

**COMMITTEE MEETING  
LAKE PLEASANT, NY  
WEDNESDAY  
AUGUST 7, 2013**

**PUBLIC WORKS / FINANCE COMMITTEE  
2:30 AM**

Present: Brian Towers, Clark Seaman, Bob Edwards, Brian Wells, and John Frey

Also present: Bill Farber and Tracy Eldridge

Tracy explained how this meeting came about. He handed out a summary of what has been budgeted in his budget from 2006 through 2013 which is split into four categories as follows: DM Repairs, DM Equipment, D Road Maintenance and D Bridge Projects. The reason he chose these four categories minus snowplowing and CHIPs is because these are really the ones that make or break us each year. Some of the numbers are askew under equipment because 2009 shows zero due to equipment that was bought through CHIPs funding.

Brian Towers asked if these are budgeted numbers not actual and Tracy stated that is correct. Some of the repair budget is off-set by work we do for other departments. The road maintenance budget includes gravel, stone items and dust control. We typically spend \$25,000 per year for dust control. Micro paving and culverts also come out of this line. Every year right off the top we take \$85,000 and pay it to the DM fund for internal equipment rental along with \$85,000 from County Snow. If we don't meet the revenue then that will affect the tax levy but typically we have more than enough.

Repair costs – The reason why he put this amount in there was because this is a line that has been hit hard the past two years. He had to go to fund balance last year. For example the exhaust for our 2008 solid waste road tractor is going bad. The muffler alone will be \$3,500 and that does not include the cost of installment by our mechanic.

The Chairman stated that inflation for truck repair parts has way outpaced inflation. The inflation rate does not touch the cost of what the parts have been.

Tracy stated that he thinks he will need between \$40,000 and \$50,000 for repairs. Some of this will have to come from solid waste; the repairs to solid waste equipment are what are using most of it.

Bridge projects – Major and minor repairs to bridges come out of this line. He tries to utilize 50 to 60 percent of this money for good long repairs to bridges. As of right now we have a couple of safety flags per inspection and one yellow flag on our bridges. Tracy doesn't agree on the yellow flag, which we have had for over two years, and he will have to address it.

Tracy stated that he just wanted to show the committee where we have been heading; it's been pretty flat over the last eight years.

Tracy then handed out a summary of information on county highway roads. In 2010 Tracy and Kenny did a power point presentation on conditions of our county roads. We have approximately 95 miles; 82 miles of that are paved and 12 ½ are gravel or non-asphalt. We average about 4 miles per year in paving/reconstruction and at this rate our life span for most roads is 20 to 25

years, but being in the Adirondacks with the frost/thaw cycle we are lucky to get 15 years of life span.

Tracy believes that his department needs to continue with 3-4 miles paving/reconstruction annually along with 3-4 miles of preservation by a combination of hot mix asphalt overlays and micro paving for the next 3 to 5 years. Then he would like to have a comprehensive road pavement analysis done and develop a road reconstruction/preservation five year plan.

To accomplish all of this he estimates the cost to be around \$500,000 of additional funding for the next five years.

Brian Towers asked of the 82 centerline miles would you say we are at 50/50 where half of the 82 miles are in rough shape and the other half will need to be done in 15 years? Bill stated where we are headed is 25% of that are in really rough shape, which is roughly 20 miles of road and if you reconstruct 3-4 miles per year gets you to that five year window. Bill thinks the reconstruction is the bigger gap than the overlaying and micro paving.

Tracy asked if we should take a year off from time to time with our current budget and don't do reconstruction and do more paving maintenance. He has been using his asphalt budget for this which is approximately \$200,000 for micro paving.

Brian Towers asked if he is proposing \$500,000 of additional highway funding. Tracy stated \$500,000 per year added to the current funding he has now. Tracy stated that he will still be reconstructing the 3-4 miles with the CHIPs fund which will keep up the roads that are cycling out.

Tracy handed out a bridge inventory list which consists of 42 bridges. Seven is the best score; Tracy stated he doesn't pay attention to the sevens or sixes they are good. What he pays attention to is the fours; they are not good and he would rather not see them on the list.

The committee discussed. Tracy stated we should be doing a bridge a year, some are small and low volume which we can do in-house and some we can't.

Brian Towers asked John if we had \$500,000 to give to Tracy's budget. John stated if the sales tax comes around he estimates we will get \$830,000. The tax cap hasn't come out from the Comptroller's Office yet but it was in the Albany paper at 1.66%. Our appropriations last year went up to \$794,000, which was a 4.8% increase just on appropriations. He feels we will need a quarter of a million dollars out of the sales tax increase to navigate appropriately where we should with a 1.66 budget.

Tracy stated he is not confident that we are going to get federal money for bridges. Tracy stated that if you are going to bond something, bond a bridge because it will last you for seventy five years and the money will be well spent. John stated that he agrees with Tracy and he said it last year, before the interest rates go back up, the time to bond is now because the rates are slowly starting to rise.

Bill asked what the useful life is for the Comptroller's Office on a bridge. Tracy thought it was 50 to 75 years.

John stated then we should be replacing a bridge every 1.65 years.

Brian Towers stated that they need to give Tracy a number that he can put in his upcoming budget.

John stated on the bridge money his first recommendation is a \$250,000 increase for bridges, which would bring it up to \$350,000 and use some of the CHIPs money to start doing a bridge.

After some discussion John stated coming off of a 13% increase and a 1% increase in sales tax he doesn't see them doing a tax cap override, Bill agreed with him.

The discussion then turned to equipment that Tracy would like to purchase. Tracy would like one tandem, one medium duty and two pickup trucks for \$365,000.00. Tracy stated that if he buys this, he would eliminate two tandems and a heavy single axel and that would help in reducing his fleet but it takes a big investment to do this.

Brian Towers asked Tracy what he really needs. Tracy stated \$220,000 for a tandem and \$50,000 for pickups.

Bill stated that there isn't enough money to go around and it isn't fair to ask Tracy to set priorities.

John suggested that they might want to think about bonding out the three bridges. If we can replace the seven bridges in the next three years by bonding, have a line in our bridge repair fund for the debt service and about the time those pay off we are looking at our next bridge replacement. Discussion continued on what is the best approach for repairing bridges.

Tracy stated that they are doing ok, but it's pretty gloomy looking at the numbers. We have been creative over the past few years, we have decent roads but we need to spend more money on our infrastructure; how do we get there?

Brian Towers asked Tracy, out of the \$365,000 what equipment do you really have to have and Tracy stated the pickups. If we need to hold off another year for the tandem then we will.

Bill suggested increasing the DM Repairs \$50,000 to make \$310,000. Then increase the equipment line to \$225,000, increase road maintenance to \$685,000 and increase the bridge line \$325,000 and that will use \$600,000 of the sales tax money.

Tracy stated that he thought that was fair and he would have a much better idea after two more months of where his budget stands.

Tracy stated it would be helpful if once the budget is adopted we then order equipment and we get it in the same year, because if he orders a tandem in January he doesn't receive it until November of that year. Meanwhile he is putting repair money into trying to keep the old truck going until the new one comes in.

Bill stated if we need a piece of equipment for construction we need to be in a position so that the equipment comes in at the correct time and then we can avoid unnecessary repairs. Bill stated we could create and fund a formal reserve fund that would carry over year to year.

Tracy stated county snow is a big expenditure, in 2006 the budget was \$552,000 up until 2009 then it went to \$635,000. Last year he had to transfer some of that money into repairs and fuel because he fell short. He feels he has a good handle on this portion of his budget.

Solid Waste – Tracy stated that the container that he put up in Raquette Lake can be used as an extra container. Brian Towers asked why they are not using it. Tracy stated it isn't ideal for them so he is going to come up with a small tandem axel dump trailer and build a cover for it.

Tracy asked for approval of changing a part-time employee to full-time. Tracy gave the history and the justification of how this employee came about. After some discussion the committee suggested that Tracy put a formal request in for changing this employee.

Tracy reported that they did a second pour of concrete in the green barn and will do the third pour in 2014.

Moose River Plains – We are hauling material in and DEC has agreed to pay for equipment rental, labor and gravel purchases. Tracy feels we have a good partnership with DEC.

All the brush work has been completed in Benson, Maple Grove and on South Shore Road in Lake Pleasant. He hopes to start ditching on the Griffin Road in two weeks and then to South Shore Road. He plans on doing full depth reclamation around Labor Day and then pave the roads mid-September. Elbow creek is completed except for the reclamation and paving.

As there was no further business, the meeting ended.