

**TOWN OF FORESTPORT
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING RE:
BUDGET/FINANCIAL MATTERS
FORESTPORT TOWN HALL
JULY 29, 2014 @ 4:00PM**

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilwoman Nancy Kardash
Councilwoman Joanne Kwasniewski
Councilman Ronald Scouten
Councilman Charles Scott
Supervisor Parker Snead

MEMBERS ABSENT

Town Clerk Shelley Entwistle

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Councilman Charles Scott.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGENCE:

Recited.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

The public notice was read by Councilman Scott.

DISCUSSION:

Councilman Scott explained that the purpose of the meeting was for the town board to assemble in a legal manner to discuss financial matters and concerns board members have regarding the spending within the current budget. He stated that it has been difficult for the board to have a discussion due to the limitations posed by the Open Meetings Law.

Councilwoman Kardash asked Supervisor Snead and other board members to please include her in discussions via email or phone call, as she does not have text ability.

Councilman Scott inquired as to the status of the proposed power at the Scouten ball field. He wanted to know if it was necessary to install power at this time or if the town could wait until Spring so as to add the project to the 2015 budget. He also asked how much use the ball field is getting after the recent improvements. Supervisor Snead reported that the field is getting moderate use thanks to the improvements, and that the field is town owned and should be maintained and improved as such.

Councilman Scott inquired if the field could be utilized for Tee-

ball and/or Minor League baseball. Councilwoman Kwasniewski stated that the field has fallen out of Little League compliance over the last decade, as national standards and guidelines have changed. She reported that the dugouts would need roofs, the infield needs to be boxed out and filled with gravel, the fences are in disrepair. Her overall impression is that the work needed to be in compliance would be an extravagant cost. Councilwoman Kardash stated she would like to remain within the existing budget for the remainder of the year and that improvements to town properties should be added to a “wish list” for the 2015 budget.

Supervisor Snead stated he believes that the board should promote the use of all town properties for community activities. He reported that Pete Scouten and Jim Greene are donating their services to install an electric service for the ball field.

Supervisor Snead reviewed the current operating statement for the town, highlighting areas where the budget has been exceeded. These include new computers for the Planning and Bookkeeping Offices, as well as the Supervisor. The Town Attorney's invoices, building and grounds department, website design and several other small expenses were discussed. The total amount over budget at this point is \$11,032. Supervisor Snead stated that the current budget is inadequate in several areas, including the Building and Grounds. He stated that according to New York State Town Law, a town board has the ability to draw from contingency budgets, as well as reserve funds if they feel it necessary. The Town of Forestport has ample reserve in the eyes of the New York State Comptroller's Office, and the expenses outside the current budget will not impact the town's financial stability.

Councilman Scott and Councilwoman Kardash stated that they feel Supervisor Snead is expending funds that perhaps the Board should review prior to purchases being made. They stated they see the vouchers for items at the regular town board meeting, at which point the money has already been spent. One example was the painting done on the town hall - Councilwoman Kardash stated she would like to see Supervisor Snead get estimates for projects and let the board make the final decision as a unit. She also inquired about the likelihood of heating the Woodgate School for the upcoming winter, as she has had people inquire. Supervisor Snead reported that the furnace at the school has been repaired and a new fuel tank installed for safety. He has no plans to heat the school. He also stated that he would really like to see more cooperation within the Board and increased participation in creating a new vision for the town.

Peter Scouten of the gallery commented that he feels Supervisor Snead has accomplished a great deal in his short tenure, and that he will

continue to donate his services to the town to help make improvements.

The board continued to discuss other current expenses such as the Port -a -Potty's at the boat launches, as well as the contract to Ritter Lawn Services in regard to mowing town properties.

Councilman Scouten reported that he procured a copy of a hold/harmless contract as well as the liability insurance for the Northern Oneida ATV Club for the purpose of opening up a section of Buck Lake Road. There is also a landowner consent form which the town needs to sign.

A motion was made by Councilman Scouten and seconded by Councilman Scott to approve the opening of one mile of Buck Lake Road for ATV use. Roll call vote:

Councilman Ronald Scouten – yes
Councilwoman Nancy Kardash - yes
Councilwoman Joanne Kwasniewski – yes
Councilman Charles Scott – yes
Supervisor Parker Snead –yes

Councilwoman Kardash stated she has concerns regarding an email from the website designers to the Planning Board. Supervisor Snead reviewed the email. Councilwoman Kardash inquired about the possibility of each department posting information to the website to eliminate the need for an administrator. Supervisor Snead reported that the current website format is out of date and an administrator is necessary. He did state that he would like to discontinue the use of the Digital Towpath at budget time, upgrading to a more modern format. This shift will allow the Board more choices for administrators.

Councilwoman Kardash reiterated she hopes the Board can communicate more effectively in the future. She inquired as well about the auctioning of Highway equipment via the internet. Supervisor Snead stated that he and Councilman Scouten are working to post the pictures to the eBay ad, and that the auction will start soon.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Councilman Scott and seconded by Supervisor Snead to adjourn. Roll call vote:

Councilman Ronald Scouten – yes

Councilwoman Nancy Kardash - yes
Councilwoman Joanne Kwasniewski – yes
Councilman Charles Scott – yes
Supervisor Parker Snead –yes

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm by Supervisor Snead.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Entwistle
Forestport Town Clerk