

**COMMITTEE MEETING  
LAKE PLEASANT, NY  
TUESDAY  
NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

**INTERNAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
1:15 PM**

Members present: John Frey, Neil McGovern and Brian Wells

Also present: Bill Farber, Phil Snyder, Clark Seaman, Brian Towers, Rick Wilt, and Frank Mezzano,

Mr. Frey called the meeting to order to discuss Department Head salary requests.

A handout was passed out and Mr. Farber explained there are also some specific requests for employees, not just Department Heads.

Budget Officer Mezzano stated the last two employees on the handout were given to him after he received the tentative budget requests, they would like to have Christy be the same rate as Dean in Planning/Tourism which is a grade 8, and she's a grade 4 or 5 at the present.

Mr. Wilt asked if some of these are just step increase.

Mr. Farber while reviewing the handout stated the tentative budget is 1.75% the exceptions are those that are higher than the 1.75%. There are instances where there is a step involved except for Lisa Johnson where it includes going from 35 to 40 hours which generates that percentage. Then the next column is the actual request from the Department Head and the column after shows the real dollar amount and the total percentage increase.

Mr. Towers questioned D5110.102 – Lisa Johnson's line – the tentative budget is at \$37,536 does that represents 40 hours?

Mr. Farber stated yes.

Mr. Towers then asked if the request from the Department Head was above and beyond the 40 hours.

Mr. Farber stated yes it was 40 hours plus another grade.

And have we had that discussion as a group Mr. Towers asked.

Mr. Farber stated yes Superintendent Eldridge has, I do not believe anyone has reacted to this or given him any inclination either way.

Mr. Towers asked what that request was based on.

Mr. Farber stated Superintendent Eldridge's feeling was his Administrative Assistant should be getting paid closer to what the Administrative Assistant in Nursing is. Administrative Assistants are tied to the Department Heads; you have an Administrative Assistant in Social Services, Tourism, Nursing, and Highway. They are similar to deputies that are tied back to the Department Head. So the difference between what is in the tentative budget and Superintendent Eldridge's request is he would like us to also in conjunction with 40 hours per week change her grade.

Mr. McGovern reported Superintendent Eldridge discussed his frustrations with him. It is more support for Superintendent Eldridge, not just more money. Mr. McGovern stated he doesn't have a problem with this bump for Lisa.

Mr. Towers asked if Lisa's responsibilities are the same as the other Administrative Assistants.

Mr. Farber stated yes, but feels they started out with the Administrative Assistant one grade to high, we need to scrutinize more closely when creating new titles.

Mr. Towers suggested they leave Lisa where she is without the step, Mr. Wilt agreed.

A short discussion then took place on the Senior Custodians of the building department.

Mr. Frey feels that a 1.75% increase for Department Heads is fair, not all towns were able to embrace that. He feels some of the requests are offensive.

Mr. Wilt and Mr. Frey advocate for the 1.75% for Department Heads.

Mr. Farber stated if we go this way we have to explain ourselves. We need to decide what we are going to do with Elected Officials. Elected Officials need to know what amount they will be receiving once elected with inflation costs.

The District Attorney is in question; she is elected but not a full time employee. Mr. Farber continued to discuss step and grade.

Mr. McGovern discussed comparing to other counties and how difficult it is to do. He agrees to holding the line along with Mr. Wilt and Mr. Frey. Double digit requests are way out of line as Mr. Frey stated.

Mr. Wells asked about Account Clerk Connie Mahoney. District Attorney Purdue asks every budget time to increase her.

Mr. Farber explained what happened. When Purdue was elected District Attorney the one person she wanted to hire as Confidential Secretary was not interested in taking the position because she would no longer have civil service protection. At the time it was unfortunate that a discussion did not take place with the Board members of something that they could do to address that. Looking at the tentative budget Connie is still earning more than the Confidential Secretary with the merit, COLA etc.

The committee discussed the merit system. How do you weed out the productive and the non-productive employees? Mr. Farber suggested that they don't increase everyone.

Mr. Seaman suggested using what the State uses, there is no merit pay, but there is an evaluation system. Rather than merit, they have an annual evaluation process and the problematic employees that aren't performing that need to improve don't get the raise next year. You don't get paid extra for doing your job, but you won't get paid extra next year if you haven't been doing your job.

Mr. Wilt asked under 1620.102 – Dan Fish – is that a step increase?

Mr. Farber stated that is where he is within the system, he's entitled to a step. Superintendent Eldridge's proposal also includes a grade increase to go with the step increase. One of the challenges is that Mark is also at the same step and grade as Dan. He suggested that they leave alone until they look over the merit system during this coming year.

Mr. Towers stated if we are going to go back and take a real hard look at the step and grade policy and where employee's fit in and look at Department Heads we really need to make a commitment to ourselves that when this is what we decide at budget time, this is where you're going to be, don't come back in the middle of the year and ask for more.

For Publicity, Tourism, Planning & Economic Development Mr. Farber stated when the tentative budget was done Director Osborne did not include the step and grade increases for both employees and no other adjustments above or beyond. Director Osborne will be leaving on or around April 1<sup>st</sup> and that would be the time for us to evaluate the two positions in that department.

Mr. McGovern discussed some ideas with the committee on that department.

Mr. Wilt stated that he would like to see that department as more of a planning department.

The committee agreed to look at the Department Heads in the coming year.

Mr. Farber stated if we need to prepare for two Public Hearings on Friday then we need to give Budget Officer Mezzano direction on whether we are comfortable with where the increase is now or whether we want to try to bring it in under the tax cap. We would have to make changes in different departments to reach the cap.

Mr. Towers stated he is comfortable with increasing the fund balance \$50,000.00 and taking \$75,000.00 out of Superintendent Eldridge's budget if this will get us under the cap, but no more than \$75,000.00.

Mr. Farber asked how Mr. Wells felt about their discussion this morning and Mr. Wells stated he is ok with this.

Mr. Frey is feeling a little leery, he is concerned that next year we will pay for this. He has no problem with staying under the cap.

Mr. Towers stated he is ok with this, historically we are still higher in the Highway budget than we have been in the past several years.

Mr. Wilt asked how the fund balance is in the highway, is it stable?

Mr. Farber stated no, it has been going down slowly and that is why Budget Officer Mezzano reduced the amount of fund balance that he was appropriating by \$250,000.00.

Mr. Seaman agreed to the hold on salaries and getting below the cap.