \$29,000 - City Administrator will put out an RFP for this service. **To be revisited at the next Workshop.**

444100 – Professional Licenses/Permits \$6,500 – This is for Microsoft Licensing. City Administrator will get more information regarding this line item. **To be revisited at the next Workshop.**

1230 – Administrator

443200 – Training – City Administrator is required to obtain training which is 3,000, Ms. Robson stated that she is willing to pay for \$2,500 of this line item.

1325 – Finance

440770 – Annual Audit – \$80,000 - Discussions regarding the Auditors. 1) Would like to have RFP's. 2) Council would like to see the final Audit for the Year. City Administrator will call Sedore and Company to get a date for the final copy. 3) A request was made to have the comments for the past ten years submitted to the Council to review what comments and if they have been corrected. It was noted that this auditing firm found \$200,000 in Grant money. **To be revisited at the next Workshop.**

1355 – Assessor

45001 – Revaluation Consultant - \$7000 – The Assessor at times requires expertise in certain areas of evaluations, such as litigation matter or commercial matters. This is a needed item. **City Administrator will talk with Kathy Martin regarding the Revaluation Consultant and the Appraiser line item for \$6,000 to obtain additional information. To be revisited at the next Workshop.**

1362 – Tax Advertising & Expense - \$30,000 - Remove

City Administrator explained that this is for delinquent taxes. It was noted that on the Auditors Report year after year after year is the uncollected taxes. The City cannot put it

under revenue as it not determined when the actual money will come in as revenue. It was agreed to remove \$30,000 from the proposed budget. City Administrator will talk to the auditors regarding uncollected taxes.

1364 – Property Acquired for Tax – This item is regarding the Ski Lodge that was acquired a few years ago. It was brought to the attention of all that this property owner had a certain amount of time to develop on this property, or it reverts back to the City of Beacon. **City Attorney Wolf will investigate this matter and report back at the Council Meeting of December 7th.**

1420 – Attorney – Council Member Casale stated for the record, he is not happy with all the attorney fees that the City pays for. This will be discussed in Executive Session. City Administrator will put out RFP for Attorney. It was suggested to look into a “firm” that has specialty in all areas. City Administrator stated that it is very important to have a good Labor Attorney.

1450 – Elections – Legislature will be voting on charge backs to cities and towns. **Mayor Gold will send a letter to the County Executive Steinhaus saying that the City of Beacon is opposed to this.**

1990 – Contingency – It was explained that his is for potential retirement payouts. It was further decided that this will be discussed in Executive Session.

3510 – Animal Control

459301 – Trap/Neuter/Return – There was discussion regarding **reducing this line item from 8,000 to 1,000** and have the remainder of the cost donated by residents if they would like this program. All agreed.

The Animal Control Position is a shared service with other municipalities. Each municipality has their own van. Council would like City Administrator to check to see if this individual is not using City of Beacon’s Van for other municipalities. There is concern that the Animal Control individual is using the City of Beacon Van for other municipality. City Administrator has been doing some tracking of work performed by this individual.

3625 – Rescue Squad

It was noted by the City Administrator that Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corp is up to speed and has been doing a wonderful job, and very pleased with this organization. Mayor Gold stated that we were paying about \$200,000 per year and now we do not have to pay the City needs to show them a little gratitude. Mayor Steve Gold suggested having a proclamation for an upcoming Council Meeting.

7112 – University Settlement Camp

There was considerable discussion regarding this line item in the Proposed Budget. City Administrator stated that the City has to maintain it to be safe. It was determined that keeping the pool open and having events there is a loss of revenue for the City. It was decided to have this property used as a walk in, walk out park. The following line items will be reduced:

412696 – Fuel for Heat Settlement Camp - **It was decided to reduce this line item from \$3,600 to \$1,000**

412796 – Cooking Gas **It was decided to reduce this line item from \$500 to \$0.00**

445100 – Maintenance Agreement **It was decided to reduce this line item from \$2,475 to \$1000**

422096 – Electric - \$5,200 - Zep will bring the electrical down to minimal amount. Zep will find out this information and **report back at the next Workshop.**

447300 – Maintenance of Equipment – The Council asked what type of equipment is used. Zep stated some but not limited too is the lawn mower, weed whacker, boilers, etc. It was the consensus of the Council to have this line item **reduced from \$2,475 to \$1,000**

447300 – Repair of Real Property – After discussing this at length it was decided that the University Settlement Camp as a passive walking park. **Reduce this line item from \$2,475 to \$1,000**

The topic of Patrick Freeman living in a house at the University Settlement Camp and only paying utilities needs to be re-evaluated.

The Mayor requested that Mark Price of Recreation, to make some connection taking out some reciprocal lines out, so we can decide if we are going to use the pool or not use the pool and **Come back to Revisit this at the next Council Meeting.**

8160 – Sanitation – The City started a Pilot Program where the Sanitation Company will be required to run a organic waste material to see if it makes sense to go in that direction. It was noted that the contract expires on December 31, 2009. City Administrator stated that the City will pay as we go. The company is going to wait for the bid.

8040 – Human Relations – It was noted that the Human Relation is still looking for a secure, confidential place.

8189– Recycling – It was noted that the Recycling Plant brings in revenue when residents bring furniture and other materials. In addition, the City of Beacon changed the Free Dump last year from dropping 500 tons to 250 tons.

9060 – Health Insurance – This is part of bargaining negotiations. City Administrator explained that right now if we maintained our current providers the City probably will not have enough money to cover. If the City Switches to Self Insurances there will be significant changes but will not know what that will be as MVP will not share their actual claims. Going self insured has the potential to save the City of Beacon hundreds of thousands of dollars. The language is specific in the Contract either MVP or Blue Shield, so as of right now cannot change.

BUDGET ITEMS FOR REVIEW

Changes to be considered:

Meeting			Current	Possible Revised Amt.	Effect on Expenses/ Revenues
11/23/2009	<u>Recreation</u>				
Expense	A7140.173100	Playground Counselors	22,000	17,611	(4,389)
	A7140.447000	Rental of Equipment	6,500	4,500	(2,000)
	A7141.XXXXXX	Pool Budget-Expense	35,850	-	<u>(35,850)</u>
		Recreation Expense Effect			(42,239)
Revenue	A7141.XXXXXX	Pool Budget-Revenue	7,000	-	<u>(7,000)</u>
		Recreation Revenue Effect			(7,000)
		Net Recreation (of all changes above)			(35,239)
	<u>Police</u>				
Expense	A3120.102000	Crossing Guards	80,450	60,450	(20,000)
	A3120.250000	Purchase Equipment	64,000	32,000	(32,000)
	A3120.220001	Purchase Computer Eq	20,140	-	(20,140)
	A3130.105201	Misc. & Out of Title	12,636	8,000	<u>(4,636)</u>
		Police Total			(76,776)

Additions to Budget

ITC Phone System	-	7,200	7,200
Channel 22	-	7,000	7,000
Elections	-	38,000	38,000
Fire Consultants	-	25,000	<u>25,000</u>
Total			77,200

Topics For Discussion

Fire

- Closing fire house
- Eliminate fire secretary

Water

- Water - Do we need a second shift?

General Comments

- RFP's for all consultants

7141 – Pool - If the Council closed the pool, it would reduce the revenue for camps that use the University Settlement Camp. It was noted that the USC Pool brought in only 7,000 and it cost the City 35,000. The Pool is a luxury, and there is a river pool that residents can use. There are four votes to close the pool, Mayor Gold would like to wait to get more information, but since there are four votes to close, the Pool is closed. Mayor Gold asked Mark Price to still conduct the study on the Pool.

Crossing Guards - The original proposed amount was 80,450, but after looking at the historical data, Chief Scofield stated that this can be **Reduced to 65,000.**

Telephones – Due to an error the \$14,000 can be **Reduced to 10,860**

Police Vehicle – The Police vehicles are in operation twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. There are three vehicles that are in excess of ninety thousand miles, which may necessitate a higher repair line than anticipated. Original request was for two vehicles, keeping in rotation. The Police Department received two new vehicles in 2009 that was budgeted in 2008. Chief Scofield reiterated again, that he spoke to the District Attorney and there are no grants available for Patrol Cars. Discussions regarding purchasing energy efficient vehicles, which the Chief will look into, but believes there is no squad car as of this time that is energy efficient. It was determined to keep one car in the budget as of right now, but will be **revisited at the next Workshop.**

Resource Officer – At one point the School district offered to pay for half the expense for this position. City Administrator Robson will contact Fern Afsky, School Superintendent to discuss this issue of paying for half of the Resource Officer. This would be a savings of \$35,000. Most Municipalities have the school district pay for the entire amount for a Resource Officer.

Computer Equipment **\$20,140**– Chief Scofield stated that is not to replace anything that is not operable. The Police Department applied for a grant for laptops scanner and printers. Waiting on the money to purchase. Mayor Gold, suggested not to reducereduced the amount budgeted for and if it is needed then it is there to use it. **Will come back and Revisit at the next workshop.**

Detectives – Miscellaneous Out of Title **\$20,140**– City Administrator suggested that this be discussed in Executive Session.

Addition to the Budget: - Maintenance Agreement expires in a week or so. Mayor would like **City Administrator to RFP this item, and in the mean time pay month to month.**

Channel 22 – It will cost the City 7,000 to buy the equipment and to have a staff member upload any information. **City Administrator was asked by the Mayor to but this into the Budget.**

Elections - \$38,000 – There is a potential that this would have to be part of the budget. Right now it is in the County Executive level to be voted on. What was proposed by the County Executive is that each municipality pays for have for the equipment. **Maybe to be revisited at the next workshop**

Fire Department – This is going to be discussed in Executive Session, as more information is being gathered. **To be revisited at the next workshop.**

Water Department – Going to 2nd shift. Due to a conflict in schedule the Supervisor was not able to attend. **To be revisited at the next workshop.**

Additional Revenue – West Point - - Possible additional revenue of 240,000.

Fire Department- - Gas & Oil \$18,000 – A question was asked if this was for the Chief and Assistant Fire Chief Cars.

Cell Phones for \$5,000 is this for the Chief and Assistant Fire Chief?

Training Certification for \$24,000. It was noted that this is contractual item. This is for the Career Staff.

Training – It was noted that the Assistant Fire Chief refuses to attend this training, and the City has to pay anyway. This is going to be discussed in Executive Session.

Chief Stipend - \$25,000 – It was noted that this amount gets decided on by the Fire Chief. No one is aware of this being in writing. This item needs to be addressed.

It was further noted that the Council needs to pay close attention to the Fire Department, needs to pay very close attention!

Due to the fact that the Fire Chief left the meeting, these items will need to **be revisited at the next workshop.**

City Administrator Robson wanted to remind the Council of some facts:

1. Six Hundred Thousand of Revenue Projected for 2010
 - a. One half of the Revenue is based on the State paying the City \$530,000
 - b. \$110,000 coming back from Escrow of Hiddenbrooke.
2. Expenditures not necessarily as conservative as they should be, i.e. retirement/severance, no salary increase for any employee and health benefit costs.
3. So low on expenditures now that we cannot cover unexpected expenses.
2. We need to get through 2009, 2010 and prepare for 2011 knowing that we're continually using one time revenues to fill the gaps and we'll have 50% in pension cost. This is on the record, just wanted to remind all the Council to be mindful of these issues and not look at line items, but the whole picture.

Transit Oriented Development – Council received that latest version dated 11/13/09, which addresses most of the concerns. The Mayor asked City Administrator when the Council can expect the Cost of Service Report. It should be here today, or tomorrow.

Professional Services – The City of Beacon will be putting out RFP's on all Professional Services (Engineer, Planner, Attorney, Auditors and IT Consultant. Would it be feasible to have a big firm that has expertise in all areas? City Administrator stated that the Labor Attorney has to be good.

Special Use Permit – Artist Live/Work Spaces – 39 Front Street – Applicant Fishkill Creek Development. The City has already approved 12 a couple years ago; he is very successful and would like to put in additional Artist Live/Work Spaces. This will go to Council on Monday, December 7th.

Appointments: There were several appointments for Traffic & Safety, Fire Advisory, Board of Ethics and Planning Board that will also be brought to Council on Monday, December 7, 2009.

Mayor Steve K. Gold announced that there will be a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, December 10th at 7:00pm regarding the budget. This meeting will take place at City Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 pm with the Council going into Executive Session. Motion by Council Fredericks, seconded by Council Kelly to enter Executive Session to discuss litigation and personnel.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Swift
Executive Assistant to Mayor
Date: December 4, 2009