

**The City of Beacon Council Workshop
Monday December 14, 2009**

The Beacon City Council Workshop was held on Monday December 14, 2009 in the Municipal Center courtroom. There is a Special Meeting Scheduled for this evening but will commence after the presentation of the Cost of Service Analysis Presentation and the few items, significantly the Proposed Budget of 2010. 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.

The Workshop began at 7:15p.m.

AKRF - Environmental, Planning, and Engineering Consultants who was hired by the City of Beacon to perform an Impact Study Cost Analysis of the four projects 1) Transit Oriented Development, 2) Edgewater, 3) Fishkill Creek Development, and 4) RD-1.7.

The principles whom presented the Impact Study Cost Analysis are John Neil and Dennis Minselli.

This presentation will be on the www.cityofbeacon.org for future viewing.

Proposed RD-1.7 Design Residence Zoning District

This is to remind the Council Members that we have this ordinance as well as the Transit Oriented Development. These ordinances were put on hold as the City was waiting for the Traffic Study which has been completed and also the Impact Cost Analysis Study which was presented earlier this evening. Early part of January it will be put back on the Agenda for consideration. This ordinance is not part of the TOD and the City of Beacon is ready to act on this Proposed Local Zoning Law. As soon as our City Planner gets some dates to the City Administrator it will be put back on the Workshop Agenda in January.

Proposed 2010 Budget

City Administrator Robson shared with the Council an updated analysis of where the City of Beacon is as far as reducing expenditures to bring the proposed tax increase down from 14.58% in November to 12.93% as of this date, to a single digit number. This does not include sales tax revenue that the City of Beacon. Mayor Gold explained that if the County goes over and removes the clothing exemption. City Administrator stated that this revenue is not included as they tried to get a number from the County but was not able to retrieve that information. The only thing that the City found out that this would not be effective until March, 2010. It was noted that Mr. John Forman at another meeting mentioned that the clothing exemption would be around the figure of eighty thousand dollars, which is revenue for the City. It is very likely that the County is going to end the Clothing Tax Exemption.

There was much discussion regarding purchasing an additional police car. By the end of the meeting, a report was shared with the Council Members which was a list of vehicles with mileage and the cost of gas for each car. It was unanimous, because the low mileage on several of the police cars, it was decided to pass these low mileage cars over to patrol and keep the high mileage cars for staff that does not need to go long distance. **As of tonight two police cars will be pulled from the proposed budget. In addition, City Administrator will be contacting the Grant Writer for her to do some research on getting a grant for Police Vehicles and Computer Equipment.**

Council Member Kelly suggested bonding for Police cars. City Administrator stated that Police cars are not considered capitalized item, because their live spam is short.

Council Member Fredericks asked if the Police are in need of the Motorcycle and the Cushman. It was relayed that the Chief does not want to use either vehicle.

Resource Officer – City Administrator made several attempts to contact the School Superintendent, with no success. Discussions regarding only sending over a Police Officer for a small part of the day and have the School District hire a Resource Officer and pay for it. Ms. Robson will continue to try to touch base with Fern Afsky, BCSD. Council Member Casale stated that he brought this up last year at budget time, and it was noted that the School is also having a hard time with their budget.

Grant Writer Consultant – The volunteer is a great idea, but the consultant that the City uses is extremely valuable to the City of Beacon, for her connections alone. But she also has brought in money to the City. There is still discussion regarding bringing in the person who would write grants for the city as a volunteer service. Further, it was noted that before the City even had a Grant Writer, the City was receiving grants. Suggestion is to have this volunteer write a grant and see if it brings any money in. It was noted the amount of money that the City pays this Grant Writer and the amount of money that has come in the City is by far a wise decision to keep this Grant Writer. **It was decided that the City will keep the Grant Writer in the Budget.**

D.C. Economic Development – After discussion, it was decided to pay half for the first six months and then make a decision whether or not to keep it. NOTE: This has to be funded for the full year, whether or not the City pays for the second half or not. This does not bring the budget percentage down. It was noted that a business would like to come to Beacon because of the Empire Zone. It was asked if the business that is in the Empire Zone could pick up the cost. Mayor Steve K. Gold stated that it is not feasible as the paperwork is difficult to fill out. Council Casale was not satisfied with the presentation that was presented at the Council Meeting of December 7th as all the questions he asked, the staff member of the D.C. Economic Development could not answer a lot of the questions. Each business is entitled to benefits to belong to this Empire Zone and Council Member Casale and Leake both agreed that the business using the Empire Zone, the fee should be forwarded to the business to pay. **This is on hold until next week.**

Telephones – It was noted by the City Administrator that the ITC (Telephone Company, who supplies the phones and equipment to operate) maintenance agreement (\$7,000) is about to expire. Council asked for RFP's to be sent out to get some other quotes for telephone equipment. City Administrator Robson strongly urged the Council to keep ITC for now and that next year she will look for other companies. It would be detrimental if in fact the phones did not work and the City would have to pay for a service call.

It was noted that the telephone bills are astronomical, which they will be an audit, such as the efficiency study where they would take part of the savings. It was the consensus to continue with the ITC Agreement. **City Administrator will check on the amount again, there is a chance instead of 72 hundred it could be 22 hundred.**

Professional Services Licenses – This item was discussed with the IT Consultant and it was confirmed that this item is needed and will stay in the Budget. The City will be looking into Verizon FIOS.

Police – Purchase of Computer Equipment - \$20,140 – It was noted that last year they had a budget amount in this area for \$31,323. Also there was a grant for computers for the Police Department. It was noted that John Ballo last week was able to get the City a Members Item for 17,000 for the Fire Department. Further the City of Beacon should contact a Senator and ask for a Members Item for Computers for the Police Department if they are in need. Mayor Steve K. Gold stated that he did contact Senator Saland office, asking for help with the Police and Fire Department, and Senator Saland asked Mayor Gold to put it in writing and he will see what he can do. The Council noticed that the Police Department spent \$43,673 in 2008 for Computers. Council Casale said that this budget is a wish list. **The consensus was to change the amount of \$20,140 to \$8,000. If in fact the Police would need more funds for then a budget transfer would occur.**

Miscellaneous & Out of Title \$13,636 - This item was for retirements in the Police Department if any. **This item can be removed from the budget as it was discussed in Executive Session.**

Fire Chief Stipend – Was this more important when the Fire Chief did not have a part time clerk. After much discussion on how the Fire Chief derives \$25,000 as his stipend is not clear as of yet. Former Fire Chief of 1980 stated that he used his own car, his own expenses to maintain the car, gas etc. and his stipend was \$1,500.00. The City paid for part of the home telephone bill. The Fire Chief and Assistant both have vehicles, gas included and a part time clerk. **It was the consensus of the Council to reduce this stipend to \$15,000. In addition there needs to be a study on the Fire Department.**

University Settlement Camp Electric \$5,200.00 – This is still being looked into as staff was not able to get through to Central Hudson to get a minimal bill amount. City Administrator explained that this \$5,200 was for the Infirmary, Theater and Gym.

OTHER BUDGET BUSINESS: There was a question on the vehicles in the City how many miles and what other costs are related to each vehicle. City Administrator stated

that the use of City vehicles is a subject onto itself. Regarding policies and procedures this is an item that needs to be addressed early part of 2010.

Putting out RFP's for outside services such as Engineers, Planners, and Auditors, etc. City Administrator stated that our Engineer is willing to take a ten percent cut. City Planner is most likely going to do the same. Early part of next year RFP's will go out on all these services.

Discussions regarding the revenue from the State for Route 9D. Council felt that for this year we should just accept the revenue and look at it in early 2010 to see what the benefit would be if the State took over the road.

City Administrator Robson also stated to the Council that there is 53 pay periods in 2010 that has not been included in the budget.

Equipment in the Fire Department – There needs to be an inventory on the equipment to see if this can be reduces. **City Administrator will meet with the Chief to talk about the air packs and the expiration dates, etc. It is important that the equipment is kept current.**

West Point Revenue. City Administrator stated the 195,000 needed for the chlorination for the Sewage Treatment Plant she was going to go for a bond. But instead of bonding she would like to earmark the revenue coming in from West Point for this project. Council agreed.

DUES – Such as NYCOM, is a great resource for all members of the Council.

After tonight's meeting the budget was reduced to approximately 9.5% tax increase.

Budget Amendments -

1. Amend the Sewer Fund Budget by transferring \$80,993 from the Water Pollution Control Refuse Removal expense (Code: G8130.446600) to the Water Pollution Control Digester Cleaning expense (Code: G8130.446601). This is necessary due to the fact that the there was no method of determining the extent of the cleanout prior to actually doing the job.
2. Amend the General Fund budget for the Fire Department by transferring \$20,000 from the General Fund Contingency expense (Code: A1990.400001) to the Administrator Consultant - Efficiency Study expense (Code: A1230.452015). These funds will pay 50% of the cost of the energy efficiency audit. The other 50% will be paid by NYSERDA
3. Amend the General Fund IT Budget by transferring the following from:
 - a. IT Professional Licenses and Permits (Code: A1220.444100) \$2,000
 - b. Finance Purchase of Equipment (Code: A1325.250000) \$1,100

This total of \$3,100 will be transferred to the IT Purchase of Equipment (Code: A1220.250000). This transfer will allow the IT Consultant to cycle out three heavily used city office computers for replacement in 2009.

Appointments – Dareshanie Graham – Human Relations Commission – Two Year Term. This will be on the Agenda for December 21st for a vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15pm.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 10:20pm by Council Member Pasti, Seconded by Council Member Fredericks. All presented voted in Favor.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 10:38pm by Council Member Kelly, Second by Council Member Pasti.

Respectfully submitted
Colleen Swift
December 15, 2009