

TOWN OF DEERPARK BOARD MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING – 2012 BUDGET
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2011
Meeting was held at Town Hall, 420 Route 209, Huguenot, NY 12746

Attendance

Supervisor: Karl Brabenec

Councilmember's: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean

Engineer: Al Fusco

Invocation: Arthur Trovei

Call to Order at 7:43 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance by David Hoovler

Florence T. Santini, Town Clerk read the Notice of Public Hearing (Attached to the Official Minutes)

Public Comment:

Jennifer Burger, 145 Big Lake Road, Huguenot – The reason I'm here today is because for the last, I don't know how many years, we keep being in the Cuddebackville Fire District and none of us live in Cuddebackville in Big Pond. None of us. We keep getting zapped with this fund and I'm not sure why we are still Cuddebackville, we are Huguenot. We are getting charged with an almost over 17% increase for the fire district that we don't even belong to. The Warming Stations were welcoming us at Huguenot and Sparrowbush – not Cuddebackville. The only thing Cuddebackville does is give us envelopes in the mail, and let people's houses burn down for three days in a row. That has happened personally on my road. The district was drawn many, many years ago when there were two warehouses or factories down here, and there weren't so many residents ... there are now 37 houses in Big Lake. Plus, the top of the mountain used to have one house and one trailer when I moved up there, it's got 12. There are 50 families up here now that are all Huguenot, that are being zapped with Cuddebackville Fire District. This District needs to be redrawn. There is no longer a C & D Battery for Huguenot to respond to. Unfortunately, we had a road problem of magnitude that was major this year at the bottom of the mountain on Big Pond Road, and it was closed. But, while that is a major inconvenience, more major than that is incurring an over 17% tax rate increase. The fire district for Huguenot went within the state guidelines of 2%. Sparrowbush – I know they tried with a 3¼% ... it happens. 17.28% is absolutely unacceptable. There are many of us residents that are paying \$1,000 a month, yes, most of it is for the Port Jervis School District, while I don't have any children there. I am very proud that all three of mine graduated from the Port Jervis District. Many at the very top of their class. Unfortunately today ... I do have a grandchild in the district and I encourage people to be in the district and pay their property taxes—it is a worthwhile education. I'd rather see the children in the district educated whether I have one in the school or not, than have them run around out there as criminals. And speaking of education, I have to say a second side bar to Mr. Dean. Thank you very much this year. Mr. Dean put a Hunter's Safety course at which I was presented with the Granny Go Get Your Gun...I took my grandson to his course. Thank you very much, I don't know if people know that you do other things other than just come in here. I don't know what this council can do but there are 50 of us families up there. We are not tiny little property owners. We're paying 5 figure sums of property taxes. We kind of demand our town council to help us out in this time of need to not go with an over 17% line item for the Cuddebackville Fire District. If they do, please remove all residents from Big Pond and put them where they belong in Huguenot, New York.

Supervisor Brabenec responded that Cuddebackville and Sparrowbush are Fire Districts and by state law, the town board has no control over their budget. They have elected fire commissioners and whatever they approve, they present to the Town Board and they put it in their budget and the Tax Collector collects taxes on behalf of the Fire District. Huguenot Fire District is a fire protection district, so they are run by a Board of Directors and the town contracts with them. In essence, the Town Board acts as their Fire Commissioners. In regards to a change in district lines, the supervisor would need letters or a petition from all the residents of Big Lake Road development to indicate the interest and they would go from there. They would also need to consult with the Huguenot Fire Commissioners.

Ms. Burger said, unfortunately it being a bad time of year, a lot of the summer only's just left, but there is a major interest in those of us who are still remaining. Many wished me good luck going down here. At this point, I'm paying 25% more for a fire district that is an arbitrary boundary line. And if these guys keep going that much higher with the percentage ... you know these things are not going to even out. Trust me, I've been in here for tax audit appeals and the Cuddebackville Fire District has notoriously just said we do what we want to do. So, for those of us who are not in Cuddebackville, please help us do

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whatever you can do. I know you said you're not in charge of it, but help us figure out the process to get somebody to change it for us.

Councilman Hoovler said he and Councilman Dean went to Cuddebackville when we saw the 17% and he also thought it was outrageous. However, they presented their point of view and they explained they have aging equipment needing to be replaced.

Ms. Burger said that is understandable but why doesn't everybody in the town share this every single time Cuddebackville comes up with an increase, they just put it through. Well maybe we have a choice to redistrict those of us that are getting zapped with the Cuddebackville that don't even live in Cuddebackville. Everything I have other than the phone number beginning with 754 that comes up as Cuddebackville, everything I have says Huguenot and always has. It used to say Big Pond Road, but it got redistricted came up matter, but maybe they have a choice to redistrict themselves. Everything she has refers to Huguenot and always has.

Ed Hughson, 2 Forrest Drive – I am here as a Department Head to speak on the budget. I am a little disappointed with the budget and spoke with a couple councilmen privately about some situations with the budget and my salary. It is no secret that I put in for a little less than a \$9,000.00 raise that I felt I was duly entitled to. If I didn't I wouldn't have put it in. When I took the position, I knew I was going to be elected and knew my salary would not be what it was supposed to be compared to other municipalities in Orange County, but it has been three years since I got a \$2,000 raise for my Highway Superintendent's position. I approached a couple board members stating that the snow removal -- part of my budget, which is 5142 ... I had put in for an increase of \$30,000 from \$35,000 to \$75,000 in personal services on the .1 line. I talked to a couple councilmen and told them that if they would be interested in taking \$2,000 out of that to put in my Park Maintenance Supervisor salary, that I would be able to cut another \$8,000 out of there and save the town money in that line item, because I would not need to be calling my Deputy to have him check the roads, that I would be doing it. They're getting called in and getting overtime—I have a plow route that I do now—and my department has been cut drastically from last year in the winter time. The increase of paper work from the disasters we've had for FEMA, the cut with my secretary—I'm trying to help her out with the paperwork for FEMA—Al Fusco, we've been going to meetings--all this stuff has a role in where I think this money is justified. It is \$2,000, it's not \$9,000 I requested and I'm saving the town \$8,000 and this is what I thought we were here for, was to save the tax payers money. I asked if they gave me the \$2,000, they would take that \$75,000 and cut it down to \$65,000...it would save on me calling in part-timers because I would be doing the work at the salary I am getting. Granted, it is all based on how the weather is going to go this winter, but by the looks of things it's not going to go good by the snow storm we already got. Just by me plowing that route, I probably saved the town about \$500 or \$600 just by me going out plowing and not bringing in the overtime. There have been stipends handed out and everybody knows who they are. I got a stipend to take over the Park Maintenance Supervisor's job. If I agreed to it two years ago for a \$3,000 raise, or a \$3,000 stipend I should say. A \$3,000 stipend for a job that was not the Highway Superintendent's position. Not knowing that there was going to be more involved in that position at the time, I thought it was a fair stipend, but then I started getting phone calls on Saturdays—I can't get the doors open, the garbage isn't picked up, Sundays-the people who were here Saturday were not picking the garbage up can you come down and pick the garbage up? They had an incident where they withheld the money from one of the people down there because they didn't take their garbage with them, because I had to go down and pick it up and I just heard a bunch of grief over it. And I did it about four or five times after that and never mentioned it, but probably should have, because I didn't want to hear oh, it was left by the party before or the party after, or whatever. But it is still time. I've gone down to mow the fields, worked in the fields, went up into Deerpark Manor and mowed the fields on my time because I didn't have the man power at the time to do it. Before school was out I couldn't hire nobody to come work and do the parks because of trying to get somebody to come in here that is not going to collect unemployment off us after three or four weeks, so I did it until we got somebody to come in here to do it, with help from a couple of my guys. I just feel that there's the \$75,000 if I'm not afraid to say it, I'll publicize it, it's \$2,000 that I'm asking to increase my Park Maintenance Supervisor's position from \$4,000, which is in the budget, to \$6,000. I just feel it is what I'm worth. I'm not crying over the Highway Superintendent's position because there is only \$2,000. The other elected officials got \$2,000 and their departments weren't cut as mine was. Their workload was not increased like mine was. I wish you would really take it into consideration. You can tell and think by what happened in these previous elections that just took place, that people voted the way they voted because of the \$2,000 raises. My opinion is I don't feel that's the reason the outcome was the outcome. As you can see, I don't think too many people are interested in this budget. I am not saying they're not interested, I don't think that the outcome of the elections of whatever happened or whatever discrepancies there are in the elections is because me, Flo and Karl are getting a \$2,000 raise. My personal opinion is because the people's services are being cut. That is my personal opinion.

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Councilman Spears asked what services are being cut?

Mr. Hughson stated the Highway Department services have been cut.

Councilman Spears asked in what regard?

Mr. Hughson answered in man power and work force.

Councilman Spears: Yeah, but what services have been cut?

Mr. Hughson: What do you mean what services have been cut?

Councilman Spears: You're still doing the job.

Mr. Hughson: Well, I'm doing the job, but I'm taking a lot longer to do the job than I would have been. Most of these roads that are still not fixed that we haven't even been on, we would have been able to haul in some sand or something so we could get ready for winter. I mean the snow storm came and I had my guys working at 6 o'clock at night on a Friday to get the trucks ready for winter because we're not ready.

Councilman Spears: Do you have enough sand for this winter? Do you have enough salt?

Mr. Hughson: I'm just saying, there are other things we could have been ready for the snowstorm. I have not even been up on Galley Hill road yet. I have not been on Horseshoe Bend yet. These roads are collapsed. If the work force wasn't cut. I hired a couple part-timers to help us out a little bit here and there, but I have people who are taking vacation time. As you know, one of the gentleman's wife has been very ill and he's been taking time off for that. So there's work force that has been cut and is not being replaced. It is hard to get someone to come in and work for \$12 an hour. I called 35 people from the applications. It's not easy. You can advertise. I've called probably 35 people to come in from the applications that I've got in my office, They hear the pay scale and they don't want to come to work, they can collect unemployment and make more money. You have to be careful on that. You have to make sure they're not collecting unemployment and bring them in and work a couple weeks and then they're going to be collecting unemployment and we're going to be paying it. You have to be careful on what you're hiring there. This is what I'm saying about the workforce. I totally understand on why you did it. It was justified. Absolutely. But, I had councilmen come up and tell me that the reason you're not making the money you're not making, was because your men are getting it. One councilman told me that. Another councilman came over and told me—set and talked to my face and say, look we're looking to give you between a \$5,000 and \$7,000 raise. My workforce got cut. I didn't get nothing but a \$2,000 raise and so did everybody else. So, I don't feel that nothing was done to better my salary. I'm the lowest paid Highway Superintendent in Orange County with the 2nd largest town. The numbers I gave you were from 2010, not 2011. You look at the paper a couple weeks ago and see Dave Bell's salary compared to mine, it is almost half. He's got 50 miles of road. I'm not here to have you give me a \$40,000 or a \$10,000 raise. I put a \$9,000 raise in. I wasn't expecting to get a \$90,000. I put it in there. Do I think I'm worth it? And I feel that you think I'm worth it. I'm not afraid to go to the people and tell them that you gave me \$2,000. If you think that it's going to make you look bad, I'll take that risk. I will tell the people that you gave me an extra \$2,000 in my Parks Maintenance Supervisor's stipend. It's justified. It's not ...my workforce has been cut. I don't have people to go down and mow lawns in the summertime. If I call somebody in to pick this garbage up on the weekend, you're paying them overtime. If I don't do it, you're going to pay them overtime. I'm doing it. If you can't get the doors open because the codes are wrong or they can't figure out the batteries dead in it, I go down and put the code in. If I call someone in, you're going to pay them two hours overtime. This is what I'm saying. The \$3,000 I was okay with, but I wasn't sure what was going to ... You're going to be putting a football field down there next year and all this other ... with the football players and stuff.

Councilman Trovei: You've got a personal services line of 5010.1 and we've got the budget where the state wants us to be, we're at \$68,907. Are you saying we could take another \$2,000 out of there?

Mr. Hughson said no, no. If you go down to 5142.42, the Snow Removal.

Supervisor Brabenc: Same page (17)-it's 5142.1 – There's \$75,000 and \$80,000 for .4.

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Councilman Trovej: So, you're saying that you could pull \$2,000 out of there and it wouldn't affect you? You could make it up with your plowing.

Mr. Hughson said what I'm tell you, is you take \$2,000 and put it in my Parks Supervisor's pay—I'll give you another \$8,000 out of there and save you that money.

Councilman Trovej: So you're saying we could pull that down to...

Mr. Hughson said \$65,000 from \$75,000. Because I'm not going to come in and call these guys in and they're going to be making \$12,000 a year more than I am. I'll pay my Deputy to come in and do it. And he's going to get paid overtime. You'll spend more than that \$2,000 in overtime when they're coming in and checking the roads.

Councilman Trovej: I can see some sense to the argument here, guys.

Mr. Hughson said that the other \$8,000 is that I'm going to call in guys to plow the route I'm plowing.

Councilman Trovej: So you're saying, hey look, I'm going to dig and do whatever I've got to do, and you're going to save money ...

Mr. Hughson: I've done it and I always will do it.

Councilman Trovej: I just wanted to announce it, that's all. I had a conversation, I mean this is what we talked about is that there is extra snow, you've got less men. I do sympathize.

Mr. Hughson said granted, the last snow storm fell on a Saturday and I had a couple guys that weren't working. If that would have been during the week, I would have been in trouble. No doubt about it. I can't find nobody to come in and plow snow for \$12.00 an hour. And I'm not going to sit here and give you a line saying I can, because they can collect unemployment for more money than that. They're not going to give up their unemployment to make \$36.00. Now even with the positions you've created—it's going to help out because I can hire them for \$20.00 an hour or something like that, but before those positions were created, they were \$12.00 an hour. I can't get anybody to come in for \$12.00 an hour.

Councilman Dean said that the \$12.00 an hour is done.

Mr. Hughson said it depends on what I hire him at. If they have a CDL license, they're considered an MEO, but if I call them in and they plow with a pickup truck and they don't have a CDL license, then they are considered a part-time laborer.

Supervisor Brabenec: Stated that as a point of information. The Board approved at the last meeting four motor equipment operators and that is what is budgeted for next year. The Board approved six temporary on call motor equipment operators and there are also currently two half- time temporary laborers, and the board approved three additional part-time temporary laborers. That's just a point of information.

Councilman Dean said, so if those positions are available do you need extra help.

Mr. Hughson: Dave, what I'm saying is trying to find the people to come in and work that are not on unemployment is difficult. I went through 35 applications that were in my office over there. I had two qualified guys that came in that are MEO's and could come in and work on weekends.

Councilman Dean asked when the last time was he got applications.

Mr. Hughson asked Flo, a week ago? I got three of them in.

Councilman Dean asked so we have an ongoing ad.

Mr. Hughson replied no there is no ongoing ad, but people are just looking for jobs. But, I'm getting applications from 18 year olds

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Councilman Dean said 18 year olds have to work too.

Mr. Hughson: They don't have CDL's Dave. This is what I'm saying.

Councilman Dean said I think what we need to do is advertise.

Supervisor Brabenec stated that we will. It's just the Motor Equipment Operators—because they are new types of positions with the collective bargaining agreement we have to give the union 15 days ... so that's November 12th or something like that.

Councilman Dean: The other temporary help has already been approved, right?

Supervisor Brabenec: Correct.

Mr. Hughson: That's the part time laborers, you give them \$12 bucks an hour for. See, you can sit there and shrug your shoulders, but you don't understand though.

Councilman Dean said I understand this. There are people who will work for that.

Mr. Hughson responded, I'm not saying that there's not. But, bring them in and then say, okay when's the last time you worked, because now we're going to pay your unemployment too.

Councilman Dean said I still think we need to advertise.

Mr. Hughson: Absolutely. You have to advertise. But, what I'm saying to you is the last time I hired somebody to collect unemployment, I heard about it. So, I've got to make sure when I bring them in for interviews, I'm saying when is the last time you worked? Then, bring them in to work for a week or two weeks, is the town going to be responsible to pay your unemployment. You know, they get fired or quit from the job they won't give them their unemployment. If they go back to work for another company and work for three weeks, they give them their unemployment and we get stuck paying for it.

Councilman Dean asked if we have work for them and they refuse to work, do we need to pay unemployment.

Mr. Hughson said, I have no idea.

Councilman Dean said I don't think we do.

Supervisor Brabenec said the state unemployment is very convoluted, very complicated and it is just very, very hard to appeal also.

Mr. Hughson said that even if we do get the guys to help, what I'm saying is you will pay a lot more money having those guys work and pay a lot more in overtime than giving me \$2,000.

Councilman Dean responded that the \$2,000 is not really the issue, because you can't solve all your problems with \$2,000.

Mr. Hughson said I'm not saying that I can. Am I looking to solve all my problems for \$2,000?

Councilman Hoover stated he could not solve any of his problems that are looming—that are coming because you realize you're almost up 6% this year overall and we made all those cuts.

Mr. Hughson asked 6% of what.

Councilman Hoover answered that it was 5.95%.

Mr. Hughson responded, I gave a budget that was even less than what you have right now was a Department Head.

Councilman Hoover stated that because it was the Comptroller's Office, certain things have to be ...

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Mr. Hughson: And I was advised to make sure that to make sure that everything that was cut out of my budget for man power was by the Town Board to make sure it went back into the places where we needed it.

Councilman Hoovler asked, do you still have those people? It would be almost 2 and half, three times that .

Mr. Hughson said Dave, I'm not arguing, I understand. I sat here and I told you I understand the reasoning behind it all.

Councilman Hoovler reminded him he used the word justified.

Mr. Hughson said the other \$2,000 he is asking for is justified.

Councilman Hoovler asked, do you think a 10% tax raise to the people of the town is justified if you plow the roads quicker. That's the answer he wants to know.

Mr. Hughson said I can't answer that, you'd have to ask the people of Deerpark that.

Councilman Hoovler said I'd like to know. You're the Department Head. I just want to know an answer to a simple question. The cost of running your department and I'm not saying that it's your fault, I'm just saying it is the cost of business. It is just keeping it the way it is and keeping the manpower the way it was, would have caused increases. We know for a fact, we sat down earlier this year—we know we headed for pension and health care increases of upwards of 17%. We knew they were coming. They told us that would happen. We made some adjustments. If we would have kept all that and your department budget went up say 10% --you had the work force you had, and you can plow the roads a little quicker. Do you think the 10% justifies having the extra manpower. As a Department Head, it is a fair question.

Mr. Hughson: Do I feel the 10% is justified? Yes and no. But listen, they're not there and there's not a 10% increase and that's not what I'm up here for.

Councilman Hoovler: I know. But what I'm saying...I think you're worth \$2,000.

Mr. Hughson: What's the problem then? I'm not raising the taxes. I'm saving you another \$10,000. I'm not saving you personally, I'm saving the town another \$10,000, but you just giving me \$2,000 in my pay. If not, that \$10,000 will be spent.

Councilman Dean: Which walnut shell is the pea under, Ed? Come on, you're saving us \$10,000 by giving you \$2,000? I thought it was \$8,000 by giving you \$2,000.

Mr. Hughson: No, you're giving me \$2,000 and you're taking \$10,000, so it is \$8,000 you're saving. Okay. Sorry, I was off a little bit. But, you're saving a lot more than that, trust me. Because there's many a sleepless nights that I'm out there. Many nights. And I have no regrets from taking the position I took, but I'm very proud of how my guys work, especially in the winter time. I think I get elected every year because of the way the roads are in the winter time. It's not because of the roads the way they are maintained in the summer, I can guarantee you that. It's because the way they are maintained in the winter.

Councilman Hoovler commented, I hear you. You know I do the multi-year plans. The numbers are through the roof.

Mr. Hughson: Dave, I also know that I got the confirmation that you had no problem with putting that other \$2,000 in there because of the increase of the parks coming on until after the elections.

Councilman Hoovler said I don't have problems with your salary, and I don't mind your posture. I'm willing to entertain it. But at the same time, the problem I have is you come up and say cut services, cut services, cut services. There is no way to keep the budget under control, other than to do that.

Mr. Hughson responded not when you have a fire department handing in a 17% increase. And I know that is out of your control, but maybe we ought to go to the state and say something to the state about this and start addressing them about that. Because that is absolutely ridiculous.

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Supervisor Brabene interjected what happens with the state tax cap, the law is convoluted. It is flawed. Because all you need is a simple majority, or a 60% majority to override that cap in a resolution. That is the commissioners that do that.

Mr. Hughson said that if the fire department, and we didn't but elsewhere, you would have been doing your 60% vote because of that fire department up there. So it raised the taxes over 2%. If you did not cut where you had to cut elsewhere. So, that fire department really took away from other people, logically.

Councilman Spears said the percentages were smaller, but he was correct.

Mr. Hughson: Logically, they took away a lot because of that Fire Department up there. Not small. A lot. 17% is a large increase. If I had to, I could go through my budget and pick and choose—and say okay, well we can cut a little bit here and a little bit there. It's hard to decipher what the fuel costs will be, they seem to be doing down, but we're running over this year. Next year we don't know what will happen-- the weather...we don't know what the weather is going to do. So It is hard to predict what is going to go on. All I am saying is, I'm not up here to put anybody down for what they are doing. All I'm saying is I think that I'm duly entitled to that extra \$2,000, especially if these parks are going to be increased for football games, and stuff like that. After September, I have nobody to work down there in the parks. I do it. The volunteers, I mean Ray came down and volunteered. I went down and helped mow the fields.

Councilman Spears: No question. You did a great job. Thank you.

Mr. Hughson: I have no problem doing that, and I don't have no problem saving money. I'll go out and plow snow, I've done it for 25 years. I am not afraid to go out and work, but I want to be paid a little bit for it. I mean, my guys are going to be making \$8,000 a year more than I am.

Councilman Hoover said that the fathers who put the town together and did the structure, saw fit that the Supervisor got paid \$31,000.

Mr. Hughson said I am not saying nobody is underpaid for what they do, but not even closely, grossly to what I am. Take the percentages Dave, and you figure them out.

Councilman Hoover: Ed, I hear the percentage.

Mr. Hughson: Just with the average for 2010, I am a lot less paid than what I should be. And I'm not saying nobody don't deserve what they should be getting...nobody should. But what I'm saying, and I know you all know it, that the work force in my job was increased. Not only with the FEMA and the plowing snow and stuff like that, but with the parks and ...

Councilman Hoover said you are the only thing really that is there that can be significantly work increased or the department decreased. I'm mean you're it.

Mr. Hughson: I know I'm it. And what I'm saying is that I'm it. What I'm telling you is I'm going to save the town \$8,000.

Councilman Spears said you presented a good argument. We'll take it under consideration. Just for the record, everybody in town thinks you and your men do a great job.

Mr. Hughson: And I know they do and I know these guys appreciate it also. Nobody does more than I do. I mean they get me elected. They keep my job and they work hard. But what I'm saying is they get paid for it.

Councilman Trovej said as councilmen, we lead by example—we took nothing.

Mr. Hughson: You did lead by example. But this is not my part-time job.

Councilman Trovej said I understand that.

Terri Horton, 41 Cora Rose Lane – She said give Ed his \$2,000 and he works really hard and if they need to raise their taxes to give him \$2,000, do it.

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Councilman Dean said there is a 2% tax cap in the state. Every little raise affects that tax cap, right? He went on to ask if she would override the tax cap?

Ms. Horton answered she would not override the tax cap.

Councilman Dean asked where do we take the money from?

Ms. Horton: He told you.

Councilman Dean: Wait. Wait. Everybody who deserves a raise. Where do we take the money from to give that raise and still not go over the tax cap? Who suffers?

Ms. Horton: Who deserves the raise? Well, you evaluate everyone. I think that Ed was probably at the top of the list.

Councilman Dean Okay. So, the other people who work in the town, are not necessarily entitled to a raise?

Ms. Horton: I don't know but I think that Ed deserves it. He showed you where he could save the money. I think he definitely does a fantastic job. (All the councilmen agreed.)

Councilman Dean said I think that a lot of people work for the town and do a fantastic job, and perhaps they deserve a raise too. The question comes where do you get that money and stay within the mandated tax cap?

Ms. Horton said if you can't give everybody who does a fantastic job a raise, then you rate everybody and the top two people who perform, they get something. I mean \$2,000 isn't a lot of money. If you can't give everybody a raise, then you have to rate everybody who deserves the support. Do you give evaluations?

Councilman Spears answered Department Heads don't.

Councilman Dean stated that perhaps they should pay a little more for somebody to do that.

Ms. Horton: Can't the Department Heads do them? Would you mind doing an evaluation?

Councilman Dean said he can't evaluate himself thought.

Ms. Horton: So, who is his boss?

Councilmen: The voters.

Councilman Dean: It is very simple on the face of it. Trust me, it's not simple.

Councilman Hoovler asked he what was an acceptable tax rate?. Everybody comes up and asks why do you do this, why do you do that...He didn't want to put her on the spot, but they have done budget reports for 21 months and not a single person in the entire town has asked for one.

Ms. Horton said she hears him say that a lot, and just started coming to meetings. I just started coming here. I've been to two meetings this week. Now I'm here. I'm paying attend. I don't come from here, I'm from Pittsburgh. I lived in Rockland and taxes here to me are very inexpensive compared to other places. We moved here because they were so low. I would be willing to pay a little more taxes.

Councilman Hoovler asked what's a little more?

Ms. Horton answered 5%.

Councilman Hoovler said if we put it up 5% this year, does that mean we can put it up to 6% next year?

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Ms. Horton said no, you're right.

Councilman Hoovler stated he does the multi-year plans and in January they will have one. When you look at it, it expeditiously builds so fast that it is like you're beyond ... the first one I did two years ago I had everything projected at 4, 6 and 7. The next one I did was 5.9, 11 and 14. This year I sat down with the Accountant to talk about it and it was like 18, 22 and 30. Even with extreme manpower cuts, it saved over probably \$300,000 over his budget and they're still looking at his budget going up about 6% and it just continues to build. It is what it is.

Ms. Horton stated I am not your old time person who has lived here for 50 years and all I'm worried about is taxes. I know the guy that tried to write in for you, was just about tax relief, tax relief. I'm not about that. I'm about services and I'm about social stuff and I want the kids taken care of. I don't think anyone on my road is not just about taxes. You have a different kind of people moving up here and we're used to paying much higher taxes.

Councilman Dean asked do you want to pay much higher taxes?

Ms. Horton replied no, not much higher taxes. No.

Councilman Dean said you're not going to get any more in returns...let me explain something. If you raise your taxes 5% this year and we raise those taxes 5% next year. Let's say we don't go up 6%. Through the magic of compounding, it is not 5% on \$100, it's 5% on \$5.00, right? So in a very short period of time, your taxes are going up 15 and 20%. This is the boogie man in the room. This is what catches people. We were elected to control the taxes. Not to let the taxes go wild. The people can't afford it.

Ms. Horton said that the people in the area, that's all they care about. Honestly, she said if our salaries go up ...

Councilman Dean asked whose salaries are going up?

Ms. Horton: Nobody.

Councilman Hoovler asked Ms. Horton when she moved here and she replied in 2004. He went on to describe that she was here for the 27% school tax rocket in 2005, 128% town increase in 2008 ... both of those increases were just because of poor planning. I hear what you're saying, that you wanted more services. I really appreciate your coming and speaking and that it was nice having someone actually come and state what they are thinking.

Ms. Horton expressed that she hears him say that all the time and she is trying to be there. She had something every night that week, but she didn't want Dave to say no one ever comes to the meeting. She tried to get other people to come, but ... here she was.

All the councilmen stated they were glad she came.

Councilman Hoovler wished that more people would come and he would like for more people to say what they want because most people say – hey, you come in with a small tax increase or a zero – hey, you're doing a great job. And that's it. Or, this last election everybody says hey, you're giving the guy a \$2,000 raise ... what are you doing?

Ms. Horton said so many people are concerned about their taxes going up, but there are other things that are important too.

Councilman Dean stated she was absolutely right.

Councilman Hoovler recommended she go to the School Board meetings in April or May.

Ms. Horton: I just wanted to give a vote of confidence to Ed. I know that both times I came here, he was there the next morning before I even left for work, not even 10 hours later. I saw him on my street and that told her he listened. That's the kind of people we want working here. If they hire a bunch of part-timers who don't have benefits, they are not going to care about the job. Ed cares about his job. I wanted to give him my vote of confidence.

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Councilman Spears stated that as they try to balance good residents like her who like to see services, they also have to balance the other end. Some facts that come home to them and when they are talking about Ed comparing Highway Superintendents of other towns ... when you go to Washingtonville, their average income is \$85,000, Highland Falls is \$68,000 and Chester is \$91,000, but the average for this area is \$45,000, so it is very difficult when you get to extra discretionary income or just paying your mortgage or taxes in this town. A large majority of people had \$45,000 or less. He agreed with Ms. Horton on a lot of things and it is nice to have services and all this good stuff, but also there are a lot of people who have lived here for a long time and they are older and they would like to see them be able to stay in their homes and near families. He appreciated Ms. Horton's comments but wanted her to understand where they were coming from too.

Ms. Horton stated she was learning and understanding that it was a poorer area. They need to get more volunteers, more programs that are volunteered. She got the Jewish Family Services to get one of the members a new washer and dryer, and they do all sorts of services for senior citizens. The Board asked her if she liked kids and thought she might be good on the Recreation Committee. She has a 16 year old. She'll join the committee.

Supervisor Brabenec asked if there was any other comment from the public or the Board. He wanted to put on record the Report No. B6-11-18, which is the letter and the report from the Office of the State Comptroller for the state of New York. He read a couple paragraphs. (A copy is attached to the official minutes.) He also submitted and read from the Observations that were observed by the State Comptroller's Office during their review over the last month. It is for the revenue side of the house. The State Comptroller mandated they go by the beginning of 2011 staffing levels, not what is proposed for 2012. So with health insurance, workman's comp they will be a little higher than they need to be but was required by New York State.

Motion to Adjourn Public Hearing at 8:39 p.m.

Motion by Gary Spears, 2nd by David Hoovler to adjourn the public hearing at 8:39 p.m.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Regular Meeting – Changes and Consideration for Adopted Budget of 2012

Motion to Decrease Unallocated Insurance Line A1910.4 From \$215,000 to \$200,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by David Dean to decrease Unallocated Insurance line A1910.4 from \$215,000 to \$200,000, as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Contractual Expense Line A3620.4 from \$10,000 to \$21,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by Gary Spears to increase Contractual Expense line A3620.4 from \$10,000 to \$21,000.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Change Parks Maintenance Supervisor A5010.1 from \$4,000 to \$6,000

Motion by Gary Spears, 2nd by David Dean to change Parks Maintenance Supervisor A5010.1 from \$4,000 to \$6,000, per Department Head request.

Discussion: Supervisor Brabenec wished to abstain due to a personal conflict.

VOTE: 4 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean

1 ABSTENTION: Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Employee Benefits Health Insurance A9060.8 from \$113,000 to \$116,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by Gary Spears to increase 9060.8 from \$113,000 to \$116,000 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

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Motion to Decrease Revenues Local Sources Sales Tax A1120 from \$800,000 to \$787,000

Motion Karl Brabenec, 2nd by Gary Spears to decrease revenues local sources sales tax A1120 from \$800,000 to \$787,000 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Appropriated Fund Balance from \$155,000 to \$220,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by David Dean to increase appropriated fund balance from \$155,000 to \$220,000 as per New York State Comptroller's Office and the town's Accountant Robert Schultz.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Decrease Snow Removal Personal Services DA5142.1 from \$75,000 to \$65,000

Motion by Gary Spears, 2nd by Karl Brabenec to decrease Snow Removal Personal Services DA5142.1 from \$75,000 to \$65,000 as per recommendation of the Highway Superintendent.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase State Retirement DA9010.8 from \$58,000 to \$84,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by Gary Spears to increase the State Retirement DA9010.8 from \$58,000 to \$84,000 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office.

Discussion: Councilman Dean asked if this was based on the Comptroller's observation that they had to use the 2011 numbers and it was confirmed. Supervisor Brabenec explained that when they factored it with the reduced work force, they said that couldn't be done this year, but would benefit from those savings next year. Councilman Dean asked if that meant the \$58,000 was a reflection of the reduced work force where the \$84,000 is pretty much a correlation of the non-reduced work force, as are the other numbers. He was assured that was the case.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Worker's Compensation DA9040.8 from \$68,000 to \$86,000

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by David Dean to increase the Worker's Compensation DA9040.8 from \$68,000 to \$86,000 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office.

Discussion: Supervisor Brabenec explained that they go by the last certified payroll, which would January 2011.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Unemployment DA9050.8 from \$30,000 to \$35,600

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by David Hoovler to increase the Unemployment DA9050.8 from \$30,000 to \$35,600 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Decrease Appropriated Fund Balance from \$50,000 to \$0.00

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by Gary Spears to decrease Appropriated Fund Balance from \$50,000 to \$0.00 as per recommendations of the New York State Comptroller's Office and the town's Accountant Robert Schultz.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Motion to Increase Contingency Fund A1990.4 by \$8,000 from Snow & Ice Removal

Motion by Gary Spears, 2nd by Arthur Trovei, to increase the Contingency Fund A1990.4 by \$8,000 from the Snow & Ice Removal (total \$83,000).

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

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Supervisor Brabenec stated this was the end of all recommendations by the Comptroller's Office and the town's accountant. Currently the total General and Highway percent change from last year would be at 1.87%, that's in the tax levy. For the purposes of the New York State computation for the tax cap percent change, because you have to take out health insurance and retirement, the tax cap percent change from 2011 would be .7%. The only thing they didn't make a motion on was the Engineering line. It is currently at \$80,000. He went on to say that if that remained at \$80,000, the total General and Highway would be at 3.88%, tax cap percent change from 2011 would be at 2.51%. They would be over the 2%.

Motion to Decrease Contractual Expense-Engineering A1440.4 from \$80,000 to \$30,000

Motion by Arthur Trovei, 2nd by Gary Spears to decrease contractual expense line for Engineering from \$80,000 to \$30,000.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Supervisor Brabenec stated that the total General and Highway was 1.87% increase in the tax levy and with the tax cap percent change for 2011 it is .7%. Councilman Hoovler said that was the only one that mattered. Supervisor Brabenec said that now they are below the 2% including health benefits and pension costs. Councilman Dean said that was the important thing, this being net net. This excludes the original loophole. Councilman Spears added that this is what the spirit of the law called for.

Motion to Adopt 2012 Budget as Modified

Motion by Karl Brabene

c, 2nd by David Hoovler to adopt the 2012 Budget as modified.

Discussion: Councilman Spears believed there wouldn't be a reduction of services but that it would be harder to not reduce services, and believed they gave the resources necessary to provide services.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Supervisor Brabenec claimed they now had a 2012 budget and he would submit it to the State Comptroller's Office and once he wrote the Budget Message and made the changes from the meeting, he would provide a final copy to the general public.

Closing Board Comments

Councilman Spears thanked the public for their input and would look into the Fire District. He wished more people would come out and give their input.

Councilman Trovei thanked those who came out and spoke, adding that it would be helpful if they knew what the feelings of the town were. He sat at that table 20 years ago and he used to tell the other guys that there are 8,000 people who must think it is okay what they are doing because they weren't there to gripe. So, that was a show of satisfaction. He also told the supervisor that he thought he did a great job that year. He was sure he would continue to give as much effort and was sorry they couldn't give him more because he thought the job deserved more.

Councilman Dean thanked everybody who worked for the town. It had been a difficult year and he thought everyone dug in and did their best. He told Ed Hughson he thought he deserved the additional money. He also thought other people working for the town deserved more too. However, it is tough times and calls for tough decisions. He was very, very pleased to serve with people who have the courage to make those tough decisions. It would be almost unbearable if it was a constant battle. He appreciated it and thanked everyone who worked for the town.

Councilman Hoovler thanked those who came out and spoke. He echoed Councilman Trovei's comments and thought he was doing the right thing with the budget and was getting the town back on track from where it was a few years ago. He added that they keep making plans for the future, no matter who is sitting on the council can follow them or not. He mentioned that the rifle deer hunting season was starting on Saturday and strongly encouraged folks to wear the harness and make sure of their targets and what is behind them.

Supervisor Brabenec announced that Veteran's Day was the next day and the Town Hall would be closed. He encouraged everyone to attend the parade and thank a veteran for their service to this country, which makes it the greatest country in the world. Also, on November 21st there would be a Public Hearing on the proposed Cable Time Warner Contract. He also thanked his fellow town board members and colleagues, the Town Clerk, the Highway Superintendent and Department Heads who give him advice every day, which he tries to implement and do what he can to improve the town and help people out. He

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appreciated their hard work and efforts and for their service to the town. Finally, Big Pond Road was finally opened as of 3:00 p.m. that day. He thanked Ed for that and the Highway Department.

Motion to Adjourn at 9:06 p.m.

Motion by Karl Brabenec, 2nd by David Hoovler to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

VOTE: 5 AYES: Gary Spears, Arthur Trovei, David Hoovler, David Dean, Karl Brabenec

MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Florence T. Santini
Town Clerk