

Town of Newfield Public Hearing
November 8, 2012

A Public Hearing was held on Thursday, November 8, 2012 for the purpose of allowing the public comment and opinion of the proposed 2013 Town of Newfield Budget. Present: Councilperson Trask, Councilperson James, Councilperson Laughlin, Councilperson Powers and Supervisor Driscoll.

The public hearing was called to order by Supervisor Driscoll at 7:15PM.

James Lawrence asked how many employees are covered in the General and Highway Funds with benefits. Supervisor Driscoll responded that there were seven employees from the Highway Department budget and three active employees and seven retirees that are paid by the General fund. Supervisor Driscoll stated that there have been seven different resolutions since 1993 having to do with health insurance. Some were done with two or three different categories for one or three people and some cases dealt with highway contract language. For the 2013 he has asked that the Board take a look at those seven resolutions and begin to craft a town wide policy. As opposed to something that was done piece meal over many years.

Mr. Lawrence also asked about Fund Balances from last year. Since the Town would not be purchasing new trucks and a loader this year, what is the Town looking at moving forward with no more ever- gaining fund balance to catch up with the usual replacement plan for good equipment. Supervisor Driscoll stated that the era of being able to pay outright for equipment which was the case for the Town of Newfield, has past. The Board is asking from the Highway Superintendent and the Manager of the Water Districts and Sewer to provide them with an equipment maintenance and replacement plan for all of the equipment over the next five to ten years. So the Board will then be able to plan ahead in terms in order to budget for these and they would be bonding them in order to level funding for regular upkeep and replacement.

Councilperson Trask noted that historically in the past when times were better there were fund balances that were carried in the hundreds of thousands not in the tens of thousands of dollars. So it was easy in the past for a highway superintendent to go out and buy a dump truck using past years fund balances. Those fund balances carried from year to year and were always there. That is not the case today in any of the funds. Some because of the tax cap, some because of the economic times and some because of not being able to keep pace resulting from increases because of workmen compensation insurance, health insurance, and state retirement. The days of having the ability of being able to go out and pay for equipment is not possible anymore. That is why the Town has gone to the bonding route. Supervisor Driscoll added the last time the Town paid outright cash was for the repair of the Main Street Bridge adjacent to the school for \$315,000.00.

Gene VanZile asked if any of the Highway employees were qualified mechanics. He felt that could be a cost savings doing work in house rather than sending work out. Supervisor Driscoll reported that Kevin Berggren is the lead in terms of repair and a lot of repair is done in house.

Supervisor Driscoll asked if there were any other questions concerning the proposed 2013 Town of Newfield budget. Hearing none, he called the public hearing on the adoption of Newfield Town Budget 2013 to a close at 7:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Miller Kenerson
Town Clerk

November 19,2012
Date